

# Introduction—and the origins and history of the junior school, 1872—1899

ESTABLISHMENTS such as ours owe their beginings to nineteenth century social reform in general and to two Acts of Parliament in particular. The first of these Acts (passed in 1854 in Britain and in 1858 in Ireland) authorised the setting up of Reformatory Schools. These institutions. as their name suggests, were intended for the training and reformation of older boys who had committed offences against the law. The second Act of Parliament was one providing for the setting up of Industrial Schools, and came into force in Britain in 1857, and in 1868 in Ireland. The Industrial Schools were intended mainly for the rescue and care and protection of younger boys who, by reason of family circumstances or environment or company, were in danger of becoming delinquent. Before the passing of these Acts, the only alternatives for dealing with all these young people were prison or the workhouse. Out of these Acts there arose, first, the Malone Reformatory, the origin of the present senior school, to be dealt with in a later chapter, and, secondly, the beginnings of the junior school, the subject of this chapter.

Another chain of events was also taking place in this mid-nineteenth century period—namely the change-over from wood to iron and from sail to steam in the ships of the Royal Navy and this had a considerable effect on the way in which these Acts of Parliament were put into practice. A number of the societies or committees concerned with setting up of Reformatories and Industrial Schools, and faced with the problem of accommodation, turned their attention to the old wooden men-of-war then becoming obsolete, and in the years between 1856 and 1876 three of these became Reformatory School ships, and eight of them Industrial School ships.

One of these latter, which we may regard as the ancestor of the junior side of the school, was the training ship "Gibraltar" which was in use from 1872-1899. (It is of interest to note that there are two schools still in existence in England which also had their origins on board ship, and whose organisation and training still retain a strong

THE ROOTS OF RATHGAEL

flavour of the sea. These are the Wellesley Nautical School, at Blyth in Northumberland, whose parent ship was the "Wellesley," and the National Nautical School at Portishead, near Bristol, whose original ship, the "Formidable," was anchored near the mouth of the Avon.)

Some advantages claimed for the use of ships for Industrial schools were that discipline on board ship was stricter and smarter than that on shore, part of the staff being always ex-Royal Navy, and that separation of the boys from their former undesirable surroundings and associations was more complete, and their supervision rendered easier. Further, the training of such boys for a sea-going life was regarded as eminently suitable and nationally desirable.

As far as our story is concerned, though attention had been drawn in the local press to the advantages of a training ship, there existed no legislation on the subject in Ireland until 1868, and so nothing was done until about 1870. At that stage, some of the local philanthropists who had been associated with the beginnings of the Malone Reformatory in 1860 (notably Mr. James T. Bristow and Mr. W. T. B. Lyons) began to work towards the provision of such a training ship, and in due course a committee was formed for the purpose. Its patron was the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Earl Spencer, the vice-patrons included the Marquis of Donegal, the Marquis of Downshire, Earl Dufferin, the Earl of Antrim, and Viscount Bangor, while on the executive committee were such names as John Mulholland, of Ballywalter Park, John Young of Galgorm Castle, Ballymena, Sir James Hamilton, the Chairman of the Harbour Commissioners, and Captain Tate, the Harbour Master.

On board the boys were organised in two divisions, senior and junior, and further sub-divided into watches in the case of the senior boys, who were in school and at nautical instruction on alternate mornings and afternoons. The day began at 5 a.m. in summer and 6 a.m. in winter. At the end of the first year there 146 boys on the ship and a staff of 13, including a bandmaster.

The raising of sufficient funds to meet the expense of altering, fitting-out and staffing a ship was an immediate and very great problem, and, had it not been for the generosity of a cross-channel benefactor (a Miss Dunbar, who subscribed £1,000, and a further £1,000 to be invested),

the project might well have been still-born. However, this princely donation tipped the scales, and in 1872 the committee acquired from the Admiralty the vessel known as the "Gibraltar," the certificate as an Industrial School being dated 22nd June, 1872. This ship had been launched at Devonport in 1860, and was the Royal Navy's eighth ship of the name. She was a wooden two-decker, described by H. S. Lecky in "The King's Ships" as a ship of 5,724 tons, provided with engines of 800 h.p. and also carrying sail. Her full crew when in commission had been 700, and her length was 252 feet. The engines had been removed and replaced with over 1,000 tons of ballast. A complete set of sails for the foremast was retained for training purposes, as were eleven ships' boats of various types, for sailing and rowing. When fully converted for use as a training ship, the accommodation comprised blacksmith's, sailmaker's, carpenter's, tailor's and shoemaker's workshops; a schoolroom, a reading room, a photographic room, a model room, a storeroom and a kitchen "capable of cooking for 800 persons and keeping a supply of 100 gallons of hot water." The Committee obtained possession of the ship in the autumn of 1871, and by May, 1872, she was ready for towing to Belfast Lough, where she was first of all moored in Carrickfergus Roads, inspected by Sir John Lentaigne, the Inspector-General of Prisons and Reformatories, and certified under the Industrial Schools' Act on 15th June, 1872. The situation at Carrickfergus was found to be too exposed in rough weather, so the "Gibraltar" was later moved to Whitehouse Roads, but the same difficulties were experienced there, and so, permission having been obtained from the Harbour Commissioners, she was finally located in the old Channel at the Twin Islands.

Reports from the early years show a considerable measure of success, yet foreshadow difficulties which were greatly to influence the future of the ship. For example, there was the beginning of awareness that the rather rigorous hard-working life with its emphasis on seagoing training did not really suit the younger boys, some of whom were of very tender years. This is mentioned in inspectors' reports as early as 1880. Another problem was the nursing and recuperation of boys who were ill, particularly with tuberculosis in various forms, which appears to have been quite common. Further, the cost of maintenance of the vessel itself was considerable. However, by 1879 the number on board had risen to over 300, and the "Gibraltar" was at least financially secure.

Consideration continued to be given in various quarters to the provision of an institution to cater for the younger boys, and, in 1882, the Committee formally resolved that it was desirable to establish a school on shore in connection with the "Gibraltar" Training Ship for children under ten years of age. The search for premises already in being was not at first successful, and, for a time, the erection of new premises was considered, but after eighteen months or so of disappointment and frustration the sub-committee were able to rent a house known as Fox Lodge, near Ormeau Park, on the Ravenhill Road. This house had some fourteen acres of land attached, and the committee had the option of purchasing it within twelve months for the sum of £4,000. The necessary work to fit the premises for use as an industrial school was put in hand, and, on 10th January, 1884, Fox Lodge was granted a certificate to accommodate sixty boys. This number was soon exceeded, as, by 1888. there were 102 boys in the school. Additional provision had to be made for these increasing numbers, which went on rising to a peak of 133 in 1897, and this additional strain both on finance and accommodation led to further change, as we shall see later.

The emphasis at Fox Lodge was on elementary education fitted to the age of the boys. Although they were too young for any sort of formal vocational training, we read of them being involved in "light healthy work in the garden and in the house, where they assist in baking, cooking, washing, etc." The indications are that Fox Lodge was a much happier and more suitable place for the younger boys, and had much more to offer them than the "Gibraltar" could ever hope to do.

However, the problems of rising numbers and the strain on Fox Lodge's space and facilities set the Committee searching once more and by 1896 we have record of them seeking counsel's opinion on the feasibility and legality of their selling the premises in order to purchase others more suitable. The Committee were advised to seek the permission of the Court of Chancery before so doing, and that any sale of the Fox Lodge premises would be subject to the approval of the Grand Jury of the County of Antrim.

Following this, in September, 1897, the Committee obtained a lease from Sir James Musgrave for the former Model Farm and 22 acres situated on the edge of Musgrave Park at Balmoral. The approval of the Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools having been obtained, the certificate for the new premises at Balmoral was

issued on 23rd November, 1897, Fox Lodge was closed and the boys transferred on 30th November of that year.

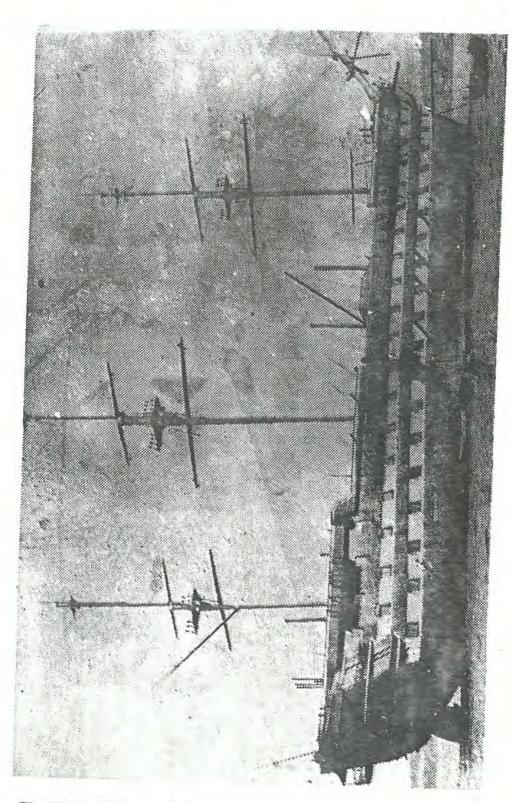
To return to the topic of the training ship, the work continued there after 1884 on its well-defined lines of education and sea-training, now set free from the problem of the younger boys. Reports from these years comment on general efficiency and good order, the good repair and wholesomeness of the vessel and commend the work of the Committee. In 1888 the name of the ship was changed at the request of the Admiralty from "Gibraltar" to "Grampian," presumably because they wished to use the name for a new vessel. There was also a gradual decline in numbers during the 1880's from their peak of over 300, to less than 240 by 1885. This decline, and the expenditure on Fox Lodge, meant that the Committee began to experience financial strain with regard to the running of the ship and its maintenance, which naturally began to increase with age.

The Royal Commission on Reformatories and Industrial Schools in Ireland in 1883 had enquired into the affairs of the "Gibraltar," and certain points which were raised at that time foreshadowed the eventual end of the Training Ship. It has been suggested that in order to maintain numbers the Committee were dilatory in releasing boys before the age of sixteen. Evidence also showed that the number of discharged boys actually going to sea was declining as time passed. The Royal Commission also found that training ships were at least one-sixth more expensive than land schools. Criticism had also been made of the Ship's situation, which it was suggested was in an insalubrious part of the channel, and also of the death-rate on board the ship. It could be said, of course, that many boys who came to the ship were suffering from poor health and physique engendered by poverty, neglect and malnutrition in their early years, and a good many were infected with tuberculosis, so that it is not surprising that some succumbed to disease, but there was at least the dawning realisation that the spartan life on board ship was not the best thing for at least some of its inmates.

Other criticisms which were raised from time to time were the loss of time and labour in bringing supplies from land and the fact that there was no small vessel in which boys could actually go to sea and make their training realistic. From all these considerations, by the mid-1890's the Committee were forced to admit that their efforts of almost thirty years' duration had not met with the success

they had hoped for in many respects and that the problems were likely to get worse rather than better, and, with the comparative success of the junior institution at Fox Lodge in mind, it was eventually decided to abandon the ship and to transfer the boys to the school at Musgrave Park. A large new wing had to be added for the purpose, and the certified number increased from 100 to 350. So, on 13th March, 1899, the "Grampian" was closed and the boys transferred to Balmoral Industrial School, thus bringing to an end an experimental effort which, perhaps by its very nature, was destined to be short-lived and only partly successful, but with whose basic aims and intentions we are bound to sympathise, for they are still very largely our own.

The "Grampian" herself was towed to Woolwich, breaking loose from her tug on the way in a gale, and being in some danger of being lost with all on board. Even today, however, faint echoes of those far-off days still linger, in that our morning and afternoon breaks are spoken of as "stand-easy," boys who waited at table until recently were known as "berth-boys," and souvenirs of the "Grampian" still exist in our possession—a photograph, now much faded and battered, the ship's bell, and a Bible presented to the ship in October, 1885, by Alfred M. Munster, the Honorary Secretary to the Committee.



The Ulster Training Ship "Grampian," formerly the "Gibraltar"

THE ROOTS OF RATHGAEL

#### The junior school ashore, 1899 — 1940

WITH the move from ship to shore, re-organisation of the curriculum had to be undertaken, so that nautical training as such came to an end, though some of the ship's terminology and organisation persisted for a long time (e.g., boys were divided into port and starboard watches, staff spoke of their watch on or off duty and the navy-style uniform continued to be worn as Sunday rig into the 1930's). Seamanship subjects were replaced by gardening, stock-keeping, carpentry, shoe-making and tailoring, the premises at Balmoral affording accommodation for all these activities, as well as classroom work, with comparative ease, even for almost 400 boys.

The re-organisation, and the school's efforts to face up to the new conditions, seem to have been remarkably successful, to judge by the reports of the Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Mr. J. Fagan, F.R.C.S., during the early years of this century. This official had in 1901 issued a circular setting out the standards by which he would judge the institutions inspected by him. These were detailed under two general headings (1) The Physical and Moral Well-Being of the Children, and (2) Their Literary and Industrial Training. He also indicated that he proposed to make a public classification of the schools inspected, and it is a measure of the standard of Balmoral at that time that, following the inspection of 1901, it and another school for R.C. boys at Monkstown, Co. Dublin, were rated the two best in Ireland.

During the early years of the century more particular attention to health was demanded by the inspectorate. and a special system of medical inspection and classification was introduced. In this field again, none of the inspector's reports is at all critical of standards and provision at Balmoral. Reports speak of "the general healthy appearance and bright manner of the boys," and the "evidence of the good care that is taken of them," and statements that "the school is in the very front rank," and "the tone of the school could not be better," occur fairly frequently.

In spite of this good record within the school itself, other factors began to cause anxiety on the part of the Com-

mittee. By 1908, numbers had risen to a peak of 442, which seems enormous by our present standards, but it must be borne in mind that these included many boys who would nowadays be in children's homes, or with foster From that time on there began a gradual parents. decline in numbers, which became more marked as the years passed, until by 1916 the number of boys was 310. It appears that following the passing of the Children Act, there was the growing tendency to regard committal to an Industrial School as a last resort. and a feeling that boys so committed would bear a stigma for life. With the advent of the war years the further consideration of adding to public expense was to play its part in the reduction of numbers. Falling numbers meant a fall in grants, and this, added to the greatly increased cost of supplies due to the war, meant serious financial trouble for the Committee in their work. Numbers were increased in 1917 by the transfer of boys from Meath Industrial School at Blackrock which was requisitioned as a military hospital, but within two more years had fallen to 263. Appeals made to the Belfast Corporation and the Treasury in 1915 resulted in some temporary improvement but the appeal had to be renewed in 1917, and by 1919 the Committee were forced to consider giving up their certificate.

From this time on, negotiations began between the Committee of Balmoral School and the Belfast Corporation resulting in the take-over of the school by the Children Act Committee of the Corporation from 30th June, 1920. The following conditions were asked for by the Trustees in connection with the transfer; (1) That the Belfast Corporation should meet any outstanding financial liabilities at the date of transfer. (2) That the Council should take over responsibility for the lease of the Balmoral property granted to the Trustees by Sir James Musgrave in 1897. (3) That the staff of the school should be taken over, with the exception of any members due for pension. (4) That provision should be made to continue to receive boys from areas outside Belfast, particularly the Northern Counties. The value of the property and stock being handed over were valued at over £20,000. So ended the voluntary management of the Junior School, a step which many thought was not in the best interests of the school, but which, looking back, can be seen to have been inevitable, and, indeed, just one of the preliminary wavelets of the general change-over from voluntary movements to state and local government provision which

has been such a marked feature of the mid-twentieth century.

Almost immediately a deputation was sent by the Children Act Committee to visit schools in Great Britain, and to enquire into conditions there. This deputation on its return made three recommendations (1) That teachers' salaries in Balmoral should be made the same as in other schools, (2) That a gym. instructor and after-care officer be appointed, (3) That steps should be taken to procure the same grants from the Treasury as applied in England.

In the following year the school's work was disrupted for a time, as were most things in Ireland at that time, by the effects of the civil disturbances following on the partition of Ireland. Under the Restoration of Order in Ireland Act of 1921, the military authorities requisitioned the school premises for the purposes of billeting a regiment there, and the school was forced to seek other quarters. These were eventually found in the Belfast Workhouse, where the school carried on under difficulties until December, 1922. In the meantime, suggestions had been made by the Government for other uses for the premises, but the Committee resisted these and in due course the school returned to carry on at Balmoral.

It is interesting to note that in 1925 there was a suggestion that the school might be placed under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education (as has been in the case in Scotland for a considerable time now), but this was turned down by the Ministry of Home Affairs on the grounds that as long as there was any penal aspect to the school it must remain their affair. By 1929, the school was entering on a somewhat unsettled and rather unhappy period. To begin with, several senior members of staff either died, or retired somewhat prematurely for health reasons, and the school as a whole felt the loss of their experience. Due to gradually falling numbers, some of these members of staff were not replaced, and during the thirties there were many changes in staff, particularly teaching staff, this lack of continuity and experience having a detrimental effect on the school as a whole. In 1934, some alterations and improvements were recommeded. For example, a library was to be provided, the shoemaking department was to be closed and turned into a games' room, hot water was to be laid on to the boys' washrooms, the wearing of the sailor-type uniform was to be discontinued, and the appointment of several extra members of staff recommended. In the same year, it was

mooted that the Reformatory boys from Malone Training School might be transferred to Balmoral, as accommodation problems were arising there, but this idea was to wait for over thirty years before finally being put into practice.

In spite of the frequent criticisms and complaints which arose in these years of the thirties, all had not been lost. The premises were spacious and well-maintained. and the facilities included a gymnasium and adjacent small swimming-pool with showers, there was an adequate playing field, and a small farm and garden with some livestock, and the usual assortment of workshops and classrooms. While the work as a whole may have lacked direction to some extent, and while some of the organisation was by then out-dated, the basic aims had not been forgotten, and there was no lack of care of the boys, though the provision for them, judged by to-day's standards, was austere. Summer camp, which was held under canvas on The Boys' Brigade site at Ganaway, near Ballywalter, was an annual event greatly looked forward to and appreciated by the boys at this time.

An important change that took place at the end of this decade was the introduction of full-time school classes for all boys of school age. Prior to this, boys from third standard upwards had been approximately half-time in class and half-time in the workshops, but, from 1939 onwards, only boys over school age were employed in the workshops and all others were in school full time. This was one of the changes consequent on the appointment of a new Manager and a new Deputy Principal in 1939. Two new teachers were also appointed that year, and from then on the school began to settle down once more into a consistent and disciplined routine.

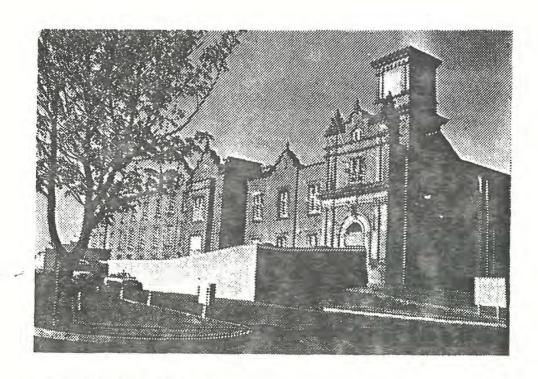
The outbreak of war, however, in September, 1939, presented the school with further problems and further upheaval. The school was now on the threshold of one of the most difficult periods in its history, for, apart from the immediate consequences like black-outs and rationing, in the summer of 1940, with the prospect of invasion imminent, notice was received that the Musgrave Park premises were to be taken as a military hospital, and soon after the R.A.M.C. appeared on the scene and began the necessary alterations. This meant that less and less accommodation was left to the school as the weeks passed until a stage was reached where only a dining-room

(formerly a library), a schoolroom (formerly the bandroom), the kitchen, toilets and the playing field were left for school use. For dormitories the R.A.M.C. provided four hospital tents, each holding 25 boys, on the cricket pitch in Musgrave Park, with small tents for some members of staff.

The Committee were meantime searching for alternative accommodation, which was very difficult to find, and the problem was not solved until October of 1940, when the school moved to the premises of the Victoria Homes and Shamrock Lodge Industrial School in Ballysillan Road, the girls having been evacuated to Greenisland. This proved to be a final parting with the Musgrave Park premises, for they later were used as an American Military Holspital and later still as the nucleus of the present Musgrave Park Hospital.



Balmoral Boys' School Musgrave Park. Altered by conversion to a hospital.



JUNIOR SCHOOL ASHORE

### The junior school at Ballysillan 1940 – 1958

HAVING moved to the premises at Ballysillan on 12th October, 1940, the school was immediately faced with many problems. Some of these arose from the nature of the premises themselves. There were, for example, four separate blocks, each with its own heating system (or lack of it). There was one classroom, one recreation room, (which had to be occupied by two classes during the day), there were no showers or swimming pool, and the kitchen and laundry facilities were both antiquated and inadequate.

Further, during the next year or two numbers rose to the very high level of 144, considerably more than there are now in the combined junior and senior schools, so that accommodation was strained to the utmost. Staff, of course, remained at the same level until some time after the war, some of them until long after retiring age. Added to all this were the difficulties of rationing, making it almost impossible to obtain adequate replacements of clothing, or even, at times, of soap. There were, too, the added responsibilities of caring for the boys during airraids, fire-watching duties and so on. Money and materials for the maintenance or repair of buildings were, naturally, very short, and such things as windows damaged by blast had to remain in a patched-up condition for a very long time.

These nightmare years passed, however, and by 1947 the beginning of a new era was in sight, not, however, before there had been an official inquiry into the state and management of the school, arising in large measure from the rundown state of the school, following what can only be described as the ordeal of the years 1940-46. From that time until the present Board of Management took over in 1956 many notable steps forward were taken.

First, there were some long-awaited and very necessary improvements in premises and facilities—e.g., the addition of a dining-room and classroom block, (formed from a group of ex-W.D. buildings of the Nissen hut type, but bright, warm and comfortable), the provision of showers, additions to the heating system, the renovation of the kitchen and general redecoration.

Improvements came also in the provision of more adequate educational and recreational equipment for the boys, and in the years from 1949 onwards the programme of evening activities was greatly extended, including the re-forming of the Scout troop, and the introduction of groups for various hobbies and crafts such as leatherwork, picture-framing, book-binding, hand-loom weaving, and a hand-bell group, in addition to the older activities like the school band, woodwork and gymnastics. A system of testing the ability and attainments of newly-admitted boys, by the use of standard tests, was introduced at this period, and out of this there developed in due course our present reception procedure, which is more fully dealt with in a later chapter.

On the staff side, too, changes took place, in that more teaching posts were established, and after prolonged negotiations by the Ulster Teachers' Union, salaries, including the Approved Schools' Allowance, payment for extraneous duties, holiday entitlement, and various other conditions of service, were at long last brought into line with those obtaining in the Approved School service in England and Wales. This parity has been maintained ever since.

Following the Children and Young Persons' Act of 1950, further developments took place. The system of leave for the boys was modernised, continuous periods of leave at the normal holiday times being introduced for the first time, and a system of weekly payment of pocket-money, based on work and conduct, came into effect. Other important provisions of this Act were the setting-up of a licensing system, and new regulations in regard to the minimum and maximum ages for committal, and the length of the period of training.

Annual camp had been re-introduced in 1947, and from then on various ex-R.A.F. and ex-Army accommodation at a number of different places, such as Ballyhalbert, Ballyhornan, Ballyedmond and Ballymacormick, were used for this purpose, these spells in informal conditions in rural and seaside surroundings being always regarded

as one of the highlights of the school's year.

During this period in the early 1950's, there originated the germ of an idea which was in due course to result in the entire re-organisation of the educational side of the junior school. This was caused by a gradual rise in the age of committals following the raising of the school leaving age to fifteen, so that we began to consider a change-over to a Secondary Intermediate basis, as by far the greater part of our intake was now coming from that age group.

A pleasing aspect of the work during this lengthy stay at Ballysillan was the very cordial relationship existing between the school and the local churches attended by the boys, namely, Ballysillan Presbyterian Church, and St. Mark's Church of Ireland Church, Ballysillan. Staff and boys were cordially received and we have many pleasant memories of our attachment to these churches, and of our dealings with the various chaplains concerned over the years.

The number in the school gradually eased off to a relatively comfortable level of 100 or less, and these years of the 1950's are remembered by those who experienced them as a relatively pleasant, progressive and successful

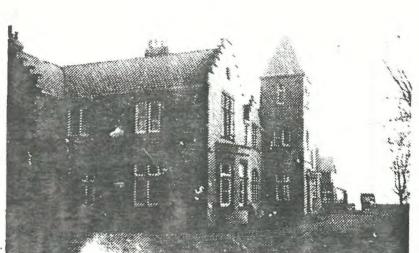
phase in the story of the junior school.

Further and even greater change was on the way, however, a change which was to involve a complete transfer of management and administration, and, indeed, the loss of the junior school's identity, for the name of Balmoral Training School was soon to disappear as a result of new legislation. In 1956, an Act of Parliament (The Malone and Whiteabbey Training Schools Act) was passed, the effect of which was to amalgamate the junior school (Balmoral Training School), and the senior school (Malone Training School, which had just lost its Borstal section, as described elsewhere), and to place them under a Board of Management to be appointed by the Minister of Home Affairs.

The arrangements were made for the Belfast Corporation to give up its certificate and for the take-over of school and staff, and in October, 1956, the new Board of Management began its task of running three separate establishments—the Girls' Training School at Whiteabbey, the Balmoral Training School at Ballysillan, and the Malone Training School at Lislea Drive, whose origins and history are the subject of another chapter. So ended the separate existence of the junior school, and the name Balmoral, which had been associated with it for over half a century.



The Cottages, Ballysillan.



Shamrock Lodge, Ballysillan.



The Office Block, Ballysillan.



Foster Green Home, Ballysillan.

JUNIOR SCHOOL AT BALLYSILLAN

17

# Origin and history of the senior school, 1860 — 1926

THE Senior section of the present school originated as the Malone Reformatory, established in 1860 by a voluntary body of public-spirited citizens, following the Reformatory Schools' Acts of 1854 in England, and of 1858 in Ireland. The President of the Society was the Marquis of Donegall, the eight Vice-Presidents included the Lord Bishop of Down, Conor and Dromore, the Earl of Antrim, Viscount Massereene and Ferrard, and Sir E. C. McNaughton, whilst among the members of Committee were to be found well-known local names such as Ewart, Dunville, Lanyon and Kinahan.

The original building has remained, with additions and alterations, to the present day, and it is of interest to note that the architects involved were the firm of Lanyon & Lynn, the name of Charles Lanyon being associated with many public buildings of note in Belfast. The interior arrangements of the buildings followed very closely those of a building at Red Hill, in Surrey, where the Royal Philanthropic Society had established, in the 18th century, the first institution of its kind in the United Kingdom. The cost of the original building at Malone was £1,000.

At first the training was mainly agricultural and horticultural, the first staff appointments being a land-steward and an assistant teacher, who took charge in the Governor's absence. As well as secular and vocational instruction, the moral and spiritual side of the boys' training was greatly emphasised, and in the first year we read of both Presbyterian and Church of Ireland chaplains being appointed.

Early annual reports of the institution contain some facts which make interesting contrasts with present-day conditions and practices, e.g. the weekly cost of food per boy was approximately  $2/6\frac{1}{2}$ d: in summer the boys rose at 5.30 a.m., and their hours of work on the farm were from 6-8 a.m., from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., and from 2-5 p.m. School took place in the evenings from 6.30-8.30 p.m. In winter the making of sacks and baskets indoors took the place of part of the field work.

Within the first five years some expansion took place, both of accommodation in the form of additional schoolroom and dormitory space, and of vocational training when tailoring and shoe-making departments were opened. The area under cultivation was also increased by renting adjoining land.

There is record of a visit to Malone in 1867 by Mary Carpenter, a lady who had been one of the pioneers in reformatory work in England, and who was particularly associated with the beginnings of Kingswood School in Bristol. She expressed herself as "well-pleased with what she saw in Malone."

From 1868 till 1883, the picture appears to be one of piecemeal and intermittent expansion, in numbers and accommodation, because of the financial limitations imposed on the committee. This led to deficiency in such items as washrooms and toilet facilities and eventually in workshops, numbers at this time being over 90. All this was commented upon by a Royal Commission on Reformatories and Industrial Schools in Ireland in 1883.

However, an Act of 1881 had made it possible for the committee to obtain certain loans from public funds, if guaranteed by a Grand Jury, and between 1883-85 funds thus provided enabled further development to take place, bringing the building into its final form of a hollow rectangle, with many internal additions and improvements in amenities, and including the construction of a Governor's house.

The school at this juncture appeared to be in a very favourable position, in regard to accommodation, facilities for training, and finance, but very soon an unforeseen difficulty arose. This was due to a falling-off in numbers, which decreased by 52 in the five years from 1885-89. This in turn meant serious financial trouble, because of the decrease in capitation grants, and the shortage of productive workers in the industrial departments. The main reason for this falling-off in committals to the Reformatory appears to have been the growth of the Industrial Schools, already dealt with in another chapter. Boys could be committed to an Industrial School directly by a court, whereas, as the law then stood, boys had to be committed to prison for a minimum of fourteen days before committal to a Reformatory. It became obvious that magistrates, where possible, were committing boys to Industrial Schools rather than to the Reformatory, in order to avoid this initial period in prison. Pressure

from the Malone committee and other interested parties eventually succeeded in having the initial period in prison made optional, at the magistrate's discretion, and from then on there was a gradual increase in numbers, until in 1900 they stood at 95. By that date, the farm and industrial departments were making a profit, and a new carpetbeating department had been opened.

In 1904, a swimming pool was provided, this being the last major development under the old committee. The pool continued to be a source of much pleasure and of useful instruction to the many boys who passed through the school during the next 64 years. During the years 1900-20 the number in the school remained over 100, rising to 130 in 1915, and in almost every respect these 20 years were the most successful and stable period the institution had ever enjoyed up to that time.

In the next 5 or 6 years, however, the position deteriorated seriously, again due to falling numbers. This was partly due to a reluctance on the part of magistrates to commit boys to the Reformatory, thereby increasing charges on the rates, which had risen steeply during and after the Great War, and partly because of the effect of the Probation of Offenders Act, which appears to have been used deliberately and excessively as a means of keeping the number of committals down.

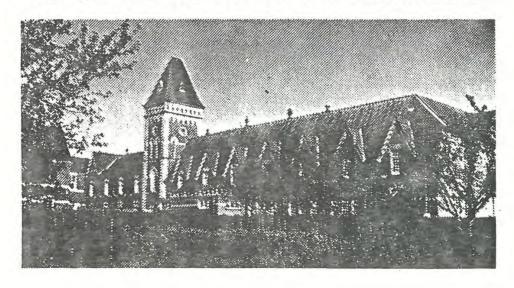
Financial difficulty was again encountered, as the partial support of the Government and the local authorities no longer closed the gap between production and expenditure. By 1924, the number of boys in the school had fallen to 38, and breaking-point had been reached, not only in the financial sense, but from the standpoint of the boys' education, for such considerations were being neglected in an effort to keep up production. The result was that the Committee, in May, 1924, gave notice to the Ministry that they would be forced to give up their certificate and to close the school from 1st December of that year. An offer of increased Government grant was judged to be insufficient and notice was duly published in the Belfast Gazette of the intention to close the school.

There followed, over the next year or so, a series of discussions and proposals, in which the School Committee, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Belfast Corporation were all involved. Amongst these proposals were (a) Increased grants from local authorities, (b) a complete

take-over of Malone by the Belfast Corporation, similar to that which had already taken place in 1920 in the case of the junior school at Musgrave Park, (c) the closing of Malone and the transfer of the boys to schools in Great Britain (Fylde Farm School, near Blackpool, and the Reformatory at Stranraer were amongst those thought of), (d) the transfer of the boys to a part of the premises at Musgrave Park.

None of these proposals was acceptable to all the parties concerned and the discussions dragged on, temporary financial arrangements having been made in the meantime, whereby the Government and the local authorities shared the losses incurred at Malone. By degrees it came to be accepted that the Ministry of Home Affairs had the main responsibility in the matter and by the end of 1925 Cabinet authority was given for the preparation of a Bill to provide for the transfer of Malone to the control of the Ministry of Home Affairs, and the setting up of a Borstal Institution for Northern Ireland, within the same premises. This Bill became the Malone Training School Act of 1926, receiving the Royal Assent on 30th November of that year, and so ensuring the continuance of the institution, albeit in a new form, as a combined Borstal Institution and Reformatory. This new phase in Malone's history was to last for the next 30 years, up to 1956.





ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF SENIOR SCHOOL

#### Malone from 1926 — 1956

TO carry out the provisions of the Act of 1926, some additions and alterations to the premises were necessary, the north-west end of the building being adapted for use as the new Borstal Institutuion and the front half being retained as accommodation for the Reformatory. In due course, any boys from Northern Ireland who were undergoing Borstal training in England, in the Borstal Institution at Feltham, were transferred to Malone, and the new system began to operate.

One important difference now was that as Borstal is part of the prison administration a large proportion of the staff were now prison officers, and were transferable to or from the prisons as directed. However, the work of the combined institution in the years succeeding 1926 ran on fairly traditional lines, covering workshop training, educational classes, and recreation. Farming and market gardening were continued, horses and cows being kept, and the boys instructed in their use and care. On the workshop side, the carpentry, tailoring and shoe making were continued, as well as carpet-beating. Clothing was made in the tailor's shop for use in the school and a certain amount of contract work was done, e.g., for mental hospitals. The shoemaker's shop ran a repair service for the general public. Garden produce was also on sale to the public. All the school's washing was done in the school laundry, and a number of boys were employed in the kitchen, as now. On the educational side, school classes were organised on a part-time basis for the Reformatory boys, and there were evening classes for the more backward Borstal boys. it was also customary for some voluntary teachers or instructors to come in the evenings to take crafts and hobbies groups, where basket-work, leather-work, rug-making, picture-framing, etc., were taught, and there was an annual display and sale of the end products of these activities.

During these pre-war years, a fairly wide range of recreational activities was carried on. The Reformatory had a Scout troop, and the Borstal had a Rover troop, both of these being organised by members of staff. The school

also had a boxing-club, and tournaments, to which teams from other clubs were invited, were held on the premises. Football, of course, was in vogue, and teams competed in the Amateur League. During the late 1920's, the practice of taking boys to summer camp for a period was introduced, the first site to be used being at Islandmagee. In later years the camp was sited at Mid Island in Strangford Lough, near Greyabbey, and later still at Gore's Island, near Downpatrick. Two other features which deserve mention at this time were classes in Irish dancing, and a well-known school display called "The Parade of the Toy Soldiers." A member of staff with considerable musical talent was mainly responsible for these two activities, and the "Toy Soldiers" in their colourful costumes, including "horses" for the "generals," were a popular item at fireworks displays and military tattoos in various parts of the Province.

During these years there were normally 30 boys in the Reformatory and up to 50 in the Borstal section. Discipline then was very strict and there were few privileges. For example, no system of leave existed, except for a day or so at Christmas time, and no pocketmoney was paid. The period of committal was longer then also, usually 3 years, as there was no licensing system. In 1937 some reconstruction and alteration of the premises was carried out, affecting mainly the North East side of the building, though a new boiler house was added at the rear of the building.

Then came the years of the 1939-45 war with their attendant difficulties—shortages of staff and materials, black-outs, air-raid precautions, etc., combined with a spectacular rise in the numbers of boys. At one stage the Reformatory held 95 and the Borstal 139 boys. A second tailor's shop for the Reformatory was opened in a temporary building, and a system of supplying parties of boys for farm work outside the school operated for some years at this time.

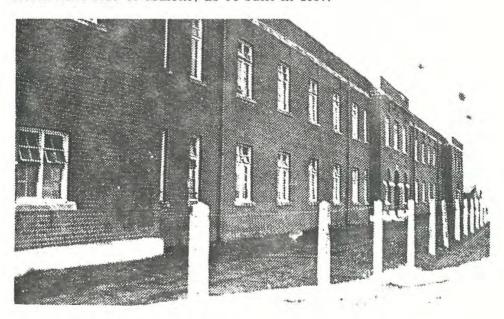
In the immediate post-war years a project of value to the school was undertaken, in the shape of a new games field, with a running track, and raised terraces for spectators, and this continued in use for football. athletics and sports days right down to the vacating of the premises early in 1968. Other welcome changes came soon after the war, too. For example, with the closing of Derry prison in 1949, extra staff were made available to Malone, together

with items of equipment, furniture, etc. Then in 1950 the new Children and Young Persons' Act came into force, with its many new and more liberal provisions regarding such matters as age limits, terms of detention, licensing, leave, and pocket-money. This Act has continued to be the basis of the work of Training Schools up to the time of writing.

Following this Act, preparations for further changes soon began, and in the years up to 1956, work was going on at Woburn House, near Millisle, Co. Down, where a new and entirely separate Borstal Institution was to be set up by the conversion of an existing large residence there.

As has been mentioned in the section dealing with the Junior School, new legislation affecting Training Schools was also being prepared at this time, and in October, 1956, Malone Training School, the Balmoral Training School, and the Girls' Training School at Whiteabbey were all placed under the present Board of Management, the Borstal part of the institution now having moved to their new premises at Millisle. The existing manager of Malone Training School continued to act as Manager of the two boys' schools and also as Governor of the Borstal Institution until his retirement a few years later. So ended another phase in the story of Malone.





# The training schools under the new Board of Management

THE new Board of Management appointed by the Minister of Home Affairs following the passing of the 1956 Malone and Whiteabbey Training Schools Act consisted of four members of the Belfast Corporation (because of their previous control of Balmoral Training School), several clergymen of the principal denominations, some members from the business community and the Trade Union Movement, and some directly connected with education and welfare. The staffs of the junior and senior schools were taken over by the new Board on the same conditions of service that had previously obtained, and the schools continued to operate at Ballysillan and at Lislea Drive for some time while consideration was given to the problem of amalgamating the two schools as required by the Act. In the meantime a teacher was seconded to Lislea Drive from the staff at Ballysillan to operate a full-time class for the boys who were still of school age there.

The greatest problem facing the management at this time was one of accommodation. Not only were the premises at Malone nearly a century old, but they were in many ways unsuitable for use by the combined schools, e.g., no classrooms existed, and the part of the building previously occupied by Borstal was largely taken up by It was decided after some time that the premises at Lislea Drive should be altered, extended and reconstructed in such a manner as to render them suitable for use by the combined schools, and an architect was employed to do the provisional planning and investigations into costs which this scheme involved. When this task had got under way, it was further decided to vacate the building at Lislea Drive during the period of reconstruction and to move the senior boys to the Ballysillan premises in the meantime. This in itself presented many difficulties, mainly of accommodation, but in February, 1958, the transfer was made.

Numbers in the senior school were low at this time, just over 40, but nevertheless the problem of accommodating this influx was a serious one. It meant for one thing removing junior boys from one whole section of the

THE ROOTS OF RATHGAEL

buildings and re-housing them in the other parts, so that senior boys could have dormitory accommodation. This move was eased to some extent by the fact that the former headmaster's house was vacant, he having gone to a post in Canada, and this space was now converted to dormitory and office use. A very large hut of the Nissen type was moved from Lislea Drive to Ballysillan as a senior recreation hut, a temporary workshop was erected, and a garage for the school vehicles. A classroom for seniors was also found in what had been a seamstresses' room. These measures, however, did little to remove the basic difficulty of putting a quart into a pint pot, and we still had the ever-present problems of over-crowding in the dining hall, one rather small and uneven playing-field for all, lack of suitable staff accommodation and so on.

It may well be imagined that these were not the happiest of circumstances for the two schools to come together. with their different regimes, outlooks, previous experiences, and their different groups of boys and staffs. It was a time of apprehension and frustration for all concerned, and looking back one wonders how we got through it as well as we did. At least one step in the right direction was the appointment of the time Housemasters. These were three members of staff of the senior school, but on appointment two of them were allocated to the junior school, and this was the first practical link at staff level between the two establishments, for these were two eminently capable and likeable men who did much to bring about the beginnings of understanding and co-operation.

In due course the board's architect produced his sketch plans and the provisional estimate of costs for the redevelopment of the premises at Lislea Drive and the estimated amount caused the Board and the Ministry to have second thoughts on the whole situation. A factor to be considered was the long-term prospect for the Bog Meadows area as a whole, it having been scheduled as mainly an industrial area. In the circumstances, the Board of Management and the Ministry of Home Affairs agreed that it would be desirable to seek an entirely new site and to build a completely new school. As soon as this stage had been reached, it became obvious that the building at Lislea Drive would be better as temporary premises for the two schools than those at Ballysillan, and in the autumn of 1958 preparations for this further move were put in hand.

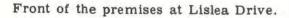
One essential part of the programme was the provision of classrooms and dormitories for the junior boys, and to do this meant the demolition of all the existing cubicles in the old Borstal accommodation, a considerable and very messy task. Two sections of this cleared space were then partitioned off as classrooms, this work being undertaken by the woodwork teacher and a group of senior boys. When this work was well advanced, the main operation of moving the combined schools began, again on a "do-ityourself" basis, with help from the Borstal institution at Woburn, in the form of a lorry, a driver, and a party of boys, whose size and strength were invaluable. Malone lorry and van were also involved for many days, and working parties travelled daily between Ballysillan and Lislea Drive to do the necessary lifting and laying, fetching and carrying, and the almost endless cleaning and tidying up that was involved. Many jobs in connection with the boiler, kitchen equipment, electrical wiring and plumbing had also to be undertaken in a building which had lain unoccupied and unmaintained for ten months, but by 12th December, 1958, work had progressed far enough for the boys to be transferred and the Ballysillan school closed down.

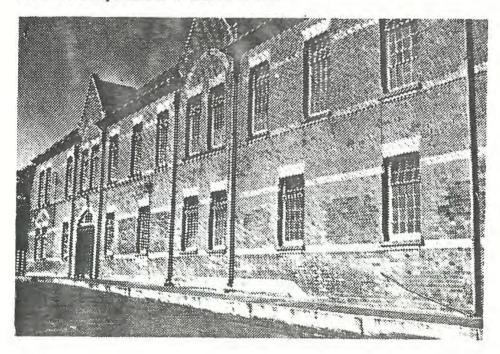
There now began what may perhaps be described as initially a period of adjustment, and, later, a period of development. As far as adjustment is applicable, it meant for the boys and staff of the junior school, settling in to, and beginning to work in, a building which was "different" and totally unfamiliar, and most parts of which were still suffering from the effects of evacuation, reoccupation, and the various necessary changes and renewals resulting from the new arrangement. was also the continuing problem of the two schools, now united willy-nilly, and it was a considerable time before everyone concerned became accustomed to each other's presence and ideas and attitudes, and the whole system became modified and adjusted and "shaken-down" into a more workable whole, and before, for example, a senior boy could cross the junior yard without half-a-dozen junior boys running to pat his arm and gaze at him in a sort of unwholesome mixture of curiosity and hero-worship.

Looking at this period from the point of view of development, it was an interesting and lively part of the school's long history, a period in which all concerned with the school, from the Ministry downwards, were looking forward and taking steps to lay the foundation of the school's future, for by now the idea of a new school was firmly established.

One of the major changes that took place during these years in Lislea Drive was the complete reorganisation of the junior school from its former primary basis to being in effect an intermediate school. The need for this had begun to be felt some time previously following the raising of the school-leaving age to 15, which was soon accompanied by a gradual rise in the age of committals, till almost all the intake on the junior side were of Intermediate school age. The advice and assistance of the Ministry of Education Inspectorate were obtained in this important matter, and eventually recommendations were produced on which we could begin to effect the change. This involved, apart from the regrading and re-allocation of classes, and the making out of new schemes of work, the recruitment of additional teaching staff with specialist qualifications, and the provision of additional accommodation such as Woodwork and Metalwork classrooms and a Science Lab. These were provided in good-quality temporary buildings on a site at the rear of the main building, and fitted out mainly by the efforts of our senior workshops.

A further recruiting of staff for the senior school was now embarked upon, namely, additional posts of Instructor in Metalwork, Building Construction, Horticulture, and Woodwork, and these were added to the staff by degrees up to 1962. Of these, Metalwork and Building





were new departments, while the Garden now had a qualified instructor. All this meant that a wide choice of interesting and vocationally worthwhile training could be offered to the senior boys, and, in due course, the kitchen was also raised to the status of an instructional department.

Parallel with these educational developments, there was also change and growth in the field of reception of new boys, and in the handling of boys on remand, and those committed for a month under Section 56 of the Children and Young Persons' Act. Out of the simple basic testing of new boys for intelligence and attainment begun in Ballysillan days, a more detailed and comprehensive system of testing, observation and diagnosis was evolved, including the use of individual tests as well as group tests, and the compiling of a report and suggestions for the use of the class teacher or instructor to whom the boys would be going. In addition, boys on remand were tested and observed in the special class organised for them, and reports prepared for their re-appearance in court, while reports were also prepared on boys committed for a month and going out to probation afterwards.

In view of the fact that the new school was to be on a house-unit basis, it was also necessary to recruit more Housemasters, and this was carried out in stages over five or six years. After an initial period of experience in the school, almost all of these new Housemasters attended and successfully completed one or other of the Home Office Training Courses in Residential Care, at Durham University, Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham or the North-Western Polytechnic in London. This programme of recruitment and training was completed in mid-1967.

A further development which took place in these years at Lislea Drive was the introduction of psychiatric help and oversight for those boys who appeared to be in need of it. After an experimental period, this service eventually took the form of regular weekly visits by a psychiatrist and his assistant, either to see boys who had been referred to them on admission, or those whom they were treating on a continuing basis.

Efforts were also made to improve and extend the general educational and recreational sides of our training programme in the widest sense. On the sports' side, the school football team regularly competed in the Intermediate Schools' League, on one occasion reaching the Cup Final only to be beaten in a replay, and the senior

Boys' team enjoyed a series of friendly matches on Saturday mornings. Other games such as Badminton and Basketball were introduced mainly as evening activities.

The programme of evening activities was extended as much as possible and eventually included such longstanding items as the Scout Troop, gymnastics, the choir, the school band, and a variety of crafts and hobbies, and also such new items as pottery, a Life-Saving class, a Boys' Club, as well as the various studies and pursuits arising out of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, in which the school participated from 1961. With the added facility of a swimming pool, emphasis on learning to swim became part of the normal P.E. syllabus, competitive swimming also developed, various other schools being invited to swim against our boys, and a team entry for the Secondary Schools' Gala became an annual event, in which we have had considerable success. In the Life-Saving Class, a group of volunteers, both junior and senior, worked each year for the Royal Life-Saving Society's various examinations, starting with the certificates, and in almost all cases gaining their Bronze Medallion, too. A few of the more expert performers went on to Bronze Cross standard and one Senior boy to the Award of Merit.

So, between 1958 and 1968, an almost continuous programme of recruitment and development was in progress, and apart from the intrinsic value of its various components, may be regarded as a "working-up" period with the move to the new school constantly in view, and it was only because of these years of work and preparation that the school was enabled to approach the proposed change with at least a moderate degree of confidence.





### The new school materialises

ONCE the decision to build afresh had been taken, in 1958, the Board of Managemant had to begin a search for a site, and this in itself was not an easy task, for sites of a suitable size and location do not come on the market every day. The site had to be somewhere reasonably near Belfast, where most of the school's intake come from, both from the point of view of access by parents and boys going on leave, and for the convenience of courts and police escorts. The Board, in fact, considered some five or six possible sites, before finally deciding on the one at Rathgael. This site of some eighty-six acres was eventually purchased in 1959.

The decision to build the new school on a house-unit basis was in keeping with existing trends in the Approved School service in Great Britain and representatives of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Management Board had made visits to a number of schools there to familiarise themselves with this new approach before this decision was made. There had also to be a good deal of thought given to assessing the probable future population of the school before deciding on the general lay-out and the number of house-units that would be necessary.

Once these basic concepts had been arrived at, the firm of Architects Associated, of Belfast, were commissioned to prepare sketch plans, in April, 1959. From this initial stage there arose a lengthy series of discussions, at Management Board level, at Ministry level, and, it is pleasing to note, at staff level, so that at various stages, as far as was possible within the general framework, those who would be doing the job had some say in the accommodation and facilities by which it would be done.

Needless to say, there were many problems and queries and suggested revisions and new ideas arising during this phase, and one at least of these deserves special mention, and a short digression on this topic may be permissible here, as this was an idea entirely new to Training Schools in Northern Ireland.

In Great Britain, boys committed to an approved school go from the Court to a Classifying School, where a procedure of attainment and intelligence testing is carried out, together with the collection of relevant information

THE ROOTS OF RATHGAEL

about the boy. All this ends in an assessment of the boy's personality, problems, and capabilities, and his eventual placing in what appears to be the most suitable Approved School in the region covered by that particular Classifying School. There are also Remand Homes for holding boys who are awaiting court appearances, and Detention Centres where boys are committed for periods up to 3 months. Here in Northern Ireland we have never had these separate institutions, the Training Schools serving for all the above purposes as well as their own main func-So, out of the discussions which took place in connection with the new school, there arose the idea of having a unit within the school which would serve these subsidiary functions and relieve the main school of distracting side issues. This took concrete shape in due course as the Reception Unit. This unit deals with committed boys for their first few weeks, during which they tested, observed, and assessed, educationally, phychologically, and socially before being placed in a house-unit, a class, or a work department. From this unit also relations between the school and the boy's home are initially established. During a remand boy's stay in this unit he is also tested and observed and a report prepared for the Court before he is to appear. Boys committed for a month under Section 56 of the Children and Young Persons Act (Northern Ireland), 1956, are also retained in this unit, and if they are going out to a period of probation at the end of their month a report is sent to the Probation Officer concerned. These short-term, ever-changing sections of the school population have long been something of an affliction in the main body of the school and it is felt that in providing special accommodation for them, and speciallytrained and experienced staff to deal with them, a considerable step forward has been taken. It should be recognised that this part of the school has its own peculiar difficulties and problems, for they are not only meeting the "raw recruits" day after day, but they are continually working against the clock, both in regard to court appearances and the placement of boys in residential units without undue delay, and they are also involved in making quite important decisions and recommendations which may have great effect on a boy's future.

To return to the main course of events, approval to the final plans was obtained from the Ministry of Home Affairs in February, 1964, and the contract subsequently placed with the firm of Messrs. D. R. Martin & Son, Ltd., of Whitehouse, who commenced work on the site at Rathgael in April, 1964. Work on the playing field are as was commenced in July, 1962, in order to give them time to become established before use. Here it seems ap-

propriate to give a brief description of the accommodation provided at Rathgael. The Reception Unit already referred to is really a double unit, with living and dormitory space for senior boys in one end and junior boys in the other, with a housemaster's residence at each end. In the middle section are the boys' dining room and servery downstairs, and a large classroom upstairs.

The Administration Block in the centre of the site contains the offices of the Head, the Deputy Head, the Board's Secretary, and the After-Care Officer, as well as the general office and stores, laundry, sewing-room and kitchen, all on the ground floor. The first floor of this building is occupied by the staff sitting room and diningroom, separate sick-bays for junior and senior boys, the surgery and dental rooms, and the apartments of the Matron and Assistant Matron. Also in the centre of the campus is the classroom block, where the education of the junior boys is carried on. The ground floor here contains the Senior Assistant's office, the library, a science lab., a woodwork room, a metalwork room, together with boys' cloakroom and toilet accommodation. A single-storey Lshaped extension contains the gymnasium (which includes a stage and film-projection facilities), and also the swimming-pool. On the top floor there are two classrooms specially for the two retarded classes, and an Art and Crafts' room, including a pottery area.

Another main section of the school is the senior workshop block, which contains the workshops and stores for the Woodwork, Engineering and Building Construction departments, as well as a classroom and drawing office for the use of these departments. The school band room is also included in this area. It is intended later, on a do-it-yourself basis, to have an open-air concrete area for practical work by the efforts of the building instructor and his group, a potting-shed and greenhouse building for the senior market-garden has been commenced, and serious other projects are planned for the first years of the con-

cupation of the new premises.

The residential units for the boys are all designed to accommodate 20. Two of these units, Nos. 1 and 4, are single units, while Nos. 2 and 3, 5 and 6, and 7 and 8 are combined in semi-detached form, with dining-rooms and services common to both. At the end of each unit is a three-bedroom maisonette where live the housemaster and his family, the housemaster's wife in almost all cases acting as housemother for the unit. The boys' accommodation on the ground floor of a house-unit consists mainly of a large bright common room, adjacent to the dining-room, and having a smaller room off it which may be devoted to hobbies, reading, homework or other small-

group activities. Other facilities on the ground floor comprise boys' wash-room, showers, bath and toilets, while storage is provided for raincoats, P.E. gear, etc., and cleaning equipment. There is also a housemother's room, which houses the tuck-shop for the unit. From the commonroom an open-type stairway leads to the first floor, where the dormitory lay-out consists of rooms for eight, six and four respectively, and two single-rooms. On this floor also are the house-master's office, the housemother's linen store, and further toilet and storage provision for the boys. Units 1, 2 and 3 which house the senior boys are at one side of the central buildings, and units 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8, which house the junior boys, lie at the opposite end.

For games and open-air recreation, two types of play area have been provided. Adjacent to the various groups of houses, and also outside the gymnasium, tarmacadam areas have been laid out, which will be used for paddertennis, tenniquoit, volley-ball, and outdoor play in general.

For other organised games and athletics there are three grass areas, one for the senior houses, one for the junior houses, and a larger one which is the official school ground for inter-school matches or athletics. These grass areas have been laid out and sown, cut and maintained for several years now, so that there is a mature growth on them which is more likely to stand up to wear and tear.

Some way down the drive leading to the dual carriageway on the Bangor-Newtownards Road further staff accommodation had been provided, consisting of the Headmaster's house and three pairs of semi-detached houses occupied by members of staff other than housemasters.

The parts of the estate of some eighty-six acres unoccupied by buildings it is proposed to develop partly as market garden, with mobile greenhouses, and partly as farm, with the possible inclusion eventually of some livestock or poultry. This in itself is a long-term project of some magnitude, and allied to it will be a general "taming of the wilderness," for parts of the site, particularly around the perimeter, are very overgrown with alders, thorn and briars, while other areas are low lying and swampy. Several acres are occupied by a lake which at present is surrounded by swamp, reeds and bushes, but which we hope to make a more sightly feature, and one which will be of some use in the recreational sense.

While work was proceeding on the site, between 1964 and 1967, work of a different sort was proceeding at Malone in connection with the new school. Details of complete staffing of the new establishment had to be worked out and approval sought to their appointment stage-by-stage. The

development of the staff in the new house-unit set-up, and details of their duties day-by-day and weekend-byweekend also involved much thought and planning and Then there was also the experimenting on paper. question of equipment and furnishing in all its various aspects. Some of this material could be brought by stages in the years preceding the move, and used or stored in the meantime, but a good deal had to be left till near the end for purchase and delivery directly to the new site, the main worry here being how closely the delivery dates might coincide with the school's actual move. And always in the background to all this activity was the financial aspect of the whole business, involving a vast amount of estimating, seeking of approval and the subsequent obtaining of quotations, seeing samples, visiting suppliers, and being visitied by representatives, and advisers, the placing of orders, and the receiving and storing, at both the old and the new schools, of an ever-increasing and varied collection of items.

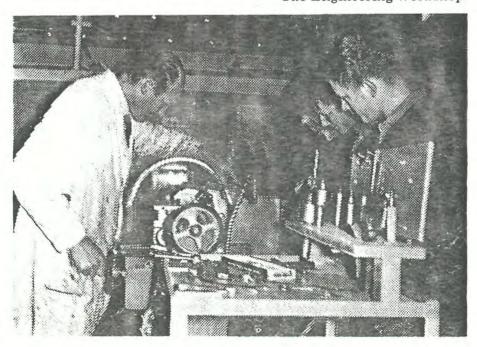
Not only had all this preparation on the purely material side to be done, but there was also preparation to be done with the human element, both staff and boys, and this was done in various ways and over a lengthy period. From the standpoint of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Management Board, preparation took the form of officially arranged tours of observation to a number of similar establishments in England and Scotland for the Headmaster and other senior members of staff, and also, of course, as far as housemasters are concerned, the courses attended in Great Britain, which included periods of practical work and observation at a variety of schools.

Within the school itself, this preparation took the form partly, of many previous visits to the new premises during the course of construction, which many members of staff made out of their own natural interest and curiosity. On the same lines, too, was the policy of inviting staff comment and suggestion on parts of the new school where they would be specially concerned, like a particular classroom or workshop. As well as interest and curiosity, however, there was also some degree of apprehension on the parts of both staff and boys regarding the conditions that would prevail in the new school, and this could only be removed by discussions, queries, and explanations, both at formal and informal levels, which went on from time to time in the months preceding the actual move. A number of senior boys had been travelling daily to Rathgael to work on the farm building, and so became familiar with the new premises, and in later stages other groups visited with their housemasters or teachers, in preparation for the change-over.

At length, towards the end of 1967, it was clear that the new school would soon be ready for occupation, and it was decided to make the actual move in January, 1968. So, when the Christmas holidays were over, the final steps towards Rathgael began to be taken. much of the work as possible was done within the school, by the efforts of staff and boys, and the use of our own minibus and minivan, and the loan of the minibus from the Whiteabbey school when it could be spared. This involved a great deal of packing and unpacking, as a good many items of stores or equipment could be taken straight from classroom or work department and put straight into the place where they would be used. Of course for the larger items of furniture, machinery, farm and garden equipment and so on, removal contractors had to be employed, but even here staff and boys played their part, in assembling the items and loading them at Malone, and in unloading and storing them at Rathgael. Some measure of the effort put into all this work by the boys may be given by the fact that, on the last night in the old school, when one might have expected a certain amount of skylarking and practical joking in the dormitories, by 9.45 p.m. there was not a boy awake in the whole school. For the last night did come, on the 24th January, the move having progressed so far by that time that the Minister of Home Affairs had been able to make the official arrangements and the necessary order for the transfer of the boys on the 25th of January. With effect from the date of transfer the old name, Malone Training School, ceased to be used, and the new premises were named in the certificate as Rathgael School. On that day, juniors in the forenoon and seniors in the afternoon, the boys were taken in the minibuses and staff cars and received into their new house-units by the housemasters and the recently appointed housemothers, who were an entirely new section of the staff. There were, of course, some materials and furnishings still to be removed, including four large wooden sectional buildings to be demolished and transported, and this occupied a party of senior boys and their instructors for a further two weeks before the move was at an end. On an evening shortly after occupation, the contractors treated the boys of the school to a special tea which was much enjoyed. At this stage a sense of relief that it was over at last was experienced, by most people concerned, soon to be replaced, however, by new problems and anxieties connected with the new school. There were, for example, certain last-minute jobs to be done by the contractors and sub-contractors, and their workmen had to be in and out of the various buildings for some time, causing a certain amount of inconvenience. Then there

was a testing period for the organisation that had previously been done in theory in connection with the day-to-day working of the house-unit system, and naturally here there were some adjustments to be made in minor details. The meals' service from the central kitchen was another source of trouble, for, apart from it being a new system, the proper containers and trolleys for its operation still had not arrived. And, as always in any new situation, there were those who found difficulty in adjusting to the changed circumstances, or who felt they were at some disadvantage compared with previous conditions.

Some of these problems solved themselves with a little time and patience, others were capable of adjustment or explanation, still others in the nature of things will remain, and people must learn to live and work with them. Against this there are the advantages of new accommodation, clean, bright, pleasant and comfortable, the house-system itself towards which so much attention and effort has been directed in recent years, with its possibilities for individual development and responsibility, and the interest of having something to look forward to in the various projects that are proposed. So it is true to say that on balance the new school has been accepted as the necessary and timely replacement of wornout and out-dated provision, and accepted as providing immense interest, challenge and opportunity for the foreseeable future.



The Engineering Workshop.

THE NEW SCHOOL MATERIALISES

CHAPTER 8

### Rathgael at work

RATHGAEL is a school, and as such its purpose is to teach and that in the broadest sense of the word. In this final chapter it is hoped to give some indication of how the school goes about this task in its many aspects.

The work in the classroom block on the junior side is the most obvious of these aspects, for it is essentially the same as the work of any small secondary intermediate school, both as regards curriculum and time-table, with the unusual addition of a school band, and also as regards the qualifications and training of the teaching staff. accommodation, already described elsewhere, provides the most up-to-date facilities. The main educational problems facing the teachers are those of retardation, arising perhaps from a long period of irregular attendance at previous schools, or lack of effort and attention while at school, and it is rare indeed for a newly-committed boy to have attainments in the basic subjects commensurate with his chronological age. Allied to this are the problems arising from the general level of intelligence of the boys.

Here the pattern is of a nucleus of pupils of around average intelligence (I.Qs. of 95-105), and the great majority gradually tailing off down through the 80's, the 70's, and ending with a few in the E.S.N. range. Again it is extremely rare for us to have a boy whose I.Q. is 120 or over. Added to these basic problems there are in many cases those of previous distaste for school in general, and those arising from character and behaviour, here presented in a concentrated form.

In coping with all this, the school very much needs to have some factors in its favour if any headway is to be made, and our organisation aims at providing as many as possible of these factors. Accommodation and facilities in the school block have been mentioned, and they are important, though much good work has been done previously in less attractive conditions. Staff training and qualifications have been mentioned, and here it may be said that some members of staff have recently been to special courses in the remedial teaching of backward pupils, and it is they who cope with the two lowest forms, whose attainment ages may be 6, 7, or 8 years, while their actual ages may be from 10-15 years. A further factor on

the school's side is the fact that classes are small, ranging in size from 12 to 20, and only very exceptionally rising to the latter level. This means that a teacher can give a good deal of individual attention to his pupils' difficulties, thereby increasing their chances of overcoming them, and making up for lost time. Full use is also made of modern aids to teaching, such as filmstrips and films, radio and television broadcasts, and recently a beginning has been made in the use of teaching machines. Lastly, the work of the Reception department in testing, assessing and preparing a diagnostic and advisory report on each boy, and finally placing him the most suitable class, is of very great value in helping both teacher and pupil to get off to a good start.

Important as all these things are, there are other factors which have nothing to do with school or teaching as such, and yet which probably have as much to do with any success achieved as anything previously mentioned. These additional considerations arise out of the training school situation, and the first is purely mechanical, in that the problem of school attendance is almost 100 per cent. With us going to school is the done thingeveryone gets up in the morning and goes to school. A boy will always have his breakfast in time, he will always be dressed and at school in time, and he will not have to decide when halfway there whether to go or not. This fulltime attendance in most cases has a noticeable effect on attainment. The second consideration is more a social one, arising from the fact that the teaching staff are not merely classroom figures here, but have a prominent part in the boys' lives as a whole. The teacher is more of a person to a boy. He may be there when the boy is having his breakfast, or going to bed. He may be involved in the boys' games or hobbies or walks or outings. He may go to church with them, or go swimmming, or fishing—the situations are almost endless. Out of all this there arises-or more correctly, may arise for it is something we cannot command—the sort of personal relationship and community spirit which can do more for both teacher and pupil in their work than new classrooms and teaching aids.

Yet, when all this has been said, the difficulties still remain—too much leeway to be made up in too little time, and the frustration arising from those who do not respond and for whom no-one finds the answer.

Another main section of our teaching function is found in the Senior School, where we are dealing with boys over school-leaving age, either being over that age when committed, or having been transferred from the Junior School on attaining school-leaving age. Here the curriculum is mainly vocational, and includes depart-

ments for woodwork and joinery, metalwork and light engineering, building construction, market gardening and farming, catering and a recently-added painting and decorating department. These departments are staffed by instructors, some of whom had previously been teachers elsewhere, and some of whom by previous experience in industry, and by private study and attendance at courses, are qualified to instruct in their particular In these vocational departments, the trade or skill. educational problems and the methods of dealing with them are basically the same as in the junior school, i.e., careful initial placement, good equipment and facilities for both practical and theoretical work, small groups, continuous steady instruction, etc. Some special difficulties arise here in that some senior boys have been away from school for over a year before committal, and in many cases have forgotten much previously learnt. There are also a proportion as in the junior school, whose

There are also a proportion as in the junior school, whose educational and vocational ability and attainment are below average in any case. There are also those who in the time elapsed since leaving school have developed poor habits and attitudes in regard to work, and many who have become more confirmed in anti-social ways.

To cope with these varying levels of ability, the courses are so arranged that some of the more able boys have the opportunity of sitting for G.C.E. "O" level in their own particular trade or skill, while those at the next level get a good general and practical training in it, possibly leading to an apprenticeship, and those with little ability or inclination may at least learn to do a day's work within their capabilities. Educational classes in the basic subjects are organised to help those preparing for examinations and

also the educationally backward.

The other field in which there is a very definite teaching aspect is that large part of the boys' time when they are not at school or in a work department, but in or around their house-units, or going out from them to some recreational or educational activity. Here it is that the third main group of staff, the housemasters and housemothers, perform their functions. A boy's "home" within the school is his house-unit, and in the house-units the housemasters and housemothers exercise many of the functions of parents, though it is not the intention to replace parents or to alienate boys from parents, but rather to co-operate with them and to attempt to secure their co-operation with us. Not cally are the house-staff responsible for most of the boys' day-to-day material wants, for organising leisure time activities, and for seeing to such matters as savings, correspondence, leave, and the tuck-shop, but the whole essence of the house

system is in providing the small group, "family" situation, where good moral and social influences may be more easily and effectively brought to bear on the boys by a group of staff with special training and experience in this

aspect of the overall work of the school.

Assistance in this is given by the teaching and instructional staff, some members of the office staff, and a number of others. These members of staff are allocated to particular houses, and act with the housemasters and housemothers as "house teams," co-operating with them in the house activities, and helping to cover the duties at times when the housemaster and housemother are off duty. The main task of the house team as a whole is to conduct the social and moral training of the boys in their house, within the framework of the school as a whole, and to do this as far as possible through their own approach and attitude and example as much as by the authority of the school. An important feature of their work is the monthly house-meeting, attended by both boys and houseteam, at which each boy's conduct, work and progress, or lack of it, are reviewed and discussed with him, and marks are awarded or deducted which determine his rate of progress through the grades to eventual licensing level.

While considering this aspect of the work, the part played by religion and religious observances must not be overlooked. Local churches of the three major denominations are involved, the boys attending morning services each Sunday, and the three clergymen concerned acting as chaplains to the school, which includes weekly classes in the junior school, and a short Sunday afternoon service conducted by them in turn. At school level there is morning assembly and a short service each morning. In addition, we have occasional showings of films of a religious nature organised by interested members of the staff, and occasional invited speakers, perhaps with in-

terests or experience of a missionary nature.

The social and moral aspect of the work is undoubtedly the most difficult, however many problems there may be on the educational side. It must be remembered that the school is attempting to change, in a relatively short time, the outlook and attitudes of boys who may have been indulging in anti-social or criminal conduct for a considerable time, and who, in some cases at least, come from backgrounds where such things are more or less accepted.

It must also be remembered that over the years there has been a significant change in the population of the school. For example, in the 20 years from 1903-1922, out of 1,085 boys committed, to the junior school only 154 had been charged with offences, the others being cases coming under the broad heading of Care or Protection, whereas

nowadays over 90 per cent, have been charged with offences. These range from stealing in some form or other (which accounts for over 80 per cent. of intake), to motoring offences, various forms of assault or disorderly behaviour, malicious damage, etc. Only a very small minority nowadays come under the heading of Care or Protection.

It must also be remembered that apart from the reasons for their committal, the school population are a concentration of fairly well-defined types who present many problems in training. Amongst these types may be mentioned the cheerful, irrepressible urchin, always in hot water, the introverted type who mopes about on his own and has no friends, the pugnacious, disagreeable type always at variance with his fellows, the boy with long experience of foster-homes and children's homes, the boy of very low intelligence, the lad who is blantantly dishonest and evasive, the rough corner-boy type, or the occasional lad from a reasonably good background, who can be a serious misfit. Perhaps the most acute problem of all is the small hard core who will not accept or respond to the training school situation at all, and who become persistent absconders, liable to commit further offences and eventually pass on to Borstal, or, if too young, to the special unit at Lisnevin. These closed facilities have had to be provided because of the acuteness of this particular problem, though it must be emphasised that it related only to a very small proportion of the boys in the school at any time.

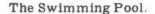
Finally, what of the boy who has progressed sufficiently to be considered for licence, having been in the school for perhaps eighteen months. He must be launched again into the community with every possible backing that can be given to ensure a reasonable chance of success. If he is still of school age, arrangements must be made with the principal of a suitable school to accept him, and all relevant information passed on. If he is of employable age, employment must be found. If he has no home or the home is unsuitable, lodgings or placement in a hostel must be arranged. And when all this has been done, the school must keep in touch throughout the period of licence, and subsequent period or supervision. arrangements are the province of the welfare and aftercare officer, and it will be recognised that with some boys going out on licence each year, it is somewhat more than a full-time job, involving a great deal of travelling, of correspondence and reporting, of experience and tact in dealing with complicated and unstable family situations,

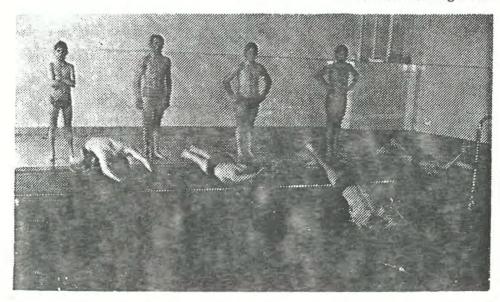
and, inevitably, the frustration and disappointment of those who do not continue to do well.

This then, is the picture of Rathgael school in its day-today work. Needless to say, every detail cannot be filled in within the compass of this booklet, and it may also be felt that perhaps there has been over-emphasis on the problems, but surely these are the very essence of the work and the basic reason for the school's existence. However, it must also be stated that there is a reverse side of the picture—the side of success and satisfaction, in many varying degrees. For it is true that there is success – at first perhaps in very obvious things, like turning a scruffy and careless lad into a reasonably clean and tidy one, or in effecting some improvement in his manners. There is a large measure of success in the educational field, and in the vocational training field. And there is the most important success of all in the lads who, having passed through the school, go out into the community and

headlines, and whose existence tends to be forgotten. The combined schools find themselves now at the official beginning of a new era in their history with a new name, new premises, and new and challenging prospects. It is now our task to learn to use the new facilities to the greatest advantage, and not to allow ourselves to be dismayed by any difficulties inherent to our changed circumstances. That we should be encouraged to do this, while not despising all that has gone before, or forgetting our predecessors who laboured towards the same basic ends in much less pleasant conditions, is the aim of this booklet.

do well within their capabilities, and who do not make the





RATHGAEL AT WORK



Dining-room in a House Unit.

#### A Building Group.



THE ROOTS OF RATHGAEL

they had hoped for in many respects and that the problems were likely to get worse rather than better, and, with the comparative success of the junior institution at Fox Lodge in mind, it was eventually decided to abandon the ship and to transfer the boys to the school at Musgrave Park. A large new wing had to be added for the purpose, and the certified number increased from 100 to 350. So, on 13th March, 1899, the "Grampian" was closed and the boys transferred to Balmoral Industrial School, thus bringing to an end an experimental effort which, perhaps by its very nature, was destined to be short-lived and only partly successful, but with whose basic aims and intentions we are bound to sympathise, for they are still very largely our own.

The "Grampian" herself was towed to Woolwich, breaking loose from her tug on the way in a gale, and being in some danger of being lost with all on board. Even today, however, faint echoes of those far-off days still linger, in that our morning and afternoon breaks are spoken of as "stand-easy," boys who waited at table until recently were known as "berth-boys," and souvenirs of the "Grampian" still exist in our possession—a photograph, now much faded and battered, the ship's bell, and a Bible presented to the ship in October, 1885, by Alfred M. Munster, the Honorary Secretary to the Committee.

has been such a marked feature of the mid-twentieth century.

Almost immediately a deputation was sent by the Children Act Committee to visit schools in Great Britain, and to enquire into conditions there. This deputation on its return made three recommendations (1) That teachers' salaries in Balmoral should be made the same as in other schools, (2) That a gym. instructor and after-care officer be appointed, (3) That steps should be taken to procure the same grants from the Treasury as applied in England.

In the following year the school's work was disrupted for a time, as were most things in Ireland at that time, by the effects of the civil disturbances following on the partition of Ireland. Under the Restoration of Order in Ireland Act of 1921, the military authorities requisitioned the school premises for the purposes of billeting a regiment there, and the school was forced to seek other quarters. These were eventually found in the Belfast Workhouse, where the school carried on under difficulties until December, 1922. In the meantime, suggestions had been made by the Government for other uses for the premises, but the Committee resisted these and in due course the school returned to carry on at Balmoral.

It is interesting to note that in 1925 there was a suggestion that the school might be placed under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education (as has been in the case in Scotland for a considerable time now), but this was turned down by the Ministry of Home Affairs on the grounds that as long as there was any penal aspect to the school it must remain their affair. By 1929, the school was entering on a somewhat unsettled and rather unhappy period. To begin with, several senior members of staff either died, or retired somewhat prematurely for health reasons, and the school as a whole felt the loss of their experience. Due to gradually falling numbers, some of these members of staff were not replaced, and during the thirties there were many changes in staff, particularly teaching staff, this lack of continuity and experience having a detrimental effect on the school as a whole. In 1934, some alterations and improvements were recommeded. For example, a library was to be provided, the shoemaking department was to be closed and turned into a games' room, hot water was to be laid on to the boys' washrooms, the wearing of the sailor-type uniform was to be discontinued, and the appointment of several extra members of staff recommended. In the same year, it was



#### RATHGAEL

#### HISTORY AND LOCATION

The history of Rathgael can be traced back to 1872 to the days of Reformatory School Ships and Industrial School Ship which had been set up by Societies and Committees consisting of learnered gentry. A training ship known as "Gibraltar" which was used from 1872-1899 was the basis for what eventually evolved to the present Rathgael Centre.

#### Care Children

This ship was certified as an Industrial School under the Industrial Schools Act on 15 June 1877 and was located in Belfast Lough. By 1879 it had provided facilities for over 300 boys who were considered to be in need of care.

However by the early 1880's reports from the ship, despite the fact that they showed a considerable measure of success, did suggest that the rigorous hardworking life with the emphasis on sea going training did not suit the younger boys some of whom were of a tender age, therefore a search by the Committee was made to acquire the provision of an institution to cater for younger boys.

On 10 January 1884, premises near Ormeau Park on the Ravenhill Road known as Fox Lodge was granted a certificate to accommodate sixty boys. By 1888 the numbers in the school had risen to 102 boys and had reached a peak of 133 boys in early 1897. With the ever increasing numbers of boys sent to Fox Lodge, space became a problem with the result that alternative premises were required. In September 1897 a 22 acre site situated on the edge of Musgrave Park at Balmoral was acquired, approved and certified and on 30 November 1897 Fox Lodge was closed and the boys transferred to the new premises.

Eventually the numbers on board the ship had declined to such a degree that for financial reasons it had been decided to abandon the ship and transfer the boys to the new school in Balmoral. On 13



March 1899 the ship was closed and the boys transferred to Balmoral Industrial School where two separate sections were set up a Junior School and Senior School. From that time until the passing of the Children Act in 1908 the numbers of children increased in Balmoral to a total of 442.

Following the implementation of the Children Act there was a growing tendency to use Industrial Schools as a last resort, that resulted in a fall in the numbers sent to Balmoral and by 1919, the Committee were forced to consider giving up their certificate. On 30 June 1920 the school had been taken over by the Belfast Corporation. This in fact ended the Voluntary Sector Management of the school.

In September 1939 the outbreak of war presented the school with difficulties and upheavals. The premises at Balmoral were required as a military hospital and the school moved on 12 October 1940 to premises known as Shamrock Lodge on the Ballysillan Road, Belfast.

#### Justice Children

In 1860 a voluntary body of what was described in history as public-spirited citizen set up an establishment known as the "Malone Reformatory" following the Reformatory Schools Acts of 1854 in England and of 1856 in Ireland. By the end of 1925 it had become accepted that the Ministry of Home Affairs had the main responsibility for children who had committed offences and a bill was prepared to provide for the transfer of Malone Reformatory to the control of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the setting up of a Borstal Institution for Northern Ireland.

That Bill became the Malone Training Schools Act of 1926 and the premises at Malone became known as a Borstal Institution and Reformatory. That lasted up to the passing of the Children and Young Persons Act in 1950 when a separate Borstal Institution was set up at Woburn House in Millisle, Co Down.



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CHAPTER 4

## Origin and history of the senior school, 1860 — 1926

THE Senior section of the present school originated as the Malone Reformatory, established in 1860 by a voluntary body of public-spirited citizens, following the Reformatory Schools' Acts of 1854 in England, and of 1858 in Ireland. The President of the Society was the Marquis of Donegall, the eight Vice-Presidents included the Lord Bishop of Down, Conor and Dromore, the Earl of Antrim, Viscount Massereene and Ferrard, and Sir E. C. McNaughton, whilst among the members of Committee were to be found well-known local names such as Ewart, Dunville, Lanyon and Kinahan.

The original building has remained, with additions and alterations, to the present day, and it is of interest to note that the architects involved were the firm of Lanyon & Lynn, the name of Charles Lanyon being associated with many public buildings of note in Belfast. The interior arrangements of the buildings followed very closely those of a building at Red Hill, in Surrey, where the Royal Philanthropic Society had established, in the 18th century, the first institution of its kind in the United Kingdom. The cost of the original building at Malone was £1,000.

At first the training was mainly agricultural and horticultural, the first staff appointments being a land-steward and an assistant teacher, who took charge in the Governor's absence. As well as secular and vocational instruction, the moral and spiritual side of the boys' training was greatly emphasised, and in the first year we read of both Presbyterian and Church of Ireland chaplains being appointed.

Early annual reports of the institution contain some facts which make interesting contrasts with present-day conditions and practices, e.g. the weekly cost of food per boy was approximately  $2/6\frac{1}{2}$ d: in summer the boys rose at 5.30 a.m., and their hours of work on the farm were from 6-8 a.m., from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., and from 2-5 p.m. School took place in the evenings from 6.30-8.30 p.m. In winter the making of sacks and baskets indoors took the place of part of the field work.



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Within the first five years some expansion took place, both of accommodation in the form of additional schoolroom and dormitory space, and of vocational training when tailoring and shoe-making departments were opened. The area under cultivation was also increased by renting adjoining land.

There is record of a visit to Malone in 1867 by Mary Carpenter, a lady who had been one of the pioneers in reformatory work in England, and who was particularly associated with the beginnings of Kingswood School in Bristol. She expressed herself as "well-pleased with what she saw in Malone."

From 1868 till 1883, the picture appears to be one of piecemeal and intermittent expansion, in numbers and accommodation, because of the financial limitations imposed on the committee. This led to deficiency in such items as washrooms and toilet facilities and eventually in workshops, numbers at this time being over 90. All this was commented upon by a Royal Commission on Reformatories and Industrial Schools in Ireland in 1883.

However, an Act of 1881 had made it possible for the committee to obtain certain loans from public funds, if guaranteed by a Grand Jury, and between 1883-85 funds thus provided enabled further development to take place, bringing the building into its final form of a hollow rectangle, with many internal additions and improvements in amenities, and including the construction of a Governor's house.

The school at this juncture appeared to be in a very favourable position, in regard to accommodation, facilities for training, and finance, but very soon an unforeseen difficulty arose. This was due to a falling-off in numbers, which decreased by 52 in the five years from 1885-89. This in turn meant serious financial trouble, because of the decrease in capitation grants, and the shortage of productive workers in the industrial departments. The main reason for this falling-off in committals to the Reformatory appears to have been the growth of the Industrial Schools, already dealt with in another chapter. Boys could be committed to an Industrial School directly by a court, whereas, as the law then stood, boys had to be committed to prison for a minimum of fourteen days before committal to a Reformatory. It became obvious that magistrates, where possible, were committing boys to Industrial Schools rather than to the Reformatory, in order to avoid this initial period in prison. Pressure

from the Malone committee and other interested parties eventually succeeded in having the initial period in prison made optional, at the magistrate's discretion, and from then on there was a gradual increase in numbers, until in 1900 they stood at 95. By that date, the farm and industrial departments were making a profit, and a new carpetbeating department had been opened.

In 1904, a swimming pool was provided, this being the last major development under the old committee. The pool continued to be a source of much pleasure and of useful instruction to the many boys who passed through the school during the next 64 years. During the years 1900-20 the number in the school remained over 100, rising to 130 in 1915, and in almost every respect these 20 years were the most successful and stable period the institution had ever enjoyed up to that time.

In the next 5 or 6 years, however, the position deteriorated seriously, again due to falling numbers. This was partly due to a reluctance on the part of magistrates to commit boys to the Reformatory, thereby increasing charges on the rates, which had risen steeply during and after the Great War, and partly because of the effect of the Probation of Offenders Act, which appears to have been used deliberately and excessively as a means of keeping the number of committals down.

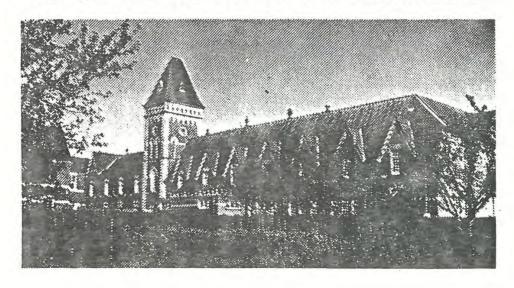
Financial difficulty was again encountered, as the partial support of the Government and the local authorities no longer closed the gap between production and expenditure. By 1924, the number of boys in the school had fallen to 38, and breaking-point had been reached, not only in the financial sense, but from the standpoint of the boys' education, for such considerations were being neglected in an effort to keep up production. The result was that the Committee, in May, 1924, gave notice to the Ministry that they would be forced to give up their certificate and to close the school from 1st December of that year. An offer of increased Government grant was judged to be insufficient and notice was duly published in the Belfast Gazette of the intention to close the school.

There followed, over the next year or so, a series of discussions and proposals, in which the School Committee, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Belfast Corporation were all involved. Amongst these proposals were (a) Increased grants from local authorities, (b) a complete

take-over of Malone by the Belfast Corporation, similar to that which had already taken place in 1920 in the case of the junior school at Musgrave Park, (c) the closing of Malone and the transfer of the boys to schools in Great Britain (Fylde Farm School, near Blackpool, and the Reformatory at Stranraer were amongst those thought of), (d) the transfer of the boys to a part of the premises at Musgrave Park.

None of these proposals was acceptable to all the parties concerned and the discussions dragged on, temporary financial arrangements having been made in the meantime, whereby the Government and the local authorities shared the losses incurred at Malone. By degrees it came to be accepted that the Ministry of Home Affairs had the main responsibility in the matter and by the end of 1925 Cabinet authority was given for the preparation of a Bill to provide for the transfer of Malone to the control of the Ministry of Home Affairs, and the setting up of a Borstal Institution for Northern Ireland, within the same premises. This Bill became the Malone Training School Act of 1926, receiving the Royal Assent on 30th November of that year, and so ensuring the continuance of the institution, albeit in a new form, as a combined Borstal Institution and Reformatory. This new phase in Malone's history was to last for the next 30 years, up to 1956.





ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF SENIOR SCHOOL



#### Ministry of Home Affairs take over

In 1956 an Act of Parliament (The Malone and Whiteabbey Training School Act) was passed, the effect of which was the amalgamation of the Balmoral and Malone establishments and placed them under a Board of Management which was appointed by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

That new Board began its task of running three separate entities – a provision for girls at Whiteabbey, The Balmoral Training School at Ballysillan and the Malone Training School at Lislea Drive.

On 12 December 1958 the Ballysillan premises closed and the children transferred to Lislea Drive. However the Board of Management had agreed to search for an entirely new site and build a completely new school. In 1959 the Board purchased the eighty six acre site at Rathgael Road, Bangor. On 25 January 1968, the Malone Training School ceased to be used and the boys transferred to the new premises at Rathgael.

In March 1986 the premises for girls at Whiteabbey closed and the girls were transferred to Rathgael.

On 4 November 1996, the introduction of the Children (NI) Order 1995 removed the responsibility from the Secretary of State of those children in need of care, thereafter those children became the responsibility of the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS), who in turn delegated the matter to the Area Boards and Trusts. In the case of the children at Rathgael the "care" facilities were taken over by the then North Down and Ards Trust (now the Ulster Hospitals Trusts) and they continue to provide facilities on site for "care" children under the name of "Lakewood". The "justice" children remained the responsibility of the NIO.

On 1 February 1999, the Criminal Justice Children (NI) Order became effective, thereafter that part of the former Training Schools which provided facilities for offenders were renamed as

were new departments, while the Garden now had a qualified instructor. All this meant that a wide choice of interesting and vocationally worthwhile training could be offered to the senior boys, and, in due course, the kitchen was also raised to the status of an instructional department.

Parallel with these educational developments, there was also change and growth in the field of reception of new boys, and in the handling of boys on remand, and those committed for a month under Section 56 of the Children and Young Persons' Act. Out of the simple basic testing of new boys for intelligence and attainment begun in Ballysillan days, a more detailed and comprehensive system of testing, observation and diagnosis was evolved, including the use of individual tests as well as group tests. and the compiling of a report and suggestions for the use of the class teacher or instructor to whom the boys would be going. In addition, boys on remand were tested and observed in the special class organised for them, and reports prepared for their re-appearance in court, while reports were also prepared on boys committed for a month and going out to probation afterwards.

In view of the fact that the new school was to be on a house-unit basis, it was also necessary to recruit more Housemasters, and this was carried out in stages over five or six years. After an initial period of experience in the school, almost all of these new Housemasters attended and successfully completed one or other of the Home Office Training Courses in Residential Care, at Durham University, Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham or the North-Western Polytechnic in London. This programme of recruitment and training was completed in mid-1967.

A further development which took place in these years at Lislea Drive was the introduction of psychiatric help and oversight for those boys who appeared to be in need of it. After an experimental period, this service eventually took the form of regular weekly visits by a psychiatrist and his assistant, either to see boys who had been referred to them on admission, or those whom they were treating on a continuing basis.

Efforts were also made to improve and extend the general educational and recreational sides of our training programme in the widest sense. On the sports' side, the school football team regularly competed in the Intermediate Schools' League, on one occasion reaching the Cup Final only to be beaten in a replay, and the senior

Boys' team enjoyed a series of friendly matches on Saturday mornings. Other games such as Badminton and Basketball were introduced mainly as evening activities.

The programme of evening activities was extended as much as possible and eventually included such longstanding items as the Scout Troop, gymnastics, the choir, the school band, and a variety of crafts and hobbies, and also such new items as pottery, a Life-Saving class, a Boys' Club, as well as the various studies and pursuits arising out of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, in which the school participated from 1961. With the added facility of a swimming pool, emphasis on learning to swim became part of the normal P.E. syllabus, competitive swimming also developed, various other schools being invited to swim against our boys, and a team entry for the Secondary Schools' Gala became an annual event, in which we have had considerable success. In the Life-Saving Class, a group of volunteers, both junior and senior, worked each year for the Royal Life-Saving Society's various examinations, starting with the certificates, and in almost all cases gaining their Bronze Medallion, too. A few of the more expert performers went on to Bronze Cross standard and one Senior boy to the Award of Merit.

So, between 1958 and 1968, an almost continuous programme of recruitment and development was in progress, and apart from the intrinsic value of its various components, may be regarded as a "working-up" period with the move to the new school constantly in view, and it was only because of these years of work and preparation that the school was enabled to approach the proposed change with at least a moderate degree of confidence.





- 4. I worked closely with Mr. Whyte throughout our years at Rathgael. We started our careers there at about the same time, Mr. Whyte as a Teacher and myself as an Assistant House Master. We considered ourselves to be very much part of a new generation of staff being recruited into Rathgael aimed at developing new approaches and creating a different culture within the Training School sector. I reported directly to Mr. Whyte when he was Director of Rathgael before taking over that role on his retirement.
- 5. I have also read the statements submitted by the Applicants to the Inquiry in relation to Rathgael and I attended the Inquiry when HIA172 gave oral evidence on 5 November 2015.

#### **Rathgael Training School**

- **6.** Mr Whyte has provided background information in relation to Rathgael in paragraphs 4 17 of his statement. I wish to add the following.
- 7. I believe that the public perception was that Training Schools were just one step removed from Borstal. Locally, Rathgael was referred to as the 'bad boy's home'. That perception is not actually what Rathgael was about in practice.
- 8. The history of these institutions was reformatory in nature. The move from Malone in 1968 to a unit based regime in a rural setting was a signal that major change was imminent. Rathgael in those early days could have been viewed as a school with accommodation although every attempt had been made to design a purpose built residential centre with small self-contained residential units, education and vocational training blocks that were well appointed and equipped compared to the former training schools. This move represented a change in approach from a reformatory style to a more progressive approach with new systems, processes and staff.
- **9.** A summary<sup>3</sup> of the changes and challenges experienced by Rathgael over the years illustrates the transition from Training School to a Centre for children and

 $<sup>^3</sup>$  Exhibit 2 - Rathgael Centre for Children and Young People: Absconding Behaviours – D Curran, APRU – 1991, paras 4.2 - 4.5.

were fully funded by the NIO. For example, HIA 172 was one of the few young people who benefitted from being sent to specialist units in England. We recognised that this was an extreme measure and the decision to move children from Northern Ireland was not taken lightly.

#### The Ethos and Culture of the School

16. My experience of Rathgael was a child-centred establishment long before "Child Centred Practice" was recognized as a desirable approach in working with children and young people. Staff were generally very conscious of the background and history of the individual young person and how vulnerable they were. Many young people had multiple placements prior to their admission to Rathgael having been admitted following a further breakdown in their personal life. It would be true to say that no child would have willingly chosen to come to Rathgael although many knew that there was no other option. It wasn't until the 1980s that specific social work practice with children and young people was recognized as a specialism. The system finally recognised that children and young people were not 'problem children but children with problems'. The separation of care and justice and a child-centred approach we had been canvassing for over a number of years came only became a reality in 2000 with the establishment of the Juvenile Justice Board Custodial Development Services.

#### Services provided at Rathgael

- 17. I also note the description of the services provided at Rathgael to young people as set out in paragraphs 18 39 of Mr. Campbell's statement. I wish to add the following. A small percentage of staff felt that their only approach, especially with the senior boys, was to be "macho"; this resulted in a more regimented approach, with an emphasis on physical activity and a highly competitive regime. Over time this was replaced by a more relational approach to working with the young people, and the introduction of marks and the setting of short term goals.
- **18.** Paragraphs 27 31 of Mr Whyte's statement covers the support structure available to the young people at Rathgael. Further to this, Chaplains were very

separation of care and justice children as recommended in the Black Report in 1979<sup>4</sup> and fully implemented through the Children's Order (NI) 1995<sup>5</sup>.

- 13. On reflection, a large proportion of young people should never have been sent to a Training School. To create a regime to adequately manage care, school refusers and juvenile offenders was unrealistic. Each group demanded a unique set of skills and approaches. Other jurisdictions within the UK had recognised this issue some years previously<sup>6</sup> and had provided alternative care arrangements for young people depending on their needs. As a result of the relatively smaller number of complex cases in Northern Ireland, it was difficult and expensive to create a series of specialised and specific units of the type that were available in the other jurisdictions. I believe the Training Schools were the perceived solution, although the specialised units in England were available young people in Northern Ireland as discussed in paragraph 15 below.
- 14. The 1969 legislation, although it didn't tamper with the criminal age of responsibility, did ensure that all children aged 14 years and under, would be dealt with in a Care Court. Additionally, Scotland brought all children to the Children's Panel, a non-court environment of professionals and significant people in the young person's life. I am of the opinion that Rathgael in particular endeavoured to learn from the developments within Community Homes. For example, I recall that staff were encouraged to go to them on placement during their training. Following the Children and Young Persons Act 1969, Approved Schools in England and Wales were replaced by Community Homes, with responsibility devolved to local councils.
- 15. These alternative care arrangements in England, such as David Lewis Centre (a centre for those with epilepsy), Cotswold, Pepper Harrow and the Ayecliff Centre in Darlington were available to those young people in Northern Ireland who had been assessed as requiring specialist treatment. These placements

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> SPT-14942 - 15088

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Exhibit 3 - The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995

<sup>(</sup>http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1995/755/contents/made)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Exhibit 4 - Children and Young Persons Act (England and Wales ) 1969

<sup>(</sup>http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1969/54)

Rathgael was overcrowded with about 210 boys being accommodated; this meant that bunks had to be set up in some recreation rooms. The numbers that were accommodated varied according to referrals from other agencies over the years.

6. The official aim of the school<sup>5</sup> was

'to restore the child or young person to society better equipped mentally and emotionally to cope with the environment from which he came and to accustom him to the habit of work. It is a process of readjustment and social re-education, based on an understanding of the personality, history, abilities and aptitudes of each boy or girl and a knowledge of the family situation, and is promoted by

- a) a stable environment which enables remedial influences to the brought to bear and progressive training to the be given;
- b) contact with the home; and
- c) help and supervision after the boy or girl leaves the school.
- 7. It must be acknowledged that Rathgael, along with the other Training Schools, accommodated the most difficult, damaged, disturbed and, in some cases, delinquent, children in Northern Ireland.
- 8. Rathgael catered almost exclusively for protestant boys and later girls when Whiteabbey closed in 1985. In addition, Rathgael had access to Runkerry House, an outdoor activities centre that provided a range of facilities to the young people and was under the management of Rathgael and Whiteabbey.
- 9. The school consisted of four autonomous sections consisting of 11 units: the Reception Unit; the Junior School; the Senior School; and an Intensive Care Unit. Each Unit had an 8, 6, 4 and 2 X 2 Bed Dorms Common Room, Dining Room, Model Room, Shower, Toilet and Office. All units were served by common facilities, including:
  - administration block,
  - Medical Centre (Sick Bay), with full Dental Room.
  - · full School facility with classrooms,
  - Assembly Hall, referred to as the "Chapel"

 $<sup>^4</sup>$  SPT-100587 - Section 83, Children and Young Person's Act (NI) 1968

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Exhibit 1 – A Social Psychological Evaluation of a Community Service Programme for Young Offenders in a Northern Ireland Training School, thesis presented for the degree of Master of Social Science, D. Campbell Whyte, August 1981, pages 30-31

### Rathgael and Whiteabbey Schools Management Board

Telephone Bangor (0247) 454276

May 1985

RATHGAEL SCHOOL 169 RATHGAEL ROAD BANGOR Co. Down, BT19 1TA

#### AMALGAMATION OF RATHGAEL AND WHITEABBEY SCHOOLS

In response to the 'Report of the Children and Young Persons Review Group' (The 'Black' Report), the Training Schools, with the approval of the Secretary of State, have made a considerable number of positive moves towards rationalisation and the implementation of a number of the suggestions put forward in that report.

In the case of Rathgael and Whiteabbey, this will involve:-

- (i) The amalgamation of both schools on the extensive site at Rathgael. Whiteabbey Girls' School will close on 2 June 1985 and all girls will be transferred on 3 June 1985 to the Rathgael site, where an extensive renovation and refurbishing programme has been carried out on three House Units (in what was previously the Senior School section of Rathgael) in preparation for this move.
- (ii) The separation of "Care" and "Justice" cases into two separate and distinct centres on the one site, each with its own staff and hierarchy.
- (iii) A comprehensive educational facility (including vocational training) to service the two sections.
- (iv) Approval for a change of name, with each of the geographically separated sections being individually named:-
  - (a) Donard (Youth Treatment for boy offenders);
  - (b) Slemish (Care for boys and girls).

The campus will be under the overall control of the Director, Mr. T. Baxter, who will have three Deputy Directors, each responsible for specific areas follows:-

- (i) Deputy Director (Care) Miss F. Robinson
- (ii) Deputy Director (Youth Treatment) Mr. C. Whyte
- (iii) Deputy Director (Education) Mr. J. Rainey

The 'Outdoor Pursuits Centre' at Runkerry, under Mr. W. Bustard, will also continue under the Board's management, to provide an important complementary service to the new Centre, to other Centres (St. Patrick's, St. Joseph's and Lisnevin) and to a variety of other agencies.

Rathgael during the transition period. Unfortunately, a fire in March 1985 accelerated this process thus preventing us following our agreed transition strategy. As a result girls and staff were moved on mass from Whiteabbey to Rathgael shortly after. This resulted in a nervousness that translated into resentment amongst some Rathgael and Whiteabbey staff. It also meant that we were not as well prepared for taking in girls as we had hoped to be. However, Whiteabbey staff transferred to Rathgael at the same time as the girls so there was no deficit of knowledge, skills or experience. Over time, however, any issues that did exist were resolved as staff and girls settled and the male young people adjusted to the changes the girls brought with them.

- **32.** Facilities specific to the requirements of girls, such as mother and baby support, were transferred form Whiteabbey and subsequently developed by the Eastside Project. Existing initiatives, such as the Community Services Programme, were extended to include the girls.
- **33.** Although the system had to respond to a premature decamping form Whiteabbey because of the fire, I am of the opinion that the girls were well taken care of.

#### Absconding

- 34. This is discussed in paragraphs 52 55 of Mr. Whyte's statement. This was and continues to be a complex issue. Often absconding was related to a child's response to routine and mundane matters, some of which may have been external to Rathgael, e.g. a demand to see a family member in hospital not being immediately met, withdrawal of weekend home leave as a result of bad behaviour, or exclusion from a particular event. At the same time I acknowledge that some residents were running away because of personally significant events that took place outside or inside the Training School environment, e.g. being bullied by other residents and perceived mistreatment.
- **35.** The issue of absconding from Rathgael was taken seriously. APRU was commissioned to carry out a review in 1991<sup>12</sup>. The resulting report was critical

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Exhibit 6 - 1991 APRU report on absconding at Rathgael

- 37. There were also Night Supervisors. These were unqualified staff who were responsible for keeping an eye on the young people at night and, therefore, had to stay awake all night. They would produce a report each morning for the day staff coming in. I recall one Night Supervisor being disciplined because he had fallen asleep whilst in duty. A senior member of staff was also on duty on site until 22:30 every evening. As Director, I would also have been contactable out of hours.
- 38. There were staff houses situated on campus but separate from the young people. I chose not to take one as I was keen to keep my personal life separate from work.

#### Home leave

39. The amount of home leave a young person received and the date of their ultimate release depended largely on progress in Rathgael. Progress in terms of education and response to education was continually monitored and recorded by a system of marks and grades.

#### Transfer of Girls from Whiteabbey<sup>18</sup>

- 40. A fire had been started in Whiteabbey Training School in 1985 by some of the residents and it was fortunate that no one was seriously injured or killed. This triggered the closure of the Training School with Rathgael and Whiteabbey being amalgamated.
- 41. I had pressed for a phasing out of Whiteabbey with girls being allowed to leave from there when appropriate and new residents being sent to Rathgael so that they had no previous experience of Whiteabbey. However, the decision was made by the Rathgael/Whiteabbey Joint Management Board and sanctioned by the NIO to immediately close Whiteabbey and transfer the girls to Rathgael. This resulted in a culture change for the girls, boys and staff alike that was initially difficult to manage.
- 42. There was limited time to prepare for the arrival of the girls and they did not want to be there. The girls were initially put together in one unit but this proved to be a mistake and resulted in some very disruptive and challenging behaviour they probably felt that they had been forced to go there and may well have been scared. Everyone had to adjust, which took a long time and it is my opinion that it should have been planned better.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> RGL-22199 – RGL-22201

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# INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 – TO – 1995 MODULE 7 TRAINING SCHOOLS AND YOUTH JUSTICE INSTITUTIONS

#### STATEMENT BY CAMPBELL WHYTE

#### **GENERAL**

#### Personal background

My career at Rathgael is summarised below:

1973 – 1974: Assistant Teacher – Senior School
1974 – 1978: Senior Assistant – Senior School
1978 – 1982: 1st Deputy Headmaster – Senior School
1982 – 1985: Headmaster – Junior School
1985 – 1989: Senior Deputy Director
1989 – 1996: Director of Rathgael

- 2. I qualified as a teacher from Stranmillis College in 1969. I graduated from the Open University with a Social Sciences Bachelor of Arts in 1974.
- 3. In 1981, I graduated with a Masters of Social Science from the Queen's University of Belfast, the title of which was "A Social Psychological Evaluation of a Community Service Programme for Young Offenders in a Northern Ireland Training School".
- 3. I became a qualified Psychotherapist after retiring.

#### Rathgael background<sup>1 2</sup>

- 4. Rathgael was one of five training schools in Northern Ireland. It opened as a regional residential Training School in 1968 to replace the former Malone School in Belfast and operated as such until its closure in 1998 during which time in the region of 8-9k children had passed through Rathgael. The school, which was purpose built on a House Unit basis, was situated on an 86 acre site on the outskirts of Bangor, 13 miles from Belfast.
- 5. Initially it was designed to provide a total of 203 places for boys between the ages of 10 and 16 years on admission who had been sent by the juvenile courts on a remand basis or under a Training School Order<sup>3 4</sup>. When I started

<sup>2</sup> RGL-23629 – RGL-23630

<sup>3</sup> SPT-80063 – SPT-80073

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> RGL-22199 – RGL-22201

- Rathgael dealt with some of the most disturbed children in Northern Ireland<sup>6 7</sup>
   Over time the emphasis was increasingly on community treatment. There was very little violence in Rathgael and none against staff until the last few years when an increase in incidents could be seen.
- 16. When I arrived in Rathgael in 1973, all house master and house mother teams were husbands and wives who lived adjacent to the residents. There were no female staff other than domestic, kitchen and nursing.
- 17. There is no doubt that there was a difficulty in getting the balance right between care and control. This was a professional challenge that evolved as Rathgael developed from being a Reform School to a more caring and educating establishment. All staff were encouraged to follow this goal and I had aspirations for the school to become a Centre of Excellence in the treatment of children and young people.

#### Services provided by Rathgael

18. Rathgael provided a range of services to the children as summarised below.

#### Education<sup>9</sup>

- 19. Education was headed by a Deputy Director, Head of Education assisted by two deputies and teachers. The range of classroom education in the Junior School was similar in most aspects to the curriculum of junior intermediate schools in the community. The curriculum was designed in response to the needs of the young children and covered subjects including literacy, mathematics, geography, history and physical education. Timetables were geared around what was available in mainstream schools as best as possible and the Teachers Union was represented to ensure teachers were aware of what was going on in mainstream schools.
- 20. The children in the Senior School were of school age and older so both classroom and trade training was provided. Classroom education was optional for young people over school age. The trade departments provided training in building, metalwork, motor engineering, painting, brick laying, decorating, joinery, catering and horticulture to both boys and girls. City and Guilds was introduced in the 1980s so that the young people could receive training and skills and an opportunity to work towards qualifications from a recognised body.

<sup>7</sup> Exhibit 2 - A Social Psychological Evaluation of a Community Service Programme for Young Offenders in a Northern Ireland Training School, thesis presented for the degree of Master of Social Science, D. Campbell Whyte, August 1981, p32

<sup>9</sup> RGL2388 – RGL23890

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup>RGL-24845

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> RGL-27433

CHAPTER 7

### The new school materialises

ONCE the decision to build afresh had been taken, in 1958, the Board of Managemant had to begin a search for a site, and this in itself was not an easy task, for sites of a suitable size and location do not come on the market every day. The site had to be somewhere reasonably near Belfast, where most of the school's intake come from, both from the point of view of access by parents and boys going on leave, and for the convenience of courts and police escorts. The Board, in fact, considered some five or six possible sites, before finally deciding on the one at Rathgael. This site of some eighty-six acres was eventually purchased in 1959.

The decision to build the new school on a house-unit basis was in keeping with existing trends in the Approved School service in Great Britain and representatives of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Management Board had made visits to a number of schools there to familiarise themselves with this new approach before this decision was made. There had also to be a good deal of thought given to assessing the probable future population of the school before deciding on the general lay-out and the number of house-units that would be necessary.

Once these basic concepts had been arrived at, the firm of Architects Associated, of Belfast, were commissioned to prepare sketch plans, in April, 1959. From this initial stage there arose a lengthy series of discussions, at Management Board level, at Ministry level, and, it is pleasing to note, at staff level, so that at various stages, as far as was possible within the general framework, those who would be doing the job had some say in the accommodation and facilities by which it would be done.

Needless to say, there were many problems and queries and suggested revisions and new ideas arising during this phase, and one at least of these deserves special mention, and a short digression on this topic may be permissible here, as this was an idea entirely new to Training Schools in Northern Ireland.

In Great Britain, boys committed to an approved school go from the Court to a Classifying School, where a procedure of attainment and intelligence testing is carried out, together with the collection of relevant information

THE ROOTS OF RATHGAEL

young people that was adopted by the Management Board and endorsed by the Secretary of State.

#### Placement of Young People in Training Schools

- 10. The majority of young people were admitted to Rathgael as a result of difficulties experienced in the Care and Education systems. Generally, they were admitted on a short-term, interim basis to the Training School as a result of a crisis in their personal or family life, or committed by the Juvenile Court because no alternative placement was available. Some were admitted by reason of their offending behaviour. The Children and Young Person's Act (NI) 1968 made it difficult to be flexible and innovative, in relation to length of placement and a planned return to their community. An indeterminate order was issued that resulted in uncertainty and was often added to by subsequent Training School Orders as a result of further offences effectively extending their period of detention and delaying their release on license to the community. I recollect many young people reaching their peak within the first year of their detention and thereafter regressing as a result of the uncertainty of future placements.
- 11. Rathgael was a regional resource and as such often dislocated young people form their community and family. Being admitted from the four health and Social Services Boards and five Education and Library Board areas, although there was financial assistance available it was difficult for families outside the greater Belfast area to visit Rathgael on a regular basis. This also meant that young people going on home lave had to travel long distances on their own. At no time in the Centre's history was there a direct bus service to the Rathgael Road.
- 12. My impression was that there was often reluctance on behalf of the Magistrate to commit young people to Training Schools but they were afforded no other option. In real terms, the Training School was the only option. Few specialized units were being developed in Northern Ireland and child and adolescent psychiatry was totally inadequate. The substantive response to this was the

CHAPTER 7

### The new school materialises

ONCE the decision to build afresh had been taken, in 1958, the Board of Managemant had to begin a search for a site, and this in itself was not an easy task, for sites of a suitable size and location do not come on the market every day. The site had to be somewhere reasonably near Belfast, where most of the school's intake come from, both from the point of view of access by parents and boys going on leave, and for the convenience of courts and police escorts. The Board, in fact, considered some five or six possible sites, before finally deciding on the one at Rathgael. This site of some eighty-six acres was eventually purchased in 1959.

The decision to build the new school on a house-unit basis was in keeping with existing trends in the Approved School service in Great Britain and representatives of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Management Board had made visits to a number of schools there to familiarise themselves with this new approach before this decision was made. There had also to be a good deal of thought given to assessing the probable future population of the school before deciding on the general lay-out and the number of house-units that would be necessary.

Once these basic concepts had been arrived at, the firm of Architects Associated, of Belfast, were commissioned to prepare sketch plans, in April, 1959. From this initial stage there arose a lengthy series of discussions, at Management Board level, at Ministry level, and, it is pleasing to note, at staff level, so that at various stages, as far as was possible within the general framework, those who would be doing the job had some say in the accommodation and facilities by which it would be done.

Needless to say, there were many problems and queries and suggested revisions and new ideas arising during this phase, and one at least of these deserves special mention, and a short digression on this topic may be permissible here, as this was an idea entirely new to Training Schools in Northern Ireland.

In Great Britain, boys committed to an approved school go from the Court to a Classifying School, where a procedure of attainment and intelligence testing is carried out, together with the collection of relevant information

THE ROOTS OF RATHGAEL

- · swimming pool with changing rooms,
- · sports hall and Fitness Suit,
- · full Kitchen and preparation rooms,
- · Vocational Training Block, with Farm Buildings.
- · Sewing Room and stores.
- playing fields and Lake.
- 18 Staff Houses and garages.
- 10. The Reception Unit provided 35 places and served a dual function in that it carried out assessment procedures as well as being a Remand Centre. Each child committed to the school spent approximately five weeks in the Reception Unit for the purpose of educational, social, vocational, medical and, if necessary, psychological and psychiatric assessment. The assessment of each child formed the basis for a treatment programme carried out in the appropriate section of the open school. If the child was under 15 years on leaving the Reception Unit, he or she was placed in the Junior School; if over 15 years of age he or she was placed in the Senior School. At the age of 15, a child would have moved from the junior school to the senior school.
- 11. The Junior School had residential provision for 94 children divided into four separate House Units with 20 places in each and a Pre-release Flat with 14 places.
- 12. The Senior School had a total of 70 places divided into three House Units of 20 places in each and a Pre-release Flat with 20 places.
- 13. Each House Unit was encouraged to develop its own character under a team of House masters, Housemothers and extraneous staff (teachers and instructors) led by a House Warden. The basis on which a child was allocated to a House Unit was generally determined by matching the ethos of a particular house with the needs of the individual.
- 14. The Intensive Care Unit had seven places for children who could not cope or could not be managed within the open school. It was a semi-secure unit with a high ratio of staff to young people and it catered for a range of problems including, for example, absconding, relationship problems, and drug and glue addiction. It was a short term provision aimed at reintegrating young people back into the open school.

separation of care and justice children as recommended in the Black Report in 1979<sup>4</sup> and fully implemented through the Children's Order (NI) 1995<sup>5</sup>.

- 13. On reflection, a large proportion of young people should never have been sent to a Training School. To create a regime to adequately manage care, school refusers and juvenile offenders was unrealistic. Each group demanded a unique set of skills and approaches. Other jurisdictions within the UK had recognised this issue some years previously<sup>6</sup> and had provided alternative care arrangements for young people depending on their needs. As a result of the relatively smaller number of complex cases in Northern Ireland, it was difficult and expensive to create a series of specialised and specific units of the type that were available in the other jurisdictions. I believe the Training Schools were the perceived solution, although the specialised units in England were available young people in Northern Ireland as discussed in paragraph 15 below.
- 14. The 1969 legislation, although it didn't tamper with the criminal age of responsibility, did ensure that all children aged 14 years and under, would be dealt with in a Care Court. Additionally, Scotland brought all children to the Children's Panel, a non-court environment of professionals and significant people in the young person's life. I am of the opinion that Rathgael in particular endeavoured to learn from the developments within Community Homes. For example, I recall that staff were encouraged to go to them on placement during their training. Following the Children and Young Persons Act 1969, Approved Schools in England and Wales were replaced by Community Homes, with responsibility devolved to local councils.
- 15. These alternative care arrangements in England, such as David Lewis Centre (a centre for those with epilepsy), Cotswold, Pepper Harrow and the Ayecliff Centre in Darlington were available to those young people in Northern Ireland who had been assessed as requiring specialist treatment. These placements

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> SPT-14942 - 15088

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Exhibit 3 - The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995

<sup>(</sup>http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1995/755/contents/made)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Exhibit 4 - Children and Young Persons Act (England and Wales ) 1969

<sup>(</sup>http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1969/54)

about the boy. All this ends in an assessment of the boy's personality, problems, and capabilities, and his eventual placing in what appears to be the most suitable Approved School in the region covered by that particular Classifying School. There are also Remand Homes for holding boys who are awaiting court appearances, and Detention Centres where boys are committed for periods up to 3 months. Here in Northern Ireland we have never had these separate institutions, the Training Schools serving for all the above purposes as well as their own main func-So, out of the discussions which took place in connection with the new school, there arose the idea of having a unit within the school which would serve these subsidiary functions and relieve the main school of distracting side issues. This took concrete shape in due course as the Reception Unit. This unit deals with committed boys for their first few weeks, during which they tested, observed, and assessed, educationally, phychologically, and socially before being placed in a house-unit, a class, or a work department. From this unit also relations between the school and the boy's home are initially established. During a remand boy's stay in this unit he is also tested and observed and a report prepared for the Court before he is to appear. Boys committed for a month under Section 56 of the Children and Young Persons Act (Northern Ireland), 1956, are also retained in this unit, and if they are going out to a period of probation at the end of their month a report is sent to the Probation Officer concerned. These short-term, ever-changing sections of the school population have long been something of an affliction in the main body of the school and it is felt that in providing special accommodation for them, and speciallytrained and experienced staff to deal with them, a considerable step forward has been taken. It should be recognised that this part of the school has its own peculiar difficulties and problems, for they are not only meeting the "raw recruits" day after day, but they are continually working against the clock, both in regard to court appearances and the placement of boys in residential units without undue delay, and they are also involved in making quite important decisions and recommendations which may have great effect on a boy's future.

To return to the main course of events, approval to the final plans was obtained from the Ministry of Home Affairs in February, 1964, and the contract subsequently placed with the firm of Messrs. D. R. Martin & Son, Ltd., of Whitehouse, who commenced work on the site at Rathgael in April, 1964. Work on the playing field are as was commenced in July, 1962, in order to give them time to become established before use. Here it seems ap-

Rathgael was overcrowded with about 210 boys being accommodated; this meant that bunks had to be set up in some recreation rooms. The numbers that were accommodated varied according to referrals from other agencies over the years.

6. The official aim of the school<sup>5</sup> was

'to restore the child or young person to society better equipped mentally and emotionally to cope with the environment from which he came and to accustom him to the habit of work. It is a process of readjustment and social re-education, based on an understanding of the personality, history, abilities and aptitudes of each boy or girl and a knowledge of the family situation, and is promoted by

- a) a stable environment which enables remedial influences to the brought to bear and progressive training to the be given;
- b) contact with the home; and
- c) help and supervision after the boy or girl leaves the school.
- 7. It must be acknowledged that Rathgael, along with the other Training Schools, accommodated the most difficult, damaged, disturbed and, in some cases, delinquent, children in Northern Ireland.
- 8. Rathgael catered almost exclusively for protestant boys and later girls when Whiteabbey closed in 1985. In addition, Rathgael had access to Runkerry House, an outdoor activities centre that provided a range of facilities to the young people and was under the management of Rathgael and Whiteabbey.
- 9. The school consisted of four autonomous sections consisting of 11 units: the Reception Unit; the Junior School; the Senior School; and an Intensive Care Unit. Each Unit had an 8, 6, 4 and 2 X 2 Bed Dorms Common Room, Dining Room, Model Room, Shower, Toilet and Office. All units were served by common facilities, including:
  - administration block,
  - Medical Centre (Sick Bay), with full Dental Room.
  - · full School facility with classrooms,
  - Assembly Hall, referred to as the "Chapel"

 $<sup>^{4}</sup>$  SPT-100587 - Section 83, Children and Young Person's Act (NI) 1968

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Exhibit 1 – A Social Psychological Evaluation of a Community Service Programme for Young Offenders in a Northern Ireland Training School, thesis presented for the degree of Master of Social Science, D. Campbell Whyte, August 1981, pages 30-31

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- **41.** Shamrock House also had a play area that was a fenced area at the side of the Unit. It offered similar activities to those which were available in Fox Lodge (see RGL-31993).
- 42. In his oral evidence HIA 172 suggested that a lack of structured activities in the secure accommodation, in particular, resulted in friction developing between young people. The very design of Rathgael illustrates that it had an emphasis on sport and physical activity through the provision of a gym, swimming pool, playing fields and the later addition of a sports hall. Stimulation and keeping the young people busy was built into the ethos of a school. This ethos was very much in practice in the secure accommodation. Like the other units facilities such as table tennis, pool tables, television and reading materials were available to the young people as well as use of the gym, swimming pool and playing fields.
- **43.** I recall many examples of young people talking to their House Staff / Key Workers, and of situations when staff were skilfully able to de-escalate situations. Young people were very aware that they, by their behaviour dictated the length of their staff in Rathgael, with the majority taking advantage of their stay, being released and not returning.

## Specification of Time-out Rooms

- **44.** Time-out rooms were not used to punish young people. Much of the best practice in relation to providing secure accommodation was being developed within psychiatric care and the prison service. Policies, procedures and the room had to be designed to reduce the risk of the young people harming themselves or others:
  - Beds were constructed in stainless steel and aluminium and fixed to the floor, to prevent the bed from being used as a weapon or barricade.
  - A heavy duty, flame retardant mattress with concealed stitching and constructed from washable material, was provided. I can understand why

the young people refer to it as a gym mat<sup>18</sup> but in reality these were safety mattresses designed to ensure the young people could not use them to self-harm and the materials used reduced the risk of cross infection as they could be easily cleaned.

- Bed sheets were dangerous, depending on the presenting problems, so blankets were used as there was less chance of them being used as a ligature.
- The room would sometimes have equipment, and books, comics and magazines were permitted.
- Some toiletries were safer than offers and were therefore permitted but no glass was permitted.
- Cassette tapes were safer than CDs and these were therefore permitted.
- Clothing would be checked and those items regarded as high risk were prohibited.

## A typical day in the life of a young person at Rathgael

**45.** This is mentioned at paragraphs 23 – 26 in Mr. Whyte's statement. The day would consist of the following:

## **Monday to Friday (School Year)**

- 7.30 Young people awakened / washed and showered / dressed
- 8.00 Breakfast
- 8.30 Morning jobs and free-time before school
- 9.00 Assembly
- 9.15 School / workshops
- 10.45 Break time young people returned to units (Stand Easy)
- 11.15 School / workshops
- 12.30 Lunch (main meal of the day)
- 2.00 School / workshops
- 4.00 Return to units free time games and hobbies
- 5.00 Tea

6.30 House cleaning and evening programme (Evening groups, TV, pool, general recreation)

9.00 Bed time

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE-PERSONAL

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Exhibit 10 - Specification of the Safety Mattress (internet search)

propriate to give a brief description of the accommodation provided at Rathgael. The Reception Unit already referred to is really a double unit, with living and dormitory space for senior boys in one end and junior boys in the other, with a housemaster's residence at each end. In the middle section are the boys' dining room and servery downstairs, and a large classroom upstairs.

The Administration Block in the centre of the site contains the offices of the Head, the Deputy Head, the Board's Secretary, and the After-Care Officer, as well as the general office and stores, laundry, sewing-room and kitchen, all on the ground floor. The first floor of this building is occupied by the staff sitting room and diningroom, separate sick-bays for junior and senior boys, the surgery and dental rooms, and the apartments of the Matron and Assistant Matron. Also in the centre of the campus is the classroom block, where the education of the junior boys is carried on. The ground floor here contains the Senior Assistant's office, the library, a science lab., a woodwork room, a metalwork room, together with boys' cloakroom and toilet accommodation. A single-storey Lshaped extension contains the gymnasium (which includes a stage and film-projection facilities), and also the swimming-pool. On the top floor there are two classrooms specially for the two retarded classes, and an Art and Crafts' room, including a pottery area.

Another main section of the school is the senior workshop block, which contains the workshops and stores for the Woodwork, Engineering and Building Construction departments, as well as a classroom and drawing office for the use of these departments. The school band room is also included in this area. It is intended later, on a do-it-yourself basis, to have an open-air concrete area for practical work by the efforts of the building instructor and his group, a potting-shed and greenhouse building for the senior market-garden has been commenced, and serious other projects are planned for the first years of the con-

cupation of the new premises.

The residential units for the boys are all designed to accommodate 20. Two of these units, Nos. 1 and 4, are single units, while Nos. 2 and 3, 5 and 6, and 7 and 8 are combined in semi-detached form, with dining-rooms and services common to both. At the end of each unit is a three-bedroom maisonette where live the housemaster and his family, the housemaster's wife in almost all cases acting as housemother for the unit. The boys' accommodation on the ground floor of a house-unit consists mainly of a large bright common room, adjacent to the dining-room, and having a smaller room off it which may be devoted to hobbies, reading, homework or other small-

# INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 – TO – 1995 MODULE 7 TRAINING SCHOOLS AND YOUTH JUSTICE INSTITUTIONS

## STATEMENT BY CAMPBELL WHYTE

## **GENERAL**

# Personal background

My career at Rathgael is summarised below:

1973 – 1974: Assistant Teacher – Senior School
 1974 – 1978: Senior Assistant – Senior School
 1978 – 1982: 1st Deputy Headmaster – Senior School
 1982 – 1985: Headmaster – Junior School
 1985 – 1989: Senior Deputy Director
 1989 – 1996: Director of Rathgael

- 2. I qualified as a teacher from Stranmillis College in 1969. I graduated from the Open University with a Social Sciences Bachelor of Arts in 1974.
- 3. In 1981, I graduated with a Masters of Social Science from the Queen's University of Belfast, the title of which was "A Social Psychological Evaluation of a Community Service Programme for Young Offenders in a Northern Ireland Training School".
- 3. I became a qualified Psychotherapist after retiring.

# Rathgael background<sup>1 2</sup>

- 4. Rathgael was one of five training schools in Northern Ireland. It opened as a regional residential Training School in 1968 to replace the former Malone School in Belfast and operated as such until its closure in 1998 during which time in the region of 8-9k children had passed through Rathgael. The school, which was purpose built on a House Unit basis, was situated on an 86 acre site on the outskirts of Bangor, 13 miles from Belfast.
- 5. Initially it was designed to provide a total of 203 places for boys between the ages of 10 and 16 years on admission who had been sent by the juvenile courts on a remand basis or under a Training School Order<sup>3 4</sup>. When I started

<sup>2</sup> RGL-23629 – RGL-23630

<sup>3</sup> SPT-80063 – SPT-80073

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> RGL-22199 – RGL-22201

Rathgael was overcrowded with about 210 boys being accommodated; this meant that bunks had to be set up in some recreation rooms. The numbers that were accommodated varied according to referrals from other agencies over the years.

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Another main section of the school is the senior workshop block, which contains the workshops and stores for the Woodwork, Engineering and Building Construction departments, as well as a classroom and drawing office for the use of these departments. The school band room is also included in this area. It is intended later, on a do-it-yourself basis, to have an open-air concrete area for practical work by the efforts of the building instructor and his group, a potting-shed and greenhouse building for the senior market-garden has been commenced, and serious other projects are planned for the first years of the con-

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Another main section of the school is the senior workshop block, which contains the workshops and stores for the Woodwork, Engineering and Building Construction departments, as well as a classroom and drawing office for the use of these departments. The school band room is also included in this area. It is intended later, on a do-it-yourself basis, to have an open-air concrete area for practical work by the efforts of the building instructor and his group, a potting-shed and greenhouse building for the senior market-garden has been commenced, and serious other projects are planned for the first years of the con-

cupation of the new premises.

The residential units for the boys are all designed to accommodate 20. Two of these units, Nos. 1 and 4, are single units, while Nos. 2 and 3, 5 and 6, and 7 and 8 are combined in semi-detached form, with dining-rooms and services common to both. At the end of each unit is a three-bedroom maisonette where live the housemaster and his family, the housemaster's wife in almost all cases acting as housemother for the unit. The boys' accommodation on the ground floor of a house-unit consists mainly of a large bright common room, adjacent to the dining-room, and having a smaller room off it which may be devoted to hobbies, reading, homework or other small-

geographical basis given the regional nature of Rathgael. An important part of the social worker's role was to liaise with the appropriate agencies in the home area, for example Social Services, Probation, schools and employment schemes such as Youth Training Programmes and Youth Opportunity Programmes.

- **74.** Returning young people to the community was fraught with a multitude of problems. A return to a school in the local area was sometimes impossible because of resistance by the school or because appropriate accommodation at home or in board care was not an option.
- **75.** By November 1990 the Board recognised that there were issues in relation to young people due for discharge from Rathgael having no home base resulting in them being retained beyond their discharge date. I carried out a detailed analysis and evaluation of the issue as detailed in a paper entitled 'Young people with no Home Base'<sup>26</sup>. This was another indication that young people in Training Schools were not being afforded the same level of care that their age and circumstances demanded.
- **76.** Rathgael, in partnership with Barnardo's, developed a Professional Fostering Scheme to enable us to place out young people who had no home base and required specialist placements. This was fully funded by the NIO.

# Eastside Project<sup>27</sup>

77. The Eastside Project was one of the few practical outworkings of the Black Report 1979. Chapter 2 of the Black report 1979 states "there must be some formal framework through which the various agencies can come together to review and coordinate their activities". I can recall a discussion with Mr. R Sterling (NIO), Mr. W Donnell (SSI) and Mr. W Pugh (NIO) with regards to the development of a community based alternative to training school. I was encouraged to develop this model and to seek a partner to take this initiative forward.

 $<sup>^{26}</sup>$  Exhibit 14 - Young People With No Home Base – L Conway – November 1990

<sup>27</sup> Exhibit 15 - The Eastside Story

out from participating in it. The number of young people who volunteered generally exceeded the number of projects so some had to wait until a place became available. Some young people may have been excluded from specific projects because, for example, a boy with a history of sexual offending would have been excluded from nursery group work or a non-swimmer would have been excluded from the swimming project.

35. The CSP was introduced when Rathgael School was undergoing a number of changes. Over time, child-care practices, counselling, individual assessment and treatment approaches were replacing the more custodial and punitive practices that had previously been in place. There was also a growing realisation that isolating boys from the community was inconsistent with the treatment policy which aimed to rehabilitate and prepare boys for return to their own communities better equipped to cope and to lead productive and trouble-free lives. The programme developed as a voluntary option for both school-age and over school-age young people and became established as both a curricular and extra-curricular activity. It was still running in 1991<sup>16</sup> but I am not sure when the programme stopped running.

## Children on license or extended leave

36. Rathgael was legally responsible for its care children, including those who had left the centre on licence or on extended leave. There was a small Community Care department that supervised those young children, including the East Side Project<sup>17</sup>, which offered 24 hour support to young people who had settled in east Belfast. This project won a national award in 1984 and went on to take referrals from all over Belfast. The centre also ran three houses for young people who left Rathgael with nowhere to go.

## Leisure and recreation

30. Evening activities included classes in photography, art and typing. Alternatively, the young people could play pool, do hairdressing or watch television. They also had opportunities to participate in specific projects. For example, in 1976, the young people, under supervision, converted an old Ulsterbus into a play bus, which was used by the Voluntary Service Bureau in the community for children to play in. This involved the young people using the metalwork, painting and motor engineering skills they had learnt in class. The play bus formed part of the Community Service Programme referred to above and provided an opportunity for a young person to act as an Assistant Playbus leader in support of the two ladies who were in charge. For this project it was normal practice for the volunteer to have come from one of the

<sup>17</sup> RGL-23888

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> RGL-27433

Rathgael was overcrowded with about 210 boys being accommodated; this meant that bunks had to be set up in some recreation rooms. The numbers that were accommodated varied according to referrals from other agencies over the years.

6. The official aim of the school<sup>5</sup> was

'to restore the child or young person to society better equipped mentally and emotionally to cope with the environment from which he came and to accustom him to the habit of work. It is a process of readjustment and social re-education, based on an understanding of the personality, history, abilities and aptitudes of each boy or girl and a knowledge of the family situation, and is promoted by

- a) a stable environment which enables remedial influences to the brought to bear and progressive training to the be given;
- b) contact with the home; and
- c) help and supervision after the boy or girl leaves the school.
- 7. It must be acknowledged that Rathgael, along with the other Training Schools, accommodated the most difficult, damaged, disturbed and, in some cases, delinquent, children in Northern Ireland.
- 8. Rathgael catered almost exclusively for protestant boys and later girls when Whiteabbey closed in 1985. In addition, Rathgael had access to Runkerry House, an outdoor activities centre that provided a range of facilities to the young people and was under the management of Rathgael and Whiteabbey.
- 9. The school consisted of four autonomous sections consisting of 11 units: the Reception Unit; the Junior School; the Senior School; and an Intensive Care Unit. Each Unit had an 8, 6, 4 and 2 X 2 Bed Dorms Common Room, Dining Room, Model Room, Shower, Toilet and Office. All units were served by common facilities, including:
  - administration block,
  - Medical Centre (Sick Bay), with full Dental Room.
  - · full School facility with classrooms,
  - Assembly Hall, referred to as the "Chapel"

 $<sup>^{4}</sup>$  SPT-100587 - Section 83, Children and Young Person's Act (NI) 1968

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Exhibit 1 – A Social Psychological Evaluation of a Community Service Programme for Young Offenders in a Northern Ireland Training School, thesis presented for the degree of Master of Social Science, D. Campbell Whyte, August 1981, pages 30-31

turned vegetarian in there. The vegetarian option was always the same meal every day. The kitchen was closed between 5pm and 9pm so we weren't allowed anything to eat or drink during that time. Supper was an apple or a drink and I was very hungry most of the time.

- 10. There were many times I tried to talk to the staff because I needed someone to talk to. They always just said they were busy and shut the door on me. Some of the staff I remember were RG 10 RG 11 and RG 12, and they didn't have any interest in me. They used to say to me 'Do you think we are here because we care about you? We are only here for the money'. They used to try to wind us up by telling us how much their own kids had at home.
- 11. In the mornings I got up, got washed, had breakfast and I was forced to go to Mass every morning in the Chapel, whether I believed or not. I went to school on the site, which was the same school as the offenders attended and they called us the 'care bears'. School was held in just one classroom with one teacher. They didn't teach us anything but gave us a 'Playstation' to play with or crosswords to keep us occupied. When I left I couldn't cope with reading, writing or arithmetic and I had no real education. I didn't even know how to deal with people.
- 12. They often restrained me and locked me in the 'D' room, also known as the 'Shamrock' room for seventy two hours at a time. I was put in there for slicing my arms and glue sniffing, or for swearing, being cheeky or aggressive to the staff. I was even put in there for refusing to go to sleep at night. In the long term units we were allowed to get out and walk about but we were never allowed to go beyond the perimeter fence. I had no time to myself as I had to be followed by staff twenty four hours a day.

**HIA 386** 

**PRIVATE** 

4

had nothing to eat or drink for the whole of that day apart from some toast in the morning.

- 7. I began a placement with the Youth Training Programme with Training Centre in September 1988. As part of this programme, I was doing some work experience in a garage in in Belfast. However, this placement broke down because I hadn't been paid in 4 weeks. The money was going to my father's house and to Rathgael instead of my brother's house in North Belfast where I was living at that time. After 4 weeks without money, I took a car from the garage. The police stopped me and I was sent back to Rathgael. The staff told me that I was being returned there because I was dismissed from the work placement. I was placed in House 3 because House 2 was full. I was not arrested for the theft of the car and, as far as I know, it was never reported to the police. After I returned to Rathgael I asked if I could return to education.
- 8. I stole another car and crashed it joy-riding in December 1988. I was taken back to Rathgael and placed in House 3 but I could not settle. I ran away from Rathgael a few times for about a day at a time. After a couple of weeks, the staff moved me to House 5, which is the reception for the justice section of the institution. I was not given a reason for the move. The atmosphere in the justice side of the institution was very different from the one I experienced on the care side. I was treated as if I were a criminal. The boys could be quite violent with each other but I was never bullied while I was there.
- 9. After about 5 weeks, I was moved again to House 6. I did not get along with the housemaster there, RG 81 Another boy, RG 1 and I broke into an office in the Rathgael grounds, stole a van and ran away. When we were caught, we were both remanded to Lisnevin Training School. After spending 2 ½ months on remand at Lisnevin, I was sentenced to 6 months imprisonment at Hydebank Young Offenders Centre. RG 1 was returned to Rathgael with Training School Orders. I thought this was surprising as RG 1 was in Rathgael with criminal charges that were far more serious than my own. RG 81, my housemaster, wrote the reports that helped determine my placement in Hydebank and RG 1 placement in Rathgael. I felt that because

- · swimming pool with changing rooms,
- · sports hall and Fitness Suit,
- · full Kitchen and preparation rooms,
- · Vocational Training Block, with Farm Buildings.
- · Sewing Room and stores.
- playing fields and Lake.
- 18 Staff Houses and garages.
- 10. The Reception Unit provided 35 places and served a dual function in that it carried out assessment procedures as well as being a Remand Centre. Each child committed to the school spent approximately five weeks in the Reception Unit for the purpose of educational, social, vocational, medical and, if necessary, psychological and psychiatric assessment. The assessment of each child formed the basis for a treatment programme carried out in the appropriate section of the open school. If the child was under 15 years on leaving the Reception Unit, he or she was placed in the Junior School; if over 15 years of age he or she was placed in the Senior School. At the age of 15, a child would have moved from the junior school to the senior school.
- 11. The Junior School had residential provision for 94 children divided into four separate House Units with 20 places in each and a Pre-release Flat with 14 places.
- 12. The Senior School had a total of 70 places divided into three House Units of 20 places in each and a Pre-release Flat with 20 places.
- 13. Each House Unit was encouraged to develop its own character under a team of House masters, Housemothers and extraneous staff (teachers and instructors) led by a House Warden. The basis on which a child was allocated to a House Unit was generally determined by matching the ethos of a particular house with the needs of the individual.
- 14. The Intensive Care Unit had seven places for children who could not cope or could not be managed within the open school. It was a semi-secure unit with a high ratio of staff to young people and it catered for a range of problems including, for example, absconding, relationship problems, and drug and glue addiction. It was a short term provision aimed at reintegrating young people back into the open school.



## THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

WITNESS STATEMENT OF HIA 434	
I, HIA 434 will say as follows:-	

## Personal details

1. I was born on the control of the child. I lived with my mother and father at the child. I lived with my mother and father at the control of the child. I lived with my mother and father at the control of the child. I lived with my mother and father at the child in Belfast. My father was a service engineer and my mother was a housewife. My parents separated early in 1986 and my mother moved to England. My father started a new relationship shortly afterwards. I began playing truant from school and in May 1986, I was placed in Rathgael for 2 ½ years on a Training School Order.

## Rathgael Training School (16 May 1986 - Feb 1989)

- 2. I was taken to House 9A when I initially arrived at Rathgael. I was given a change of clothes, had a shower and a medical examination. The reception area had two classrooms, one for education and the other for woodwork. I was put in a single bedroom initially but I was moved to a bedroom dormitory after a week. The staff locked us in our dormitories overnight from about 10.00pm until 7.30am. A member of staff was on duty all night and they would let you out to use the toilet. The quality of the food was generally okay. I do not have any complaints about that aspect of the care.
- 3. I was moved again to House 2 after about five weeks in Reception. I recall witnessing an incident there when a member of staff, RG 20 assaulted another inmate, RG 77 RG 20 was in his early thirties, had dark brown hair, an athletic build and was about 5 feet 8/9 inches tall. RG 77 broke a glass pane and RG 20 restrained him and put him in a lock by twisting

HIA 434 1

the young people refer to it as a gym mat<sup>18</sup> but in reality these were safety mattresses designed to ensure the young people could not use them to self-harm and the materials used reduced the risk of cross infection as they could be easily cleaned.

- Bed sheets were dangerous, depending on the presenting problems, so blankets were used as there was less chance of them being used as a ligature.
- The room would sometimes have equipment, and books, comics and magazines were permitted.
- Some toiletries were safer than offers and were therefore permitted but no glass was permitted.
- Cassette tapes were safer than CDs and these were therefore permitted.
- Clothing would be checked and those items regarded as high risk were prohibited.

## A typical day in the life of a young person at Rathgael

**45.** This is mentioned at paragraphs 23 – 26 in Mr. Whyte's statement. The day would consist of the following:

## **Monday to Friday (School Year)**

- 7.30 Young people awakened / washed and showered / dressed
- 8.00 Breakfast
- 8.30 Morning jobs and free-time before school
- 9.00 Assembly
- 9.15 School / workshops
- 10.45 Break time young people returned to units (Stand Easy)
- 11.15 School / workshops
- 12.30 Lunch (main meal of the day)
- 2.00 School / workshops
- 4.00 Return to units free time games and hobbies
- 5.00 Tea

6.30 House cleaning and evening programme (Evening groups, TV, pool, general recreation)

9.00 Bed time

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE-PERSONAL

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Exhibit 10 - Specification of the Safety Mattress (internet search)

- 21. The Head of Education, Mr Cromey introduced a points system for education to encourage them. 'Contracting' was also introduced in classrooms for particularly disruptive pupils. This involved drawing up an agreement with the pupil to enable them to earn points if their behaviour in class improved.
- 22. I recall that the average teacher to pupils' ratio of the classes were in the region of: 1:6/8 in the main school; 1:5 in the short term reception classes and 1:3 in Shamrock House to reflect the varying demands and issues in each setting. Ancillary staff were also available to assist with particularly disruptive pupils.
- 23. There were Monday morning meetings with all teachers to discuss relevant issues and what was to be achieved for that week.
- 24. The school day started at 09:00 with assembly that was designed to provide positive messages and motivate the young people. This was held in a building called the "Chapel" although the services did not focus on religion.
- 25. This was followed by teaching until the classes broke up for lunch, which was served in the Units followed by further classes in the afternoon until about 16:00. The young people then returned to their units where they had dinner and undertook evening activities.
- 26. Each young person had an educational assessment on literacy and numeracy on entrance to provide a baseline with routine follow up assessments. Many on re-test showed a significant improvement.

## Support for the children

- 27. If a young person was unhappy, he or she could talk to numerous people key workers, team leaders, teachers, matrons/medical staff, chaplains, board members and staff at all levels. In addition, staff were instructed to report complaints by any of the residents to line management<sup>10</sup>.
- 28. In addition, staff from the Adolescent Psychological Research Unit (APRU)<sup>11</sup> headed by assisted by four psychologists, attended Rathgael every day and RG 253 a psychiatrist, visited the school weekly. Individual cases were referred to the APRU by the team Leader in Rathgael. Often, the Individual Assessment Treatment Profile process would flag up individuals who would benefit from working with the APRU. The APRU would have engaged in one-to-one work with individuals in response to their needs.
- 29. I also ran group counselling sessions (I was a trained Counsellor) consisting of 10-12 boys. This was confidential unless criminal issues were raised.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> RGL-46333

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> RGL-27433

in 1976. For example, at there were technical drawing classes which I found impossible to keep up with as we were never taught this in Rathgael.

- 14. School finished about 3.30pm and we could do whatever we wanted before bed time. There was a snooker table, some miniature tennis courts where we played "patter tennis", and a swimming pool. The site itself was quite open but we were all locked in at night. There were opportunities to abscond but I only absconded once, following the incident where I was returned to Rathgael because I was frightened about getting caught and punished.
- 15. If any boy did run away, the police usually caught them quite quickly. The staff would isolate you for a time after you were returned and you were made to wear shorts instead of jeans. The boys who ran away were closely supervised by a housemaster for a while after they were caught.
- 16. My father came to visit me every weekend when I was in Rathgael. My parents had separated at this stage and my mother had moved to She visited less frequently as it was difficult for her to travel. I don't remember any external visitors coming to Rathgael for example, social workers or health/education welfare visitors. I was able to talk to certain members of staff, for example, the staff who were my housemasters about the things which bothered me while I was there, RG 18 or RG 19. They were both good men, but there was a sense that if you complained about bullying, they were all in cahoots with each other and nothing would really be done to change behaviours.
- 17.1 remember Rathgael as an almost entirely negative experience. When I went there first although I was getting into trouble, it was not serious trouble and looking back, I can see that I was quite innocent. I was exposed to a lot of negative influences there and my own behaviour started to escalate into more serious drinking and crime. Things happened to me in Rathgael which made me feel very insecure about myself and have adversely affected my whole life. For example, I was never taught to value myself and I never had the confidence to push myself career wise. Consequently, because I missed

HIA 200 5

year or so and then she passed away. She was sixteen years old and had been sniffing aerosols.

- 10. I attended school in Rathgael which was like going back to primary school. I have dyslexia and no additional help or assistance was provided. The education was very poor and my level of education fell. For that reason I had more interest in practical subjects like woodwork, gardening and metal work than the academic subjects.
- 11. I could not swim when I went to Rathgael. RG 17 threw me in to the pool and scared the life out of me. I did learn to swim and became a strong swimmer. He always put me in fear as he would hit you with a gym slipper or throw you outside in all weathers as punishment. He was good at sport but he was very strict.
- 12. At the weekend there was always something planned for us to do. We were taken for a walk, or went swimming or watched videos. I eventually was allowed weekend leave and I went to stay with my father in Belfast. I cycled to Belfast and back when I had weekend leave. I enjoyed cycling and was in the cycling club in Rathgael which was organised by RG 49.
- 13. I got on well with most of the staff but some of them were short tempered and I knew to avoid them. RG 52 and RG 41 were caring and I felt that I could talk to them. I was a quiet child but I was prone to angry outbursts. I behaved this way because I had been abused by my older brother when I was younger, my mother had passed away, my father was in prison and I was being bullied in Rathgael. RG 52 and RG made an effort to find out why I behaved that way and helped me to view things differently.
- 14. My key worker was called RG 20. I thought we had a good relationship and he even taught me how to play the guitar but all of a sudden that stopped. The bond seemed to disintegrate for no reason. I had the same experience with RG. He took me out cycling a few times and then all of a sudden that stopped. The ones I kept my relationship with were RG and RG 52.

quite a violent man and he would slam children into the ground, twist their arms up their backs, use swimming flippers to whack them across the legs and throw things at them.

- 42. There were children in Rathgael for failure to attend school. I remember being handed a children's book in science class and being told to read it while the teacher taught everyone else. He thought there was no point in teaching me asl couldn't read or write. If Rathgael was supposed to fulfil a child's educational needs I could never understand why I left Rathgael unable to read and write. I have taught myself everything that I know.
- 43. One day there was a boy on the roof who was drunk and spitting on people from the roof. He was being abusive and started having a go at me. I was allowed to go to my Aunt's house in to get away from him. I had to be back at the unit for bed time and when I returned the boy seemed to have calmed down and I went to bed and thought nothing more of him. When I was sleeping he came in to my room wearing a pair of boots and kicked me in the face. My face swelled to twice its size and I do not remember being taken to hospital. A member of staff called RG 20 took a photograph of my head but later confiscated it. I believe they did not want there to be any evidence of the attack as there was a risk of Rathgael looking bad. One day I saw that boy defending himself against
- 44. I started to become like the thugs in Rathgael. I remember a guy bullying me and I punched him and gave him a black eye. I was encouraged by the other boys in the house to hit him. I was not proud of what I had done but it seemed like the only way to deal with him.
- 45. I believe that a child needs someone to idolise and children idolise their parents. A child who is in care has nobody who plays a substantial enough role in their lives for them to idolise. Even if they have a social worker that they like and look up to the relationship ends when the child leaves care. They have no one to look up to anymore and no one to look out for them. After I left Rathgael the

anyone I could talk to about what was happening to me and even if I could, I thought I wouldn't be believed because at that time, I felt I was perceived as a 'wild child' who was getting into trouble a lot.

- 16. There was a school on site at Rathgael. The normal school day was 9 am to 3pm. We were educated separately from the children who had come to Rathgael on the care side. I was in a class of about 12 to 15 other children. We were not separated according to age or ability. I don't remember having any homework or follow up work to do in the evening. You were not forced to go to school and there were weeks at a time when I didn't go. My education essentially stopped when I went to Rathgael. I left there without any qualifications.
- 17. After I was released from Rathgael, I went back to live with my mother in Ballymena. I wanted to go back into mainstream education but I was told it was too late and that I had missed too much. I felt that my lack of education has been a disadvantage to me all through my adult life. One of my children has just been diagnosed with dyslexia and when I look back at my difficulties with school, I think I may be dyslexic too.

## Maghaberry (08/12/94 - 11/01/95 & 08/02/95-13/06/95)

- 18. After a while in Rathgael my behaviour began to escalate and the staff at Rathgael felt that they could not control me. I remember being called into the Office and told I was going to be sent to Maghaberry. I was never given any warning that this might happen and I was very scared because I knew it was an adult women's prison. I saw a police car drive up and I suddenly realised it was for me. I got upset and I begged RG 47 not to send me there. However, the police officers put me in handcuffs and took me straight to Maghaberry.
- 19.I was taken to the Reception when I arrived at the prison and I was strip searched. There were three female officers in attendance. One sat at a desk

HIA 231 PRIVATE 6

# **EDUCATION REPORT**

RE: HIA 503

This pupil has recently transferred class because of the closure of the unit to which she was attached. It was thought that this would generally be beneficial, not only to HIAT, but also to the other pupils formerly in her company.

She had presented management problems in terms of her aggressive and abusive behaviour, not only towards her peers, but also her teacher A change of environment both in terms of residence and class was a reason for some optimism on everyone's behalf. This optimism however has been ill-founded. Since transferring to blass she has been particularly disruptive. On many occasions she has deliberately spurned any help which was offered and has refused to do some of her exams.

Her attitude is continually belligerent and aggressive both verbally and physically, and although she is capable of quite good work and reasonable behaviour, instances of this are rare.

It is a great shame that someone of ability is prepared to waste her own time and that of others by her immature and unacceptable behaviour.

RG 149 RG 149

- 35. I approached another staff member, RG 6 to let him know of issues I was having and I was told to 'grow up and sort myself out'.
- 36. During my time under the training order I was in complete lock up.
- 37. When I had completed the training order in Rathgael I was placed under a care order to remain in Rathgael. I was placed in Unit 1 Downhill. This is an open unit. I had a Key Worker who was seldom on duty. When they were working I found they had limited time to listen to me. When I did get a chance to speak to them and tell them I was being bullied by the other residents and staff I was told that it was all in my head.
- 38. I had one brother whom I was very close to while I was in Rathgael. I would speak to him on the telephone. A staff member told me that our conservations were not appropriate. This resulted in me pushing him away and rejecting contact with him. I believe this was a deliberate tactic to alienate me from my family.
- 39. Once during the summer months I was on a bus trip and there was a female member of staff call RG7 I cannot recall her surname. I broke wind and she ordered me off the bus. I was barred from any bus trips for two weeks.
- 40. Whilst at school in Rathgael I would have been given tasks more suitable to primary school education. My education consisted of colouring in pictures. I was not taught anything of value and I left there without any qualifications. Consequently I have poor communication, numeracy and life skills.
- 41. I was placed on work experience for 15 weeks in the kitchens. I made sandwiches for the entire 15 weeks. I never gained any work experience with the exception of how to butter bread. When the kitchen staff would leave to take their breaks they would have locked me in the kitchen on my own.

and bedding were clean. We all had chores to do and kept our individual houses in good order. There were inspections and if, for example, the standard of cleanliness was not up to scratch, then we would be made to clean it again as a punishment, or given toothbrushes and told to clean out the multi-gym. I remember feeling degraded by these punishments.

- 12. There was a points system in Rathgael which was linked your privileges within the institution. If your behaviour both at school and at your house was good, you were allocated points. Once your points reached a certain level, you were given weekend leave to visit your parents. The number of points you received was reviewed monthly and you could work your way up to a position where you were getting leave every weekend. Some staff were quite fair and others would be very quick to deduct points for minor misdemeanours. It left me in a position where I was constantly on guard as I never knew when my leave might be affected by a small breach of the rules.
- 13. The day-to-day regime at Rathgael was that we got up in the morning about 7.30am to 8am and made our beds. We got washed and then did chores in our houses. We had breakfast and then we were marched up to the chapel. Then we had an assembly and after that we went to the school which was in a different building on the site. There were classrooms and there were lessons until mid-day. The education system there was fairly good. For example, although RG 64 was a violent man, he was a good teacher. He had a particular system which helped me to learn to read. However, I didn't leave Rathgael with any formal qualifications.
- 14. After lessons in the morning, we went back to our houses for dinner and when that was over, we went back to school for afternoon lessons. When school was over, we went back to our houses and tidied up. Then we had some social time outside for activities like tennis or gymnastics.

  RG 17

RG 17 I spent a lot of my free time training with them.

his hands behind his back. I saw RG 20 hitting RG 77 by punching him repeatedly in the back. I remember seeing this assault and then two members of staff took RG 77 upstairs.

- 4. I remember another incident when RG 78 and I absconded in the summer of 1988. The police caught us and returned us to Rathgael. We were locked in separate rooms. All our normal clothing was taken from us and we were left with just our underwear, a plastic mattress and a sheet. We were held in this way for 10-14 days. I did not have a watch or a clock and it was difficult to gauge time. The staff brought me food three times a day on a tray. We were left isolated and a member of staff from the next house kept an eye on us from time to time. At times, you had to wait hours to use the bathroom because there was no one in the building.
- 5. The education system in Rathgael was broken down into a form-based system regardless of age. If you were very clever, you were put in Form 5. The children who were least able were put in Form 1. I was in Form 4 because I was weak at English. I was about 14 at the time but the age group of the class was mixed. There was no set curriculum but I remember that English, Maths and Geography were taught. The teaching staff overall were quite good to me. They never hit me although some lost their tempers more easily than others and this made me apprehensive around them.
- 6. I was given two Training School Orders for two charges of theft around Easter 1987. These were both appealed and I was given an absolute discharge. The police normally escorted you to and from Court. On this occasion, RG 41 RG 41, a member of staff at Rathgael, took me there. After the hearing, a member of the police told RG 41 that it was his responsibility to take me back to Rathgael. She disagreed but he insisted. The police put me in a room on my own in the court building where the appeal was heard and they forgot about me. This was at approximately 11am in the morning. The police did not come to collect me until after midnight that night. I was only fourteen at the time and I should not have been held in this way as I was given an absolute discharge. I

Page 181

- 1 too, but if there was a -- say he would have caught
- three or four of them smoking, and he knew right away,
- because he could smell the smoke off you -- do you know
- 4 what I mean -- but if you denied smoking -- do you know
- 5 what I mean -- you would have got clipped and maybe the
- other two that was with you would have got clipped too.
- 7 It was ...
- 8 O. So it was instant retribution?
- 9 A. Oh, instant. Instant. Do you know what I mean? A lot
- of the boys were a weed. He just had to look at you and
- 11 that was enough. Do you know what I mean? But other
- boys just kind of a way maybe pushed the boat out with
- him, but, as I say, what he done with us, the way you
- seen it on the TV where you see -- you
- 15 know what I mean -- --
- 16 Q. Yes.
- 17 A. -- and they are , he had us doing
- 18 that. I don't know how the hell he done it, but he had
- us doing that at the highest levels, like. We actually
- 20 went out of school and in
- different places, in old people's home and all. I think
- 22 we would have done one in at the time. The
- 23 pensioners there were over the moon to see all the
- 24 rascals of the day .
- 25 Q. Yes. Thank you very much.

- 15. RG 17 background was in the Royal Navy and he was quite strict but fair. He knew he didn't have to hit the boys to get their respect. He did have a slipper and he would use it to punish the boys occasionally.

  made up from the boys at Rathgael. I really loved developing my skills in this area. He was a positive influence during my time there. There were some good teachers there, but for every good one, there were bad teachers like RG 64 and RG 4
- 16.I don't remember any welfare officers or social workers coming to visit me during my time there. There was no-one I could talk to either in my own family or in Rathgael. Some of the most violent staff, like RG 4 were very well known, almost heroes, in my community. If I complained about my treatment, it would have come back at me, so I kept it all to myself.
- 17.I came to lose respect for all authority figures because of the experiences I had in Rathgael. I believe that, because I saw these violent encounters as a young man, I turned into a very, very violent man myself. It ruined me in the end. Even now, as an adult, I don't back down from a fight not even if paramilitaries are involved. Consequently, as an adult, I was stabbed twice and sustained other serious injuries including injuries where someone tried to cut my head off. I feel I have lost almost everything positive in my life because of my exposure to violence.

## Life After Care

18. After I left Rathgael, I went home and lived with my mother and family for a while. The violence I was exposed to at Rathgael changed my personality. I ended up in prison on a couple of occasions for assaults against the police. I have a real problem with authority figures. This kind of conflict just triggers something negative in me. It reminds me of that fear I experienced when men who were supposed to be looking after me were actually beating and humiliating me. The fear I felt then and that sense of not being safe has stayed with me and it means I react aggressively in conflict situations.

HIA 267

5

year or so and then she passed away. She was sixteen years old and had been sniffing aerosols.

- 10. I attended school in Rathgael which was like going back to primary school. I have dyslexia and no additional help or assistance was provided. The education was very poor and my level of education fell. For that reason I had more interest in practical subjects like woodwork, gardening and metal work than the academic subjects.
- 11. I could not swim when I went to Rathgael. RG 17 threw me in to the pool and scared the life out of me. I did learn to swim and became a strong swimmer. He always put me in fear as he would hit you with a gym slipper or throw you outside in all weathers as punishment. He was good at sport but he was very strict.
- 12. At the weekend there was always something planned for us to do. We were taken for a walk, or went swimming or watched videos. I eventually was allowed weekend leave and I went to stay with my father in Belfast. I cycled to Belfast and back when I had weekend leave. I enjoyed cycling and was in the cycling club in Rathgael which was organised by RG 49.
- 13. I got on well with most of the staff but some of them were short tempered and I knew to avoid them. RG 52 and RG 41 were caring and I felt that I could talk to them. I was a quiet child but I was prone to angry outbursts. I behaved this way because I had been abused by my older brother when I was younger, my mother had passed away, my father was in prison and I was being bullied in Rathgael. RG 52 and RG made an effort to find out why I behaved that way and helped me to view things differently.
- 14. My key worker was called RG 20. I thought we had a good relationship and he even taught me how to play the guitar but all of a sudden that stopped. The bond seemed to disintegrate for no reason. I had the same experience with RG. He took me out cycling a few times and then all of a sudden that stopped. The ones I kept my relationship with were RG and RG 52.

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#### **MASTER TAPE T096979A**

**RG 17** 

And obviously corporal punishment would have been still, as far as I'm aware, you can correct me on this, would have still been aloud, yes.

Well may I comment em on what he said about me with him.

Yeah, yeah.

First of all under no circumstances would I ever be such an idiot as to throw anybody in the pool.

Okay.

It was one of my personal targets to have no boy who came into Rathgael leaving Rathgael without being a swimmer.

Okay.

So that's nonsense. Ah slapping, ah whatever I'm doing, accused of doing with a slipper, not true.

Okay.

And if he's saying how many times I slippered him, I'm sorry that's absolute rubbish. I can't even remember an HIA 429 such was the, the you know the mark he made on me.

Ah hm.

I know it's a long time ago but if I slippered somebody as many times as you're saying.

Yeah.

I would surely remember him and I, I'm, I don't and it did not happen.

And he said about RG 155 that you would have gave him a clout.

He said.

Yeah.

RG 155

Yeah.

Does RG 155 make this complaint.

I, I'll go to his, I'll go to his statement next if you wish after this.

SOLICITOR Yes please do, please do.

15

queued up for our food however the day the inspectors were there we sat at the tables and the staff served us.

- 39. During my time in house 10 I was sent to a therapeutic community in the Cotswolds for a night to be assessed for admission there. I found out that I would not be sent to the Cotswolds as I was too old. I was so distraught at this news that I tried to commit suicide by hanging myself from my bedroom window with my bed sheet. The night man had to cut me down. My bedroom was stripped of everything. I was also stripped of everything and locked in a room with nothing but a rubber mattress. My food was brought to me for about two weeks and no one would talk to me. I remember some members of staff laughing at me through the slot in the door. No one spoke to me and no one asked me why I tried to commit suicide.
- I was sent from house 10 to a Therapeutic Community in called I was there for a year and a half and have good memories of being there. The staff and the facilities were great. However, one of the residents started a fire which burnt down the building and I had to return to Rathgael. When I returned I was placed in house 3. There was a resident who I used to get on really well with. He was hyper like me and we used to sit under the stairs talking. He had changed into a different person. He was withdrawn and no longer hyper.
- RG 33 put me in detention and told me to copy a book. I was put in a broom cupboard with a desk. At lunch time I could hear the other pupils going to lunch and I asked RG 33 if I could go too. He came in to the broom cupboard and punched and kicked me. He only stopped because he heard other people coming so I was able to get past him and run back to house 3. RG 33 was typical of the school teachers in Rathgael all of whom I thought were violent. There was a maths teacher called RG 62 who was crazy and would punch you in the back of the head for making mistakes in your maths work. There was a sports teacher called RG 17 who walloped me a few times. I remember seeing a boy running away from him with a bleeding nose. He was

quite a violent man and he would slam children into the ground, twist their arms up their backs, use swimming flippers to whack them across the legs and throw things at them.

- 42. There were children in Rathgael for failure to attend school. I remember being handed a children's book in science class and being told to read it while the teacher taught everyone else. He thought there was no point in teaching me asl couldn't read or write. If Rathgael was supposed to fulfil a child's educational needs I could never understand why I left Rathgael unable to read and write. I have taught myself everything that I know.
- 43. One day there was a boy on the roof who was drunk and spitting on people from the roof. He was being abusive and started having a go at me. I was allowed to go to my Aunt's house in to get away from him. I had to be back at the unit for bed time and when I returned the boy seemed to have calmed down and I went to bed and thought nothing more of him. When I was sleeping he came in to my room wearing a pair of boots and kicked me in the face. My face swelled to twice its size and I do not remember being taken to hospital. A member of staff called RG 20 took a photograph of my head but later confiscated it. I believe they did not want there to be any evidence of the attack as there was a risk of Rathgael looking bad. One day I saw that boy defending himself against
- 44. I started to become like the thugs in Rathgael. I remember a guy bullying me and I punched him and gave him a black eye. I was encouraged by the other boys in the house to hit him. I was not proud of what I had done but it seemed like the only way to deal with him.
- 45. I believe that a child needs someone to idolise and children idolise their parents. A child who is in care has nobody who plays a substantial enough role in their lives for them to idolise. Even if they have a social worker that they like and look up to the relationship ends when the child leaves care. They have no one to look up to anymore and no one to look out for them. After I left Rathgael the

Page 161

- 1 the world and then the next minute he would have took
- 2 the head off you.
- 3 Q. I was asking you did -- because we have managed to get
- 4 hold of and check the records that exist that relate to
- 5 these two boys to see could we find a reference to him
- 6 --
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. -- being knocked unconscious, one or other of them, but
- 9 you don't recollect him getting medical treatment. You
- 10 recollect him being knocked off the seat.
- 11 A. No. He got back up on to the seat. He was just sitting
- there and then after a while he just broke out crying,
- but I think it was just the shock of it, kind of thing,
- 14 because he didn't know where he was at all.
- 15 Q. Now what we did find, which I am going to draw to the
- Panel's attention, because it is relevant to the Panel's
- work, is that there was definitely an incident involving
- 18 RG65, but on 23rd September 1977. That was after
- 19 you had already -- you left in December of '76.
- 20 A. Right.
- 21 Q. Just bear with me while we look at this record at 47202,
- 22 please. It is an issue that I have brought to
- 23 Mr Wolfe's attention and the Department will see if
- there's anything more that can be said about it, but it
- we turn this round, please, you can see again this is

Personal, Professional, Protective Policing



## **MASTER TAPE T096979A**

RG 17

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Ah hm.

I know it's a long time ago but if I slippered somebody as many times as you're saying.

Yeah.

I would surely remember him and I, I'm, I don't and it did not happen.

And he said about RG 155 that you would have gave him a clout.

He said.

Yeah.

RG 155

Yeah.

Does David Robinson make this complaint.

I, I'll go to his, I'll go to his statement next if you wish after this.

SOLICITOR Yes please do, please do.

15

- 10. Most of the other boys were from Belfast and I remember getting teased a lot because I had a Bangor accent. On one occasion, I remember walking into a classroom where he was the teacher and he said, "Hello, SexyHIA 200 I am heterosexual, but this teasing had a homophobic element to it and the boys would then make comments about my sexuality which implied I was gay. All the other boys would laugh at this and this kind of teasing went on constantly. It was very hurtful and I felt humiliated by it.
- 11. There was another member of staff, RG 17 who He was in his 40's, had dirty fair hair and was athletic. He had a military background and was very strict. He was also a bully and he physically punished us using a He would beat us for minor misdemeanours in front of the other boys. I remember being frightened of him and being beaten by him on occasion. Rathgael just tolerated this sort of behaviour and it was normalised to a degree.
- 12.I started smoking when I was 8. I was addicted to it from a very early age. When I was in Lisnevin, I was allowed 6 cigarettes a day, however this was absolutely forbidden at Rathgael. I desperately needed cigarettes, and I frequently got caught smoking. I was constantly going off to have a cigarette and then I had to lie about where I had been. The staff were always finding me out and punishing me because of this. My housemaster always mentioned this at house meetings in front of the other boys as an example of bad behaviour. They would call me names like "sleekit" "slimy" and "underhand". These names stuck with me and I am still sensitive about people perceiving me in this way.
- 13. The regime at Rathgael was quite strict. We got up at 7.30 or 8.00am, got washed and ready to go to school. We all had breakfast together and then went to the school. The school was separate from the building where we lived but we went back to our main houses for meals. Classes in Rathgael were streamed but the education provided was very basic and the standard was so low that I found it difficult to adjust when I went back to Bangor High School

HIA 200 4

Page 26

- 1 Q. Well, HIA200, then you go on to talk in paragraph 11
- about another teacher and you say he taught
- 3 That's RG17.
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. He was in his . You go on to describe him. You say:
- 6 "He was very strict and he was a bully. He
- 7 physically punished us using a slipper" --
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. -- "which he had a name for."
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. "He called it 'Rufus'."
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. "He would beat us for minor misdemeanours in front of
- the other boys."
- 15 You remember being frightened of him and being
- beaten by him on occasion. You say that that sort of
- 17 behaviour by the staff was tolerated and normalised in
- 18 Rathgael to a degree.
- 19 A. Yes. Well, there would have been other members of staff
- there with him, with RG17 at that time. There would
- 21 have been other members of staff there quite willing,
- you know, to just let it happen.
- 23 Q. Paragraph 12 you talk about your smoking.
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. You say you started smoking when you were aged 8 --

but I was too afraid to say because if I had been marked as a squealer my life would have been even more intolerant.

- 8. There was a bully called RG 71 who used me as his slave. He would make me run errands for him, clean his shoes and dry his hair after he had washed it. It was humiliating but I would have been beaten if I did not do as he wished.
- 9. I spent the first couple of months being constantly beaten and covered in bruises. I was released on Christmas parole and I decided I was not going back because I could not face it. I lived on the streets in Bangor for a month or so. I lived in a lock up garage and I lived in a tree house in somebody's garden. I was freezing as it was winter and I was committing crime to survive. I was apprehended for burglary and taken back to Rathgael.
- 10. When I returned to Rathgael the second time the abuse eventually stopped. The boys who were inflicting the abuse on me were committing crimes and absconding themselves so they were eventually moved to Millisle. Once that core of bullies was moved I was able to establish myself as a stronger character. I had also grown a bit. As a result the last few months that I spent in Rathgael were relatively comfortable
- 11. As a consequence of my absconding I was not allowed out of the unit. I was not allowed home for visits and I was not allowed to go on an outdoor pursuit excursion to Runkerry with the other boys.
- 12. I was in the senior school and they tended to focus on employment skills rather than academic subjects. I completed a City and Guilds in motor engineering so every morning I went to the workshop. I would sometimes tell the workshop tutor that I was needed down at house 3. I would sneak out through the forest and go home and play with my friends for the afternoon and then I would sneak back to Rathgael. My house was close to Rathgael.
- 13. There were the usual recreational facilities that you would expect to find in such an institution such as a television, table tennis and board games. We also had

HIA 400 PRIVATE 3

- Rathgael dealt with some of the most disturbed children in Northern Ireland<sup>6 7</sup>
   Over time the emphasis was increasingly on community treatment. There was very little violence in Rathgael and none against staff until the last few years when an increase in incidents could be seen.
- 16. When I arrived in Rathgael in 1973, all house master and house mother teams were husbands and wives who lived adjacent to the residents. There were no female staff other than domestic, kitchen and nursing.
- 17. There is no doubt that there was a difficulty in getting the balance right between care and control. This was a professional challenge that evolved as Rathgael developed from being a Reform School to a more caring and educating establishment. All staff were encouraged to follow this goal and I had aspirations for the school to become a Centre of Excellence in the treatment of children and young people.

# Services provided by Rathgael

18. Rathgael provided a range of services to the children as summarised below.

# Education<sup>9</sup>

- 19. Education was headed by a Deputy Director, Head of Education assisted by two deputies and teachers. The range of classroom education in the Junior School was similar in most aspects to the curriculum of junior intermediate schools in the community. The curriculum was designed in response to the needs of the young children and covered subjects including literacy, mathematics, geography, history and physical education. Timetables were geared around what was available in mainstream schools as best as possible and the Teachers Union was represented to ensure teachers were aware of what was going on in mainstream schools.
- 20. The children in the Senior School were of school age and older so both classroom and trade training was provided. Classroom education was optional for young people over school age. The trade departments provided training in building, metalwork, motor engineering, painting, brick laying, decorating, joinery, catering and horticulture to both boys and girls. City and Guilds was introduced in the 1980s so that the young people could receive training and skills and an opportunity to work towards qualifications from a recognised body.

<sup>7</sup> Exhibit 2 - A Social Psychological Evaluation of a Community Service Programme for Young Offenders in a Northern Ireland Training School, thesis presented for the degree of Master of Social Science, D. Campbell Whyte, August 1981, p32

<sup>9</sup> RGL2388 – RGL23890

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup>RGL-24845

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> RGL-27433

much members of the Rathgael Community and developed greatly over the years. As well as conducting regular Assemblies, they provided Pastoral Care to both young people and staff alike. This met the statutory requirement set out in section 31 of the Training School Rules.<sup>7</sup>

# **Education**

- 19. I note from their statements that some Applicants (for example, HIA172 and HIA198) are critical of the standard of education provided at Rathgael. HIA 172 was admitted at the age of 12, which would assume that he had basic English and Math's on admission. His comments would also infer that he returned from Pepper Harrow unable to read and write, which in my opinion is difficult to comprehend. HIA198's recollection of Shamrock does not align with my experience staff to pupil ratios were low and individual teaching plans were developed and followed. Additional activities such as colouring in, crosswords and television would have also been part of the normal routine. Mr Whyte's statement at paragraphs 19 26 also discusses provision of education at Rathgael.
- 20. Further to that, high ability young people, mostly Care residents, attended local schools in the Bangor area, e.g. Gransha High and Bangor Girls High School, to allow them to continue mainstream education and obtain qualifications. The individual's parent school would have linked with the donor school to ensure continuity of education.
- 21. With regards to school refusers, I am of the opinion that Rathgael introduced many to a positive education experience for the first time, introducing them to a school routine and afforded them an opportunity to progress with their own personal development. It must be stated that many of the young people had been admitted having been excluded from school or having a negative experience of education, some of whom were unable to read or write. Assessments will show that many were admitted with low attainments, many of which were related to absenteeism as opposed to intelligence levels. The older

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> SPT-80001 - 80062

- 35. I approached another staff member, RG 6 to let him know of issues I was having and I was told to 'grow up and sort myself out'.
- 36. During my time under the training order I was in complete lock up.
- 37. When I had completed the training order in Rathgael I was placed under a care order to remain in Rathgael. I was placed in Unit 1 Downhill. This is an open unit. I had a Key Worker who was seldom on duty. When they were working I found they had limited time to listen to me. When I did get a chance to speak to them and tell them I was being bullied by the other residents and staff I was told that it was all in my head.
- 38. I had one brother whom I was very close to while I was in Rathgael. I would speak to him on the telephone. A staff member told me that our conservations were not appropriate. This resulted in me pushing him away and rejecting contact with him. I believe this was a deliberate tactic to alienate me from my family.
- 39. Once during the summer months I was on a bus trip and there was a female member of staff call RG7 I cannot recall her surname. I broke wind and she ordered me off the bus. I was barred from any bus trips for two weeks.
- 40. Whilst at school in Rathgael I would have been given tasks more suitable to primary school education. My education consisted of colouring in pictures. I was not taught anything of value and I left there without any qualifications. Consequently I have poor communication, numeracy and life skills.
- 41. I was placed on work experience for 15 weeks in the kitchens. I made sandwiches for the entire 15 weeks. I never gained any work experience with the exception of how to butter bread. When the kitchen staff would leave to take their breaks they would have locked me in the kitchen on my own.

out from participating in it. The number of young people who volunteered generally exceeded the number of projects so some had to wait until a place became available. Some young people may have been excluded from specific projects because, for example, a boy with a history of sexual offending would have been excluded from nursery group work or a non-swimmer would have been excluded from the swimming project.

35. The CSP was introduced when Rathgael School was undergoing a number of changes. Over time, child-care practices, counselling, individual assessment and treatment approaches were replacing the more custodial and punitive practices that had previously been in place. There was also a growing realisation that isolating boys from the community was inconsistent with the treatment policy which aimed to rehabilitate and prepare boys for return to their own communities better equipped to cope and to lead productive and trouble-free lives. The programme developed as a voluntary option for both school-age and over school-age young people and became established as both a curricular and extra-curricular activity. It was still running in 1991<sup>16</sup> but I am not sure when the programme stopped running.

# Children on license or extended leave

36. Rathgael was legally responsible for its care children, including those who had left the centre on licence or on extended leave. There was a small Community Care department that supervised those young children, including the East Side Project<sup>17</sup>, which offered 24 hour support to young people who had settled in east Belfast. This project won a national award in 1984 and went on to take referrals from all over Belfast. The centre also ran three houses for young people who left Rathgael with nowhere to go.

# Leisure and recreation

30. Evening activities included classes in photography, art and typing. Alternatively, the young people could play pool, do hairdressing or watch television. They also had opportunities to participate in specific projects. For example, in 1976, the young people, under supervision, converted an old Ulsterbus into a play bus, which was used by the Voluntary Service Bureau in the community for children to play in. This involved the young people using the metalwork, painting and motor engineering skills they had learnt in class. The play bus formed part of the Community Service Programme referred to above and provided an opportunity for a young person to act as an Assistant Playbus leader in support of the two ladies who were in charge. For this project it was normal practice for the volunteer to have come from one of the

<sup>17</sup> RGL-23888

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> RGL-27433

- estates it operated in and was the only project in which a volunteer travelled unsupervised to and from the project.
- 31. The school also ran a number of sporting competitions, mostly for football, pool and gymnastics. In fact, there was a Rathgael Gymnastics Club, which consisted of boys mainly and would put on shows. The Bangor Rotary Club would arrange for residents from nursing homes to come into the school so that young people could put on a show for them.

# Medical and dental

- 32. There were daily "Sick Bay Parades" and a qualified Doctor came in every week in support of the Medical Department that was on-site. In addition, there were twice yearly medical examinations. This was staffed by a matron and two qualified nurses. First aid provision was available on site 24 hours a day so if a resident suffered an injury they could see a nurse or to be brought to a hospital, depending on the circumstances. The medical services were also subject to inspection.
- 32. A dentist also came in regularly but this did not work as well as the young people attending their own dentists so this practice stopped.

# Food and clothing

- 33. The young people were required to wear a uniform in the early days of Rathgael until the early 1980s at which point they wore their own clothes. There was a laundry department where some of the older residents would also work under supervision.
- 34. There was a kitchen with three cooks supported by some of the older residents that provided food to all of the Units. The young people could also prepare supper and snacks for themselves in the kitchen facilities provided in the Units. A hot breakfast, lunch and dinner were available, and the diet was varied. There were complaints about this in the 1970s and early 198s but steps were taken to improve the standard of food provided and the chef was replaced.

## Staffing and personnel aspects

- 35. Rathgael consisted of Care and Youth Treatment staff supported by administrative, medical and legal personnel in addition to those servicing facilities and accommodation, e.g. the laundry and kitchen.
- 36. All the teachers were qualified. The care and youth treatment staff were either qualified in the Certificate of Qualification in Social Work (CQSW) or Certificate of Social Services (CSS) Social Workers. Unqualified care and youth treatment staff were also recruited but were required to become qualified within five years.

in 1976. For example, at there were technical drawing classes which I found impossible to keep up with as we were never taught this in Rathgael.

- 14. School finished about 3.30pm and we could do whatever we wanted before bed time. There was a snooker table, some miniature tennis courts where we played "patter tennis", and a swimming pool. The site itself was quite open but we were all locked in at night. There were opportunities to abscond but I only absconded once, following the incident where I was returned to Rathgael because I was frightened about getting caught and punished.
- 15. If any boy did run away, the police usually caught them quite quickly. The staff would isolate you for a time after you were returned and you were made to wear shorts instead of jeans. The boys who ran away were closely supervised by a housemaster for a while after they were caught.
- 16. My father came to visit me every weekend when I was in Rathgael. My parents had separated at this stage and my mother had moved to She visited less frequently as it was difficult for her to travel. I don't remember any external visitors coming to Rathgael for example, social workers or health/education welfare visitors. I was able to talk to certain members of staff, for example, the staff who were my housemasters about the things which bothered me while I was there, RG 18 or RG 19. They were both good men, but there was a sense that if you complained about bullying, they were all in cahoots with each other and nothing would really be done to change behaviours.
- 17. I remember Rathgael as an almost entirely negative experience. When I went there first although I was getting into trouble, it was not serious trouble and looking back, I can see that I was quite innocent. I was exposed to a lot of negative influences there and my own behaviour started to escalate into more serious drinking and crime. Things happened to me in Rathgael which made me feel very insecure about myself and have adversely affected my whole life. For example, I was never taught to value myself and I never had the confidence to push myself career wise. Consequently, because I missed

HIA 200 5

sports days and I remember a day when each house had to build a raft and race across the lake on the grounds.

- 14. The unit was clean, we were well fed and reasonably well looked after. I found the staff in Rathgael reasonable apart from their lack of awareness of what was happening and their inability to manage the bullying. There was no investigation if they saw you with a black eye and accepted your word if you said you got it from falling. I think they were negligent in the care they provided. They provided very little supervision and spent most of their time in the staff room rather than looking after us. You lived in fear if there was a member of staff on duty who spent a lot of time in the staff room as you knew that you had no protection from the bullies during that shift.
- 15. There was not a lot of interaction between the staff and the boys. There was a points system and the points added up to privileges such as weekend leave. That system did not work well for me as I lost any points I had accumulated when I ran away.
- 16. When I was in Rathgael I received no visits from social workers. My mum visited me regularly. My father was a chronic alcoholic so he never visited me. I am not sure he was even aware I was in any institution.
- 17. When I absconded I committed crimes to survive. I was on remand and was returned to Rathgael after each court appearance until I turned seventeen. Once I turned seventeen I was no longer able to stay in a training school so I was remanded to Crumlin Road jail. I was sentenced to six months to two years in borstal.

## The Maze (1977)

18. It was common practice to be sent to a closed borstal for the first few months after being committed to borstal. If you proved yourself to the Board they could then move you to an open borstal. When I was committed to borstal there was no purpose built closed borstal so I was sent to the H-blocks. I was in H4 A-wing which was the borstal wing. The other three legs of that block were for regular

- 21. RG 2 a member of staff was very heavy handed. He was verbally abusive to me, he would shout and swear at me, calling me names like 'bitch' and would threaten me by saying 'I am your worst nightmare'.
- 22. On one occasion I was restrained by a member of staff called RG 3, who was exmilitary. He put my arm right up my back and pressed on a pressure point on my thumb which paralysed me with pain.
- 23. On another occasion I did not get out of the swimming pool with other residents. I had just been in the pool a short time when a staff member, that I believe was called RG 232 took me out of the pool using a large hook and sat on me. I would estimate him to be 18 stone weight. My face was pushed against the tiles I screamed for help but no one assisted me nor did he stop. Another staff member called RG 5 was also present and did nothing to help me.
- 24. A punishment at Rathgael was to be sent to the Shamrock room. The room was approximately four foot square. This room was empty and had a very rough carpet. Punishment was to be locked in there for 72 hours in solitary confinement. When I was put in the Shamrock room I would pull at my hair through boredom.
- was responsible for giving us cigarettes. If I was in any trouble, RG 5 would cut the cigarettes to make them shorter. At times the cigarettes would have been shortened to an inch long. This was another method staff used to control us, in reality this led to tensions between the residents.
- 26. During the evenings we were not allowed to select a particular television programme to view. We had to watch the staff's choice of programme.
- 27. There was a pool room at Rathgael. We were not allowed to use this facility unless accompanied by a member of staff. In practice this happened quite infrequently.

the young people refer to it as a gym mat<sup>18</sup> but in reality these were safety mattresses designed to ensure the young people could not use them to self-harm and the materials used reduced the risk of cross infection as they could be easily cleaned.

- Bed sheets were dangerous, depending on the presenting problems, so blankets were used as there was less chance of them being used as a ligature.
- The room would sometimes have equipment, and books, comics and magazines were permitted.
- Some toiletries were safer than offers and were therefore permitted but no glass was permitted.
- Cassette tapes were safer than CDs and these were therefore permitted.
- Clothing would be checked and those items regarded as high risk were prohibited.

# A typical day in the life of a young person at Rathgael

**45.** This is mentioned at paragraphs 23 – 26 in Mr. Whyte's statement. The day would consist of the following:

## **Monday to Friday (School Year)**

- 7.30 Young people awakened / washed and showered / dressed
- 8.00 Breakfast
- 8.30 Morning jobs and free-time before school
- 9.00 Assembly
- 9.15 School / workshops
- 10.45 Break time young people returned to units (Stand Easy)
- 11.15 School / workshops
- 12.30 Lunch (main meal of the day)
- 2.00 School / workshops
- 4.00 Return to units free time games and hobbies
- 5.00 Tea

6.30 House cleaning and evening programme (Evening groups, TV, pool, general recreation)

9.00 Bed time

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE-PERSONAL

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Exhibit 10 - Specification of the Safety Mattress (internet search)

- 7. I remember another incident where RG 4 had told the boys they were not allowed to hang on the monkey bars inside the school. I was away when he said this and I didn't know that he had forbidden us to hang on the bars. I was leaning against them when he walked back later that day and RG 4 took me to his office. I refused to hold my hand out to be caned. He lost his temper and beat me with such force that his cane broke and he started thumping me with his fists. I was only thirteen at the time and I was terrified. I remember hearing about another incident where one of the teachers, RG 66 who was a small man with glasses, hit a boy called RG 68 on the lip. RG 68 had to get four of five stitches. These sorts of violent incidents were the norm rather than the exception.
- 8. There was other incident with a boy who had come from Kincora. He was a big lad and he was very withdrawn. We called him RG 69 He just wandered around with his hands in his pockets and never spoke to anyone or about anything. I remember we were told that he had taken his own life by throwing himself off one of the ferries going to Scotland.
- 9. In the summer of 1976 we were made to work chipping small mosaic tiles from a swimming pool which was on site as a form of punishment. We were given small hammers and told to chip away the tiles. We spent hours at this task and our hands were covered in blisters when we finished. The dust was overwhelming and we had no masks or protective clothing. It was a form of child labour and I felt degraded doing this work.
- 10.I remember being afraid constantly at Rathgael. For example, there was a night watchman, I think his name was RG 13 He used to patrol the grounds at night. He had two big Alsatians and he used to bring those dogs into the houses at night. He used to come up right up beside you with these two big, barking dogs. It was just an example of another thing that really scared me.
- 11. The general level of care was good at Rathgael. I have no complaints about the living conditions as such. For example, the food was good and the environment was clean. The laundry was done every week and your clothing

year or so and then she passed away. She was sixteen years old and had been sniffing aerosols.

- 10. I attended school in Rathgael which was like going back to primary school. I have dyslexia and no additional help or assistance was provided. The education was very poor and my level of education fell. For that reason I had more interest in practical subjects like woodwork, gardening and metal work than the academic subjects.
- 11. I could not swim when I went to Rathgael. RG 17 threw me in to the pool and scared the life out of me. I did learn to swim and became a strong swimmer. He always put me in fear as he would hit you with a gym slipper or throw you outside in all weathers as punishment. He was good at sport but he was very strict.
- 12. At the weekend there was always something planned for us to do. We were taken for a walk, or went swimming or watched videos. I eventually was allowed weekend leave and I went to stay with my father in Belfast. I cycled to Belfast and back when I had weekend leave. I enjoyed cycling and was in the cycling club in Rathgael which was organised by RG 49.
- 13. I got on well with most of the staff but some of them were short tempered and I knew to avoid them. RG 52 and RG 41 were caring and I felt that I could talk to them. I was a quiet child but I was prone to angry outbursts. I behaved this way because I had been abused by my older brother when I was younger, my mother had passed away, my father was in prison and I was being bullied in Rathgael. RG 52 and RG made an effort to find out why I behaved that way and helped me to view things differently.
- 14. My key worker was called RG 20. I thought we had a good relationship and he even taught me how to play the guitar but all of a sudden that stopped. The bond seemed to disintegrate for no reason. I had the same experience with RG. He took me out cycling a few times and then all of a sudden that stopped. The ones I kept my relationship with were RG and RG 52.

- 30. Young Teenage Mothers were referred to Parents and Children Together (Barnardos) and Thorndale Family Centre (Salvation Army)
- 31. In 1982, I helped introduce Independent Assessment Treatment Profiles<sup>12</sup> <sup>13</sup> in conjunction with the APRU for each resident. This innovation enabled staff to assess and treat each person individually and covered issues such as family background, education, social skills, and physical and psychiatric problems. An interdisciplinary approach was adopted, which involved social workers, teachers, psychologists, medical staff and the school's consultant psychiatrist working together to identify and ease each young person's particular problems. Although this proved to be an effective model for a lot of kids, it was very challenging to deliver effectively to all. This approach had particular success in reducing and eliminating individual problems. The Social Services Inspectorate agreed this approach as a suitable model.

# Community Service Programme

- 32. I could see the benefits of community-based treatments whilst recognising that some young people would benefit better from a residential experience.
- 33. In 1974, I approached the proposal to establish the Community Service Programme (CSP)<sup>1415</sup>. This involved the young people being placed in a variety of Community-based projects aimed at turning them into 'treaters' rather than being treated themselves. RG 269 agreed to this proposal which I then implemented. For example, they would work with kids in the Rudolf Steiner village at Glencraig on activities such as gardening and sport. They also went to Kilcooley Primary School to teach the children how to play football. Other projects attended by the young people included the Physically Handicapped and Able-Bodied (PHAB) Club in Bangor, the Avoca Playgoup, Beacon House Club and swimming with the handicapped.
- 34. The young people were supervised by two Community Service Volunteers (CSVs) who were also resident at the school for a minimum period of six months. The Volunteers were selected by the CSV Organisation in conjunction with Rathgael's Community Service Supervisor. These activities put the Rathgael residents into a caring role. Only two abscondings and two alleged thefts were recorded during the first five and half years of the programme in which over 150 boys had participated. This was regarded as an indication of the respect the young people had for the programme and how much they got

<sup>14</sup> Exhibit 3 – A Social Psychological Evaluation of a Community Service Programme for Young Offenders in a Northern Ireland Training School, thesis presented for the degree of Master of Social Science, D. Campbell Whyte, August 1981, pp33-42

15 RGL-27433

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup>Exhibit 3 – Initial case conference for K brown – 14 Dec 1993

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> RGL-46505 – RGL-46508

- estates it operated in and was the only project in which a volunteer travelled unsupervised to and from the project.
- 31. The school also ran a number of sporting competitions, mostly for football, pool and gymnastics. In fact, there was a Rathgael Gymnastics Club, which consisted of boys mainly and would put on shows. The Bangor Rotary Club would arrange for residents from nursing homes to come into the school so that young people could put on a show for them.

# Medical and dental

- 32. There were daily "Sick Bay Parades" and a qualified Doctor came in every week in support of the Medical Department that was on-site. In addition, there were twice yearly medical examinations. This was staffed by a matron and two qualified nurses. First aid provision was available on site 24 hours a day so if a resident suffered an injury they could see a nurse or to be brought to a hospital, depending on the circumstances. The medical services were also subject to inspection.
- 32. A dentist also came in regularly but this did not work as well as the young people attending their own dentists so this practice stopped.

# Food and clothing

- 33. The young people were required to wear a uniform in the early days of Rathgael until the early 1980s at which point they wore their own clothes. There was a laundry department where some of the older residents would also work under supervision.
- 34. There was a kitchen with three cooks supported by some of the older residents that provided food to all of the Units. The young people could also prepare supper and snacks for themselves in the kitchen facilities provided in the Units. A hot breakfast, lunch and dinner were available, and the diet was varied. There were complaints about this in the 1970s and early 198s but steps were taken to improve the standard of food provided and the chef was replaced.

## Staffing and personnel aspects

- 35. Rathgael consisted of Care and Youth Treatment staff supported by administrative, medical and legal personnel in addition to those servicing facilities and accommodation, e.g. the laundry and kitchen.
- 36. All the teachers were qualified. The care and youth treatment staff were either qualified in the Certificate of Qualification in Social Work (CQSW) or Certificate of Social Services (CSS) Social Workers. Unqualified care and youth treatment staff were also recruited but were required to become qualified within five years.

young people were able to follow vocational training courses and many achieved City and Guilds qualifications in a range of subjects, painting and decorating, motor engineering, horticulture, catering and metal work: for example HIA 400. This greatly improved their employability on discharge from Rathgael and ready access to work experience placements enabled staff to refer young people to local employment schemes such as Youth Training Programmes and Youth Community Programmes. Many young people were not accepted by their home school with some choosing to return to Rathgael as day-pupils.

# Medical and Dental Services

- 22. From reading the statements of the Applicants, I note that there are criticisms in relation to the medical and dental care provided at Rathgael: for example HIA436 and HIA503. This was not my experience of how these services worked. In terms of medical services provided in Rathgael and further to the information provided at paragraphs 32 of Mr. Whyte's statement, we provided comprehensive medical and dental services to all young people in Rathgael.
- 23. There was a fully qualified medical department consisting of visiting Medical Officers and a Dentist, a Matron and a number of nurses. When the girls transferred from Whiteabbey to Rathgael in 1985, a female doctor was also appointed.
- 24. Daily visits to sick bay were organised and treatment given. There was an inpatient facility until the late 1980s when it was replaced with care being providing in the residential units by visiting nursing staff. In my opinion the medical services provided in Rathgael were outstanding and the staff were professional and caring and dealt with a high level of remedial medical care as a result of medical issues having been neglected prior to admission.
- **25.** The medical centre / sick bay consisted of:
  - i. A dedicated medical room with an examination couch, equipped medical cabinets and desk;

puzzles and played games on the computer. I did not receive the same education as children in mainstream education.

- 33. The food I was received in Rathgael was disgusting; I do not believe the food was fit for human consumption. When I was in Shamrock House the meals I received were nearly cold and had a rubber texture.
- 34. There was no medical or dental care. There was a Matron called RG 75 but she just seem to dispense Strepsils for every ailment. On one occasion I had an injury to my foot and I was given a Strepsil.
- 35. I never received a hair cut during my time in Rathgael.
- 36. Despite all my problems I was not given any medication or any help. I had very little education as no-one understood my problems.
- 37. I did not receive any life sills during my time spent in Rathgael, for example, how to look after my appearance or respect myself. I was not prepared for life when I left care.

## **Life After Care**

- 38. I left Rathgael when I was seventeen years old. I was deemed 'high risk' and discharged to the care of my father. My parents had since divorced and my father had no knowledge of how to manage me nor did he want to manage me. My father, brother and sister were drinking heavily. I contacted Rathgael and social services regarding this and I was told 'it's a good home', 'there is nowhere else for you to go' and that social services had no legal obligation towards me. I believe my family had a huge resentment for me as I was blamed for breaking up the family. To this day I feel consumed with guilt and find it very difficult to accept that I deserve a future.
- 39. I registered with a dentist when I left Rathgael. I required eight fillings as my teeth had been neglected throughout my childhood.

# Rathgael Training School (1988 to 1990)

- 3. I stayed in the Reception Unit for 2 to 3 months when I initially arrived at Rathgael. The staff at this unit treated me well for the most part. However, I missed my brother and sister. I didn't understand why I couldn't go home to live with them. I felt isolated and homesick.
- 4. I was hospitalised with suspected appendicitis during this time. I remember feeling really unwell and throwing up on the Friday before my admission to hospital. A locum doctor attended me at Rathgael and left a prescription for paracetamol. I was in agony all weekend and the staff did not take me to hospital or seek further medical advice. On Monday I was re-examined by Rathgael's own doctor who realised immediately something was seriously wrong. I was admitted to hospital from 5 September to 19 September 1988. I had to have emergency surgery.
- 5. I was moved to House 1 after two to three months in Reception. I remember things went downhill from then. I began to feel lonely and homesick. I did not feel I could talk to the staff there. I missed living at home and being with my brother and sister. After I had been in Rathgael for six months, I began menstruating for the first time. I was scared and I wanted to talk to my mother and I absconded from the Unit for the first time. I thumbed a lift to and went straight to my mother's house. The police collected me the next day and took me back. I remember my mother had to explain to a male police officer the reason why I absconded and I felt embarrassed.
- 6. When I got back to Rathgael, the staff put me in isolation as a punishment for running away. I was kept in a single room in House 1 for between 24 or 48 hours. No-one talked to me about the changes which were happening to my body or asked me if anything was troubling me. I remember feeling scared and upset and this was a particularly unhappy time for me.
- 7. I began absconding more consistently from this point. I always went to my mother's house in because I did not know where else to go. The police guickly located me and the staff put me in an isolation room for the first

- 4. We were punished in Rathgael for not complying with instructions, self-harming or generally messing around. There was a team leader called RG 11 and he was a big man. He was seen as an enforcer and the other staff looked up to him. He would kick me and punch me. When he punished me he would tell the other staff to leave him to deal with me. He would lay into me, punching me and kicking me with his trainers while gripping me by my hair or my throat. I also witnessed him grabbing other residents by the throat and dragging them away. You could hear their screams getting louder and you knew what was happening to them. The other members of staff were aware of what he was doing but they were scared of him.
- 5. There was another member of staff who beat me for messing around in the television room. He pulled me up the corridor and threw me in to his room. I cannot remember his name but he was between 25 and 30 and walked with a skip to his step.
- 6. I started self-harming when I was in Rathgael. If you were self-harming at night RG 11 had to be contacted. An ambulance was never phoned as the staff did not want to bring attention to the place. You could smell alcohol from some of the staff as they drank and smoked when they were on duty.
- 7. When I look back at my time in Rathgael I realise how wrongly we were treated but at the time we thought it was part and parcel of being in care. Despite the issues I have with Rathgael I enjoyed my time there in comparison to the political situation I was living in in Belfast. Undoubtedly it was a place of safety and the majority of the staff could not have done enough for you and were kind people. I believe that the problems with the care in Rathgael were the result of deficiencies in the recruitment, supervision and training of staff.

# Somerton Road Children's Home (17/10/1989 - 30/11/1989)

8. I moved from Rathgael to Somerton Road. I was sexually abused by one of the older residents at night time. I have no complaints about the staff in Somerton Road and I enjoyed my time there as it had a more caring and homely environment.

HIA 182 PRIVATE 2

They were always permitted to use the toilet. At no time did I authorise or contribute to a child being detained in the room for an inappropriate period of time. Further, I recall that the residents were not detained in the room for constant periods of time, but would rather be permitted to leave for various reasons during their period of detention in the room.

- (e) I have no knowledge of the room being misused by staff. The room was simply a safe environment in which to manage a volatile resident whilst they calmed down. All tiers of management were aware of the use of the room and deemed its use appropriate. Records were kept in respect to the use of the room. Rathgael Training School was regularly inspected by external agencies. Some inspections were unannounced. Each child regularly engaged with their designated social worker. Medically trained nurses worked in both sides of Rathgael Training School and every child was consulted regularly. The residents consulted with the nurses alone and independently of the staff.
- (f) Restraint was never used as a means of punishment. Placement of a resident in a room alone that may have been sparsely furnished was not used as a means of punishment. It did however provide an opportunity for positive engagement with a young person and an opportunity for them to reflect upon difficult behaviours that they were presenting.

Response to Allegations Appearing in Witness Statement of

- 19. At paragraph 4 of his witness statement, HIA 182 suggests that he was punished by me. I am said to have kicked and punched him and grabbed his hair and throat. The allegations are generic in nature, and are denied.
- 20. At paragraph 4 of his witness statement, HIA 182 suggests that he witnessed me 'grabbing other residents by the throat and dragging them away'. It is implied that these persons were then further assaulted by me. Other staff members are said to have been aware of what I was doing, but did nothing about it because they were afraid of me. The allegations are generic in nature, and are denied.
- 21. I categorically deny that I assaulted HIA 182 at any time. I never punched or kicked him. I never grabbed his hair or throat. I never grabbed residents other than by the throat and trailed them. I categorically refute any suggestion that I was violent towards or any other resident in my charge. HIA 182 allegations of assault against me are false and entirely without foundation.
- 22. At paragraph 6 of his witness statement, himself when in Rathgael. He suggests that if a person harmed themselves at night time I would be contacted. He claims that 'the staff' never tasked an ambulance as they did not want to attract attention. He further suggests that he could smell alcohol from 'some of the staff' as they drank alcohol whilst on duty.

- I am thus unable to gainsay his contention that he harmed himself when he was resident. Insofar as it is suggested that I was responsible for neglecting to task emergency medical assistance by ambulance when it was appropriate to do so or that I neglected to secure appropriate medical treatment for any resident in my charge, I categorically deny that this ever occurred. If a resident did self harm at night and I was on call I would usually be called depending on the severity of the situation. I would have no hesitation in tasking an ambulance or taking a child to hospital if that was required. I have never been motivated by a desire to hide what occurred in Rathgael Training School from any appropriate person or body.
- 24. Insofar as it is suggested that I drank alcohol whilst on duty, I categorically deny this allegation. It is false and entirely without foundation.
- 25. I am familiar with Centre. I consider that the allegations made by HIA 182 are malicious and that they have been made in response to disciplinary issues that have arose with his employment and my scrutiny of his alleged misconduct. I believe that HIA 182 has had contact with other past residents of Rathgael Training School and has discussed his allegations against me with them. I fear that he may have colluded with other complainants. The concerns that arose during HIA 182 employment include:
- (a) He was considered to be over-familiar with other staff. For instance, he is said to have obtained another member of staff's mobile telephone without her permission and to have posted some comment on her Facebook social networking website. She was upset by this.
- (b) There were occasions when he was considered to be absent from work without good reason and / or sufficient notice.
- (c) He was required to undertake TCI (Therapeutic Crisis Intervention) training. He initially failed this and it was subsequently reported by the training Team Leader to me that he was avoiding the re-test. I had cause to speak with him about this matter and inform him that the training was mandatory.
- (d) He was alleged to have made some threat to a night supervisor, during a period of industrial action.
- (e) He was off work after he complained of sickness. He was referred to occupational health. He is said to have informed occupational health that he was injured during the restraint of a resident. No record existed of any such restraint. I received reports that there was no such restraint from other staff. I sought an incident report from HIA 182 and the report that he provided was wholly inadequate in that it contained scant detail.

# Rathgael Training School (1988 to 1990)

- 3. I stayed in the Reception Unit for 2 to 3 months when I initially arrived at Rathgael. The staff at this unit treated me well for the most part. However, I missed my brother and sister. I didn't understand why I couldn't go home to live with them. I felt isolated and homesick.
- 4. I was hospitalised with suspected appendicitis during this time. I remember feeling really unwell and throwing up on the Friday before my admission to hospital. A locum doctor attended me at Rathgael and left a prescription for paracetamol. I was in agony all weekend and the staff did not take me to hospital or seek further medical advice. On Monday I was re-examined by Rathgael's own doctor who realised immediately something was seriously wrong. I was admitted to hospital from 5 September to 19 September 1988. I had to have emergency surgery.
- 5. I was moved to House 1 after two to three months in Reception. I remember things went downhill from then. I began to feel lonely and homesick. I did not feel I could talk to the staff there. I missed living at home and being with my brother and sister. After I had been in Rathgael for six months, I began menstruating for the first time. I was scared and I wanted to talk to my mother and I absconded from the Unit for the first time. I thumbed a lift to and went straight to my mother's house. The police collected me the next day and took me back. I remember my mother had to explain to a male police officer the reason why I absconded and I felt embarrassed.
- 6. When I got back to Rathgael, the staff put me in isolation as a punishment for running away. I was kept in a single room in House 1 for between 24 or 48 hours. No-one talked to me about the changes which were happening to my body or asked me if anything was troubling me. I remember feeling scared and upset and this was a particularly unhappy time for me.
- 7. I began absconding more consistently from this point. I always went to my mother's house in because I did not know where else to go. The police guickly located me and the staff put me in an isolation room for the first

RG 81 and I did not get along, he wanted me out of Rathgael. Consequently, he wrote a poor report about me. I asked to see the report, but I was not allowed. I felt that the system excluded me from any effective participation in matters concerning my welfare.

- 10.1 remember another boy at Rathgael, RG 83 whom I had known since primary school and he was about two years older than I was. He was diagnosed with schizophrenia. He was bullied when he was in primary school and he was bullied at Rathgael. I remember he tried to hang himself at Rathgael and they moved him to hospital. He took his own life at home when he was eventually discharged. No-one on the staff at Rathgael offered us any counselling or asked us if we wanted to go to his funeral. It was as if it never happened. I found this very upsetting.
- 11. The staff found out that I was having consensual sexual relations with a girl at Rathgael in 1987. They told me I had to start going to the VD clinic. They made me go every 2-3 weeks for roughly 3 months to medically test me for any sexually transmitted diseases. I was told on one of the last appointments that I was disease free and I was given some sexual education. They also gave me a brown paper bag with pamphlets and durex condoms. I put these in my own overnight bag. The following weekend, I went to my father's house for an overnight stay. I had forgotten about the brown bag in my overnight bag and when I saw it, I hid it in a drawer in my room as my dad or step-mother did not know anything about going to the clinic. My stepmother found the brown bag while putting clothes away and told my father. My father got very angry and said he was not aware that I had gone to the clinic. Rathgael did not inform him of any of this and he said he was going to speak to them about it. It never came up again.

## Lisnevin (21 February 1989 - May 1989)

12.I was in Lisnevin on remand for about two and a half months. The regime there was very strict but generally the quality of care was good. Everything was regulated and you were given very little freedom. For example, if you wanted more food in the dining hall, the staff took your dining plate and then gave you

Page 135

- 1 It was embarrassing. I was a young teenager. Just even
- being in the same room, it was uncomfortable, but we got
- 3 by, so we did.
- 4 O. Was she --
- 5 A. But, no, I -- sorry.
- 6 Q. Was she receiving similar sort of treatment then?
- 7 A. She was receiving treatment for one of the venereal
- 8 diseases --
- 9 Q. Yes. Right.
- 10 A. -- so she was. Hence why they insisted on me going, but
- I was basically told on the Monday, "Listen, you're
- going to this place and that's it", if you know what
- I mean like. That's -- not even an explanation why,
- 14 because they didn't know whether I had a sexual
- relationship before this incident, if you know what I
- mean, but I -- well, I felt really uncomfortable and
- 17 embarrassed --
- 18 Q. Yes.
- 19 A. -- so I was, being that age and that sort of procedure.
- 20 Q. Right. Thank you very much.
- 21 A. You're welcome.
- 22 CHAIRMAN: HIA434, you will be relieved to hear I am sure
- that we don't have any more questions for you today, and
- thank you for arranging to speak to us as you have from
- 25 Canada. It's very helpful --

- estates it operated in and was the only project in which a volunteer travelled unsupervised to and from the project.
- 31. The school also ran a number of sporting competitions, mostly for football, pool and gymnastics. In fact, there was a Rathgael Gymnastics Club, which consisted of boys mainly and would put on shows. The Bangor Rotary Club would arrange for residents from nursing homes to come into the school so that young people could put on a show for them.

# Medical and dental

- 32. There were daily "Sick Bay Parades" and a qualified Doctor came in every week in support of the Medical Department that was on-site. In addition, there were twice yearly medical examinations. This was staffed by a matron and two qualified nurses. First aid provision was available on site 24 hours a day so if a resident suffered an injury they could see a nurse or to be brought to a hospital, depending on the circumstances. The medical services were also subject to inspection.
- 32. A dentist also came in regularly but this did not work as well as the young people attending their own dentists so this practice stopped.

# Food and clothing

- 33. The young people were required to wear a uniform in the early days of Rathgael until the early 1980s at which point they wore their own clothes. There was a laundry department where some of the older residents would also work under supervision.
- 34. There was a kitchen with three cooks supported by some of the older residents that provided food to all of the Units. The young people could also prepare supper and snacks for themselves in the kitchen facilities provided in the Units. A hot breakfast, lunch and dinner were available, and the diet was varied. There were complaints about this in the 1970s and early 198s but steps were taken to improve the standard of food provided and the chef was replaced.

## Staffing and personnel aspects

- 35. Rathgael consisted of Care and Youth Treatment staff supported by administrative, medical and legal personnel in addition to those servicing facilities and accommodation, e.g. the laundry and kitchen.
- 36. All the teachers were qualified. The care and youth treatment staff were either qualified in the Certificate of Qualification in Social Work (CQSW) or Certificate of Social Services (CSS) Social Workers. Unqualified care and youth treatment staff were also recruited but were required to become qualified within five years.

putting you in timeout she was fair and did what she said. If she told me I was going to my room for five minutes then I was put there for five minutes. I respected her and she was kind. Although some of the staff were kind I find it difficult to understand how they were able to stand back and allow horrible things to happen to me. I thought that any act of kindness was so wonderful but I realise that that is just normal.

- 19. Feeling alone and being separated from my family was punishment enough without being in a harsh, unfair environment.
- 20. I was not properly discharged from Lissue as I ran away a few days before I was due to leave and was not sent back. I spent a few months at home with my mum. I attended the Jaffa Centre where the staff were good people who had a lot of time for the children. My mother could not cope so I was moved to Rathgael.

## Rathgael Training School, Bangor (22/05/1986 to 30/01/1990)

- 21. I was admitted to Rathgael in the summer of 1986 on a place of safety order. I was placed in house 5 which is the reception unit on the young offenders' side as there was no room on the care side. The house parents were RG 50 RG 51 RG 51 On arrival in house 5 I was told to have a shower and when I was dried there was a uniform waiting for me. I have no idea what happened to my old clothes. I was handed a mop and bucket and told to clean the bathroom. That was my introduction to child labour. All the unskilled labour was delegated to the children who were then assaulted if they did not do it. Everyone in house 5 wore outdated, humiliating clothes. The clothes were all similar and felt like a prison uniform. I already felt like I was an oddball and did not like being made to wear clothes which marked me out. When we were in Bangor we were easily identifiable as being from Rathgael as we were in our "uniform".
- 22. Within four days of being admitted to Rathgael I had been beaten and left with a black eye. At breakfast I complained that someone had spat in my cereal.

  RG 50 the housemaster of house 5, told me to shut up and eat it. I said no

- 7. I remember another incident where RG 4 had told the boys they were not allowed to hang on the monkey bars inside the school. I was away when he said this and I didn't know that he had forbidden us to hang on the bars. I was leaning against them when he walked back later that day and RG 4 took me to his office. I refused to hold my hand out to be caned. He lost his temper and beat me with such force that his cane broke and he started thumping me with his fists. I was only thirteen at the time and I was terrified. I remember hearing about another incident where one of the teachers, RG 66 who was a small man with glasses, hit a boy called RG 68 on the lip. RG 68 had to get four of five stitches. These sorts of violent incidents were the norm rather than the exception.
- 8. There was other incident with a boy who had come from Kincora. He was a big lad and he was very withdrawn. We called him RG 69 He just wandered around with his hands in his pockets and never spoke to anyone or about anything. I remember we were told that he had taken his own life by throwing himself off one of the ferries going to Scotland.
- 9. In the summer of 1976 we were made to work chipping small mosaic tiles from a swimming pool which was on site as a form of punishment. We were given small hammers and told to chip away the tiles. We spent hours at this task and our hands were covered in blisters when we finished. The dust was overwhelming and we had no masks or protective clothing. It was a form of child labour and I felt degraded doing this work.
- 10.I remember being afraid constantly at Rathgael. For example, there was a night watchman, I think his name was RG 13 He used to patrol the grounds at night. He had two big Alsatians and he used to bring those dogs into the houses at night. He used to come up right up beside you with these two big, barking dogs. It was just an example of another thing that really scared me.
- 11. The general level of care was good at Rathgael. I have no complaints about the living conditions as such. For example, the food was good and the environment was clean. The laundry was done every week and your clothing

placed there for six weeks. I saw him in Rathgael but the staff there knew what he'd done to me. I then went back to Carnview for about two and a half years before going back to Rathgael for a second time. I had to face RG8 everyday in Rathgael for almost two years. The staff also knew he was in the Simon Community even though that's where they sent me to after my time in Rathgael.

I never agreed with the way spoke to me about RG8 penis was soft or hard when he assaulted me and he told me that I asked for it.

Was eventually moved on to another children's home in Larne.

7. The food was fine in Carnview and the accommodation was warm and comfortable enough. There was no sex or hygiene education.

# Rathgael Training School, Bangor (26/12/92-06/01/93, 23/2/95-10/4/95, 23/4/95-19/9/96)

- 8. I was placed in Rathgael until I was seventeen and a girl called RG 9 was in charge of our unit. I started off in the care unit and I was in there for the first six months. That was awful because you didn't get out for exercise or fresh air. It was a small room and there was a TV in the common room but there was no privacy. I felt totally trapped. If you went to the toilet staff waited outside the door and we weren't even allowed to sit in the hall. In my bedroom I slept on a thin blue mattress on the floor, like those used in gymnastics. It was like a cell and I remember the staff could look at me through a glass panel and they shouted at me from outside. There was one room we were allowed to smoke in and they gave us three cigarettes a day.
- 9. The food was served in the living room/ kitchen area. It was disgusting and if I didn't want to eat they forced me to finish it before I was allowed to leave the table. The staff were very hard. The chicken was never cooked properly and I

**HIA 386** 

**PRIVATE** 

3

turned vegetarian in there. The vegetarian option was always the same meal every day. The kitchen was closed between 5pm and 9pm so we weren't allowed anything to eat or drink during that time. Supper was an apple or a drink and I was very hungry most of the time.

- 10. There were many times I tried to talk to the staff because I needed someone to talk to. They always just said they were busy and shut the door on me. Some of the staff I remember were RG 10 RG 11 and RG 12, and they didn't have any interest in me. They used to say to me 'Do you think we are here because we care about you? We are only here for the money'. They used to try to wind us up by telling us how much their own kids had at home.
- 11. In the mornings I got up, got washed, had breakfast and I was forced to go to Mass every morning in the Chapel, whether I believed or not. I went to school on the site, which was the same school as the offenders attended and they called us the 'care bears'. School was held in just one classroom with one teacher. They didn't teach us anything but gave us a 'Playstation' to play with or crosswords to keep us occupied. When I left I couldn't cope with reading, writing or arithmetic and I had no real education. I didn't even know how to deal with people.
- 12. They often restrained me and locked me in the 'D' room, also known as the 'Shamrock' room for seventy two hours at a time. I was put in there for slicing my arms and glue sniffing, or for swearing, being cheeky or aggressive to the staff. I was even put in there for refusing to go to sleep at night. In the long term units we were allowed to get out and walk about but we were never allowed to go beyond the perimeter fence. I had no time to myself as I had to be followed by staff twenty four hours a day.

**HIA 386** 

**PRIVATE** 

4

hammering' or that he would 'get me'.	RG 2	treated most	of the
residents in this manner.			

- 23. Another member of staff, RG 20 would often pretend to tickle me. In reality he was fondling my breasts. This happened throughout my time in House 3 at Rathgael. There was another resident called RG 23 She had large breasts. RG 20 would often fondle her.
- 24. When I was sixteen years old I was moved to the care unit at Rathgael. This was a very depressing time for me. I was still being bullied by other residents and staff. I continued to engage in self harm and began to sniff glue.
- 25. The food in Rathgael was poor. I turned vegetarian whilst in Rathgael because the meat was always under-cooked. I recall being forced to eat under cooked chicken by a member of staff, RG 24 RG 24 is the manager of RG 24 laughed at me and spat in my food and in my face and yelled at me. After this I received a vegetarian dish for lunch. I received the same vegetable pastry dish every day. Staff would laugh at me eating the same food every day. At supper time I received toast. I was hungry a lot during my time in Rathgael.
- 26. In Rathgael I attended classes in life skills in preparation for leaving Rathgael. The staff there did not teach me any life skills.
- 27. I did not have a social worker when I was in Rathgael. I had a key worker called RG 25 although she would not have been there often, I have no complaint about her.
- 28. I did not received any visitors during my time in Rathgael.

## **Life After Care**

29. I was sixteen and a half years old when I left Rathgael. I went to the Simon Community in A man called RG 26 from Rathgael was in charge of my after care. He gave me a box of food and told me as I was not seventeen yet he

HIA 389 PRIVATE 5

## Rathgael (1994)

- 14. Initially I was sent to Rathgael for 15 weeks assessment. My older sister HIA 389 was also a resident there although I was not allowed to see her as staff believed she was a bad influence on me.
- 15. In my room at Rathgael there was no handle on the inside of my door which was locked at night. There was a glass window in the door and staff would peer through this at night when I was in bed. We had buzzers in our room that we had to ring for staff to accompany us to the bathroom. I have always suffered from a weak bladder and would have to urinate frequently. When I would press the buzzer, staff would ignore it and I would have had to urinate in a container and dispose of the contents out the window.
- 16. In place of a mattress I had a blue gymnastic mat. I had no bed sheet to cover the mat. I had one thin blanket and a pillow. During the winter months I was very cold.
- 17. The window in my room could only be opened a small amount and during the summer the air was stifling which meant it was difficult to sleep.
- 18. There was no choice during meal times. I am a vegetarian, although I was provided with a vegetarian meal I was never given a choice of vegetarian meals. I was given the same vegetarian pastry dish every day. Also water was only available to me during meal times.
- 19. When bathing in Rathgael I had to keep the bathroom door open. Both male and female staff members would have stood at the door. I found this lack of privacy disgraceful and degrading.
- 20. I was sent to Chapel every morning. This I could not understand as I am not a Catholic. I never felt comfortable with this.

puzzles and played games on the computer. I did not receive the same education as children in mainstream education.

- 33. The food I was received in Rathgael was disgusting; I do not believe the food was fit for human consumption. When I was in Shamrock House the meals I received were nearly cold and had a rubber texture.
- 34. There was no medical or dental care. There was a Matron called RG 75 but she just seem to dispense Strepsils for every ailment. On one occasion I had an injury to my foot and I was given a Strepsil.
- 35. I never received a hair cut during my time in Rathgael.
- 36. Despite all my problems I was not given any medication or any help. I had very little education as no-one understood my problems.
- 37. I did not receive any life sills during my time spent in Rathgael, for example, how to look after my appearance or respect myself. I was not prepared for life when I left care.

## **Life After Care**

- 38. I left Rathgael when I was seventeen years old. I was deemed 'high risk' and discharged to the care of my father. My parents had since divorced and my father had no knowledge of how to manage me nor did he want to manage me. My father, brother and sister were drinking heavily. I contacted Rathgael and social services regarding this and I was told 'it's a good home', 'there is nowhere else for you to go' and that social services had no legal obligation towards me. I believe my family had a huge resentment for me as I was blamed for breaking up the family. To this day I feel consumed with guilt and find it very difficult to accept that I deserve a future.
- 39. I registered with a dentist when I left Rathgael. I required eight fillings as my teeth had been neglected throughout my childhood.

boys in this way. I never reported RG 31 as I did not feel I had anyone to report it to or that anyone would listen to me.

- 10.At night time you were locked in a dormitory upstairs and you were not allowed to go downstairs. You went to school on site. You were not allowed to smoke on the junior side but during a break one morning on the junior side one of the seniors gave me a cigarette. I was sitting on the toilet during break smoking and a member of staff, called RG 74 came in and smelt the smoke. He said you've been smoking and hit me with a bat, like a baseball bat. I felt like hitting him, like lashing out. RG 74 hit me three or four times on my backside with a bat. I never received any treatment or care following this incident.
- 11. RG 74 and RG 31 were about forty when I was thirteen. I believe they are now deceased.
- 12.I saw boys abscond but I was scared to run away. I once saw two or three boys get punished for throwing a fire extinguisher through a window and running away one evening. When they were caught by police and brought back they were made to wear corduroy shorts and baseball boots with no laces. This was a typical punishment as was being made to do extra cleaning duties or being sent to bed early. I wanted to run away but seeing what happened to them frightened me.

13.1 was friendly with one boy at Rathgael,	who went to the	
same school as me in He lives in	and looks after	
I have not been in contact with him since	leaving Rathgael.	

14. The food at Rathgael was horrible and watery and you had to drink from a plastic cup and eat off plastic plates.

- estates it operated in and was the only project in which a volunteer travelled unsupervised to and from the project.
- 31. The school also ran a number of sporting competitions, mostly for football, pool and gymnastics. In fact, there was a Rathgael Gymnastics Club, which consisted of boys mainly and would put on shows. The Bangor Rotary Club would arrange for residents from nursing homes to come into the school so that young people could put on a show for them.

# Medical and dental

- 32. There were daily "Sick Bay Parades" and a qualified Doctor came in every week in support of the Medical Department that was on-site. In addition, there were twice yearly medical examinations. This was staffed by a matron and two qualified nurses. First aid provision was available on site 24 hours a day so if a resident suffered an injury they could see a nurse or to be brought to a hospital, depending on the circumstances. The medical services were also subject to inspection.
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young people that was adopted by the Management Board and endorsed by the Secretary of State.

# Placement of Young People in Training Schools

- 10. The majority of young people were admitted to Rathgael as a result of difficulties experienced in the Care and Education systems. Generally, they were admitted on a short-term, interim basis to the Training School as a result of a crisis in their personal or family life, or committed by the Juvenile Court because no alternative placement was available. Some were admitted by reason of their offending behaviour. The Children and Young Person's Act (NI) 1968 made it difficult to be flexible and innovative, in relation to length of placement and a planned return to their community. An indeterminate order was issued that resulted in uncertainty and was often added to by subsequent Training School Orders as a result of further offences effectively extending their period of detention and delaying their release on license to the community. I recollect many young people reaching their peak within the first year of their detention and thereafter regressing as a result of the uncertainty of future placements.
- 11. Rathgael was a regional resource and as such often dislocated young people form their community and family. Being admitted from the four health and Social Services Boards and five Education and Library Board areas, although there was financial assistance available it was difficult for families outside the greater Belfast area to visit Rathgael on a regular basis. This also meant that young people going on home lave had to travel long distances on their own. At no time in the Centre's history was there a direct bus service to the Rathgael Road.
- 12. My impression was that there was often reluctance on behalf of the Magistrate to commit young people to Training Schools but they were afforded no other option. In real terms, the Training School was the only option. Few specialized units were being developed in Northern Ireland and child and adolescent psychiatry was totally inadequate. The substantive response to this was the

in 1976. For example, at there were technical drawing classes which I found impossible to keep up with as we were never taught this in Rathgael.

- 14. School finished about 3.30pm and we could do whatever we wanted before bed time. There was a snooker table, some miniature tennis courts where we played "patter tennis", and a swimming pool. The site itself was quite open but we were all locked in at night. There were opportunities to abscond but I only absconded once, following the incident where I was returned to Rathgael because I was frightened about getting caught and punished.
- 15. If any boy did run away, the police usually caught them quite quickly. The staff would isolate you for a time after you were returned and you were made to wear shorts instead of jeans. The boys who ran away were closely supervised by a housemaster for a while after they were caught.
- 16. My father came to visit me every weekend when I was in Rathgael. My parents had separated at this stage and my mother had moved to She visited less frequently as it was difficult for her to travel. I don't remember any external visitors coming to Rathgael for example, social workers or health/education welfare visitors. I was able to talk to certain members of staff, for example, the staff who were my housemasters about the things which bothered me while I was there, RG 18 or RG 19. They were both good men, but there was a sense that if you complained about bullying, they were all in cahoots with each other and nothing would really be done to change behaviours.
- 17. I remember Rathgael as an almost entirely negative experience. When I went there first although I was getting into trouble, it was not serious trouble and looking back, I can see that I was quite innocent. I was exposed to a lot of negative influences there and my own behaviour started to escalate into more serious drinking and crime. Things happened to me in Rathgael which made me feel very insecure about myself and have adversely affected my whole life. For example, I was never taught to value myself and I never had the confidence to push myself career wise. Consequently, because I missed

HIA 200 5

sports days and I remember a day when each house had to build a raft and race across the lake on the grounds.

- 14. The unit was clean, we were well fed and reasonably well looked after. I found the staff in Rathgael reasonable apart from their lack of awareness of what was happening and their inability to manage the bullying. There was no investigation if they saw you with a black eye and accepted your word if you said you got it from falling. I think they were negligent in the care they provided. They provided very little supervision and spent most of their time in the staff room rather than looking after us. You lived in fear if there was a member of staff on duty who spent a lot of time in the staff room as you knew that you had no protection from the bullies during that shift.
- 15. There was not a lot of interaction between the staff and the boys. There was a points system and the points added up to privileges such as weekend leave. That system did not work well for me as I lost any points I had accumulated when I ran away.
- 16. When I was in Rathgael I received no visits from social workers. My mum visited me regularly. My father was a chronic alcoholic so he never visited me. I am not sure he was even aware I was in any institution.
- 17. When I absconded I committed crimes to survive. I was on remand and was returned to Rathgael after each court appearance until I turned seventeen. Once I turned seventeen I was no longer able to stay in a training school so I was remanded to Crumlin Road jail. I was sentenced to six months to two years in borstal.

# The Maze (1977)

18. It was common practice to be sent to a closed borstal for the first few months after being committed to borstal. If you proved yourself to the Board they could then move you to an open borstal. When I was committed to borstal there was no purpose built closed borstal so I was sent to the H-blocks. I was in H4 A-wing which was the borstal wing. The other three legs of that block were for regular

17.I never had any visitors from family. My dad had since got out of prison but he didn't bother with me. My mum had no interest either and she had a hard life of her own. I still to this day do not know why I was put into Rathgael and I spent two years there. I was just told one day that I was moving to the Simon Community. I actually tried to jump into one of the electric pylons because I was petrified of living on my own. I sliced my arms and glue sniffed trying to kill myself but I was still getting no help.

# **Simon Community**

- 18.I lived in the Simon Community for about a year. I took lots of overdoses in the Simon Community too.

  RG 8

  tried to force himself upon me on one occasion but usually I managed to stay away from him because my sister was there too. I used to go to the toilet in the sink because I was terrified of all the men there. I was afraid of getting abused.
- 19.I went on a course in the Simon Community and I got twenty four pounds a week. By the time I paid my bills in there etc I had no money left and it was impossible to live. I didn't even know how to boil an egg. I used to go down to the local Co-op with my sister HIA 389 and steal ham and other food. We were taken to court for stealing and I think we were given a suspended sentence and a fine.

# Life after Care

20.1 then moved in with my sister in law and I helped her look after her kids. I live in mow and have two kids of my own, aged eight and ten. I am very protective of them. I have looked for work but I just get very nervous and I have lost all my confidence because of my past. I have been diagnosed with

HIA 386

**PRIVATE** 

6

physically restrain me. They were well-built men. They would hold me with my head face down in the carpet and twist my hands behind my back in order to restrain me. I had a very slight build at that time. They could have held me down with one hand. I felt that the way they treated me amounted to physical abuse.

- 13. My behaviour in Rathgael was wayward and difficult for the staff to control at times. However there was very little engagement by the staff with the underlying problems which triggered my bad behaviour. For example, I had come from an environment where my mother had mental health difficulties and I was more or less left to fend for myself. I never really thought my mother loved or even liked me as a person. I remember once asking her to help me tie my school tie. She took my tie and choked me with it until my face went purple. She told me "Now, you won't ask me to do that again". I thought that when I went to Rathgael I would get more support but there wasn't any emotional support and although RG 48 was kind to me, he took advantage of me by sexually abusing me. I found this very difficult to understand how he could be good to me and abuse me at the same time.
- 14. After about 4 or 5 months my friend HIA 236 was moved into House 6. She also had her own room. I felt I couldn't tell HIA 236 about what RG 48 was doing to me but I think the same thing was happening to her. There was an understanding between us that RG 48 was treating us differently. I recall looking at each other knowingly. She also received an Easter egg from RG 48 with her name on it. One day HIA 236 and I were sitting on the summer seat. She told me that she was in love. I didn't believe her and she didn't tell me who with. I thought it was one of the boys. Later on she told me that she was having a relationship with RG 47 RG 47 had groomed her from when she went into Rathgael. She said she loved him.
- 15. My grandmother was my only regular visitor during my time at Rathgael. She was the only positive influence in my life at that time. She came every week but she was in her mid seventies then and I couldn't tell her what was happening. There was no-one on the staff I could complain to. I didn't have

- 28. In Rathgael I felt the standard of nursing care was inadequate. There were Matrons at Rathgael who provided medical support. For example when I was ill I would be examined however I would not be told what the issue or the treatment was nor was I given any reassurance or comfort.
- 29. Whilst in Rathgael my brother, was gravely ill. None of the staff members told me. My sister who was a resident in the care side of Rathgael came and told me. Staff would not allow me to visit him in hospital.
- 30. During the entire time I spent in care in Rathgael I was bullied by three other residents.

# **Princess Gardens Care Home (1994)**

31. After spending 15 weeks being assessed in Rathgael I was sent back to Princess Gardens on a trial basis. I had a pending court case, the outcome of which was a training order to Rathgael.

# Rathgael (1994 - 1997)

- 32. During my time in Rathgael under the training order I was still not allowed to see my sister who was now a resident in the care side of the centre. A glass door separated us. My sister and I would run away in order to speak to each other.
- 33. On one occasion my brother came to visit me at Rathgael. Staff would not allow him to see me and said he needed an appointment. He had brought me a television for my room. Staff did not allow me to have it.
- 34. When my training order expired I was moved back to the care side in Rathgael. During this time I recall another female resident hit me on my eye. I had to be taken to hospital with concussion and a black eye. Staff mocked me and commented that the other resident 'had a great right hand'. On my return from hospital staff did not separate me from this particular resident who continued to bully me.

HIA 503 PRIVATE 6

- 35. I approached another staff member, RG 6 to let him know of issues I was having and I was told to 'grow up and sort myself out'.
- 36. During my time under the training order I was in complete lock up.
- 37. When I had completed the training order in Rathgael I was placed under a care order to remain in Rathgael. I was placed in Unit 1 Downhill. This is an open unit. I had a Key Worker who was seldom on duty. When they were working I found they had limited time to listen to me. When I did get a chance to speak to them and tell them I was being bullied by the other residents and staff I was told that it was all in my head.
- 38. I had one brother whom I was very close to while I was in Rathgael. I would speak to him on the telephone. A staff member told me that our conservations were not appropriate. This resulted in me pushing him away and rejecting contact with him. I believe this was a deliberate tactic to alienate me from my family.
- 39. Once during the summer months I was on a bus trip and there was a female member of staff call RG7 I cannot recall her surname. I broke wind and she ordered me off the bus. I was barred from any bus trips for two weeks.
- 40. Whilst at school in Rathgael I would have been given tasks more suitable to primary school education. My education consisted of colouring in pictures. I was not taught anything of value and I left there without any qualifications. Consequently I have poor communication, numeracy and life skills.
- 41. I was placed on work experience for 15 weeks in the kitchens. I made sandwiches for the entire 15 weeks. I never gained any work experience with the exception of how to butter bread. When the kitchen staff would leave to take their breaks they would have locked me in the kitchen on my own.

- 37. There were also Night Supervisors. These were unqualified staff who were responsible for keeping an eye on the young people at night and, therefore, had to stay awake all night. They would produce a report each morning for the day staff coming in. I recall one Night Supervisor being disciplined because he had fallen asleep whilst in duty. A senior member of staff was also on duty on site until 22:30 every evening. As Director, I would also have been contactable out of hours.
- 38. There were staff houses situated on campus but separate from the young people. I chose not to take one as I was keen to keep my personal life separate from work.

# Home leave

39. The amount of home leave a young person received and the date of their ultimate release depended largely on progress in Rathgael. Progress in terms of education and response to education was continually monitored and recorded by a system of marks and grades.

# Transfer of Girls from Whiteabbey<sup>18</sup>

- 40. A fire had been started in Whiteabbey Training School in 1985 by some of the residents and it was fortunate that no one was seriously injured or killed. This triggered the closure of the Training School with Rathgael and Whiteabbey being amalgamated.
- 41. I had pressed for a phasing out of Whiteabbey with girls being allowed to leave from there when appropriate and new residents being sent to Rathgael so that they had no previous experience of Whiteabbey. However, the decision was made by the Rathgael/Whiteabbey Joint Management Board and sanctioned by the NIO to immediately close Whiteabbey and transfer the girls to Rathgael. This resulted in a culture change for the girls, boys and staff alike that was initially difficult to manage.
- 42. There was limited time to prepare for the arrival of the girls and they did not want to be there. The girls were initially put together in one unit but this proved to be a mistake and resulted in some very disruptive and challenging behaviour they probably felt that they had been forced to go there and may well have been scared. Everyone had to adjust, which took a long time and it is my opinion that it should have been planned better.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> RGL-22199 – RGL-22201

young people that was adopted by the Management Board and endorsed by the Secretary of State.

# Placement of Young People in Training Schools

- 10. The majority of young people were admitted to Rathgael as a result of difficulties experienced in the Care and Education systems. Generally, they were admitted on a short-term, interim basis to the Training School as a result of a crisis in their personal or family life, or committed by the Juvenile Court because no alternative placement was available. Some were admitted by reason of their offending behaviour. The Children and Young Person's Act (NI) 1968 made it difficult to be flexible and innovative, in relation to length of placement and a planned return to their community. An indeterminate order was issued that resulted in uncertainty and was often added to by subsequent Training School Orders as a result of further offences effectively extending their period of detention and delaying their release on license to the community. I recollect many young people reaching their peak within the first year of their detention and thereafter regressing as a result of the uncertainty of future placements.
- 11. Rathgael was a regional resource and as such often dislocated young people form their community and family. Being admitted from the four health and Social Services Boards and five Education and Library Board areas, although there was financial assistance available it was difficult for families outside the greater Belfast area to visit Rathgael on a regular basis. This also meant that young people going on home lave had to travel long distances on their own. At no time in the Centre's history was there a direct bus service to the Rathgael Road.
- 12. My impression was that there was often reluctance on behalf of the Magistrate to commit young people to Training Schools but they were afforded no other option. In real terms, the Training School was the only option. Few specialized units were being developed in Northern Ireland and child and adolescent psychiatry was totally inadequate. The substantive response to this was the

- **46.** Mentions Meeting were held on Friday afternoons during which marks were allocated to individual young people and House Points awarded for good behaviour or taken away for inappropriate behaviour (cross reference with paragraphs 48 49 of Mr. Whyte's statement). Individual marks were allocated to young people for good behaviour in class and unit, performance in school and workshop, house cleaning and tidiness of rooms. House points would have been awarded for sporting activities such as five-aside football, snooker and table tennis.
- 47. The Mentions meetings were attended by all young people and staff on duty held in the Common Rooms of each Unit. This is what the disciplinary system was based on and it was very much part of the culture all young people were made aware of this as part of their introduction to Rathgael. This system developed over the years resulting in a more assessment profiling approach and ultimately became the bronze, silver and gold awards scheme.
- **48.** The award of points allowed a young person full pocket money, full home leave and full participation in sporting and weekend activities. There was also the recognition of their good behaviour that was afforded by being awarded individual and house points in the first place.
- **49.** If a young person ended up in a negative points situation this could have resulted in sanctions such as reduction of pocket money, withdrawal of home leave, withdrawal of sporting activity and early beds.
- **50.** The Mentions meetings were also used to discuss home leave and activities for the forthcoming weekend. They generally afforded an opportunity for young people and staff to discuss routine matters within the Unit.
- 51. There was a less formal time-table during holiday times. Lengthy leave periods for young people would have been negotiated. I recall that leave would have been granted to those assessed as being eligible and with a suitable home base. These would have been in two-week blocks thus reducing the risk of returning to inappropriate behaviour. This leave would have been supervised and monitored by house staff using home visits and was part of the overall assessment of a young person's progress. For those periods outside term time

were fully funded by the NIO. For example, HIA 172 was one of the few young people who benefitted from being sent to specialist units in England. We recognised that this was an extreme measure and the decision to move children from Northern Ireland was not taken lightly.

# The Ethos and Culture of the School

16. My experience of Rathgael was a child-centred establishment long before "Child Centred Practice" was recognized as a desirable approach in working with children and young people. Staff were generally very conscious of the background and history of the individual young person and how vulnerable they were. Many young people had multiple placements prior to their admission to Rathgael having been admitted following a further breakdown in their personal life. It would be true to say that no child would have willingly chosen to come to Rathgael although many knew that there was no other option. It wasn't until the 1980s that specific social work practice with children and young people was recognized as a specialism. The system finally recognised that children and young people were not 'problem children but children with problems'. The separation of care and justice and a child-centred approach we had been canvassing for over a number of years came only became a reality in 2000 with the establishment of the Juvenile Justice Board Custodial Development Services.

# Services provided at Rathgael

- 17. I also note the description of the services provided at Rathgael to young people as set out in paragraphs 18 39 of RG 48 statement. I wish to add the following. A small percentage of staff felt that their only approach, especially with the senior boys, was to be "macho"; this resulted in a more regimented approach, with an emphasis on physical activity and a highly competitive regime. Over time this was replaced by a more relational approach to working with the young people, and the introduction of marks and the setting of short term goals.
- **18.** Paragraphs 27 31 of Mr Whyte's statement covers the support structure available to the young people at Rathgael. Further to this, Chaplains were very

Rathgael during the transition period. Unfortunately, a fire in March 1985 accelerated this process thus preventing us following our agreed transition strategy. As a result girls and staff were moved on mass from Whiteabbey to Rathgael shortly after. This resulted in a nervousness that translated into resentment amongst some Rathgael and Whiteabbey staff. It also meant that we were not as well prepared for taking in girls as we had hoped to be. However, Whiteabbey staff transferred to Rathgael at the same time as the girls so there was no deficit of knowledge, skills or experience. Over time, however, any issues that did exist were resolved as staff and girls settled and the male young people adjusted to the changes the girls brought with them.

- **32.** Facilities specific to the requirements of girls, such as mother and baby support, were transferred form Whiteabbey and subsequently developed by the Eastside Project. Existing initiatives, such as the Community Services Programme, were extended to include the girls.
- **33.** Although the system had to respond to a premature decamping form Whiteabbey because of the fire, I am of the opinion that the girls were well taken care of.

# Absconding

- 34. This is discussed in paragraphs 52 55 of Mr. Whyte's statement. This was and continues to be a complex issue. Often absconding was related to a child's response to routine and mundane matters, some of which may have been external to Rathgael, e.g. a demand to see a family member in hospital not being immediately met, withdrawal of weekend home leave as a result of bad behaviour, or exclusion from a particular event. At the same time I acknowledge that some residents were running away because of personally significant events that took place outside or inside the Training School environment, e.g. being bullied by other residents and perceived mistreatment.
- **35.** The issue of absconding from Rathgael was taken seriously. APRU was commissioned to carry out a review in 1991<sup>12</sup>. The resulting report was critical

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Exhibit 6 - 1991 APRU report on absconding at Rathgael

- a Punishment Book. I personally never administered or observed corporal punishment.
- 51. When corporal punishment was abolished in state schools a Directive issued stating that there was to be no more corporal punishment in Training Schools so this practice stopped. Withdrawal of privileges became the main form of discipline pocket money, TV, swimming pool, home leave and outings. This was part of the weekly Mentions Meeting. Major incidents would have involved Senior Staff, family Social Worker and Probation Officer if appropriate.

# **Absconding**

- 52. The "Pindown Report" 1991<sup>23</sup> was the subject of an SSI Inspection report at Rathgael<sup>24</sup>. There was no "pindown" at Rathgael as it was against the rules although it was recognised that running away was an endemic problem in open establishments.
- 53. Every time a young person absconded, this was reported to the local police. Rathgael received of a lot of criticism because of the high level of absconding. In response to criticism by the North Down MP Jim Kilfedder, the Spectator newspaper ran an article on the school on 22 September 1991<sup>25</sup>. Statistics at the time of the article in relation to absconding showed that in the previous six months, 54% had not absconded; 34% had absconded but many were just late back from home leave, a training programme or work whilst some were absent for a day or two; only 12% were persistent and serious absconders these were the cause of most concern.
- 54. The young people were counselled on the likely consequences of absconding and sanctions, such as depriving them of taking part in activities or freedom of movement were applied. In addition a number of measures were in place to reduce absconding in relation to: carrying out detailed research to ensure improvements, if any, could be measured; provision of a residential programme for homeless children outside North Down; and, continuation of work on providing a semi-secure building to enable the more serious absconders to be locked in their rooms at night.
- 55. Fofany Cottage, which opened on 27 May 1994,<sup>26</sup> was established as a result of Rathgaels' Mourne Cottage Project with the support of the Prince's Trust Young Offenders Group committee. The aim of the project was to provide a

 $\frac{https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/yourcouncil/dataprotection and freedom of information/publications scheme/}{The-Pindown-Experience-and-the-Protection-of-Children.pdf}$ 

<sup>23</sup> 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> RGL-23801 – RGL-23805

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> RGL-27433

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Exhibit 6 - Fofany Cottage Project – the Official Opening – 27 May 1994

Page 81

- 1 Runkerry and there are reports available to the Panel
- from a stay, a week-long stay, 14th-18th November 1977.
- 3 Part of your behaviour is analysed. I am not going to
- 4 go into the report. The Panel have access to it. It is
- 5 at 42942, but an entry I want to draw attention to, if
- 6 we look at 42957, which is of 28th November 1977, if we
- 7 just enlarge that and scroll down to the bottom of the
- page, again we can see this is initialled by RG 208
- 9 **RG 208** , at the end:
- "After a particularly down weekend for HIA248 where
- 11 he played everyone badly ... Things have gone wrong
- 12 after dinner. HIA248 was noticeable by his absence. He
- was eventually found in bed. When reprimanded HIA248
- became abusive. He was taken to RG16, who gave him
- 15 three of the cane."
- 16 A. That's right.
- 17 Q. I was asking you about that, HIA248. The cane was
- administered by either RG112 or RG16.
- 19 A. Yes, correct.
- 20 Q. There were none of the --
- 21 A. No.
- 22 Q. -- who ever used the cane on you.
- 23 A. No.
- 24 Q. You were simply taken to --
- 25 A. To the

boys in this way. I never reported RG 31 as I did not feel I had anyone to report it to or that anyone would listen to me.

- 10. At night time you were locked in a dormitory upstairs and you were not allowed to go downstairs. You went to school on site. You were not allowed to smoke on the junior side but during a break one morning on the junior side one of the seniors gave me a cigarette. I was sitting on the toilet during break smoking and a member of staff, called RG 74 came in and smelt the smoke. He said you've been smoking and hit me with a bat, like a baseball bat. I felt like hitting him, like lashing out. RG 74 hit me three or four times on my backside with a bat. I never received any treatment or care following this incident.
- 11. RG 74 and RG 31 were about forty when I was thirteen. I believe they are now deceased.
- 12.I saw boys abscond but I was scared to run away. I once saw two or three boys get punished for throwing a fire extinguisher through a window and running away one evening. When they were caught by police and brought back they were made to wear corduroy shorts and baseball boots with no laces. This was a typical punishment as was being made to do extra cleaning duties or being sent to bed early. I wanted to run away but seeing what happened to them frightened me.

13.1 was friendly with one boy at Rathgael,	who went to t	the
same school as me in He lives in	n and looks after	
I have not been in contact with him since	e leaving Rathgael.	

14. The food at Rathgael was horrible and watery and you had to drink from a plastic cup and eat off plastic plates.

Page 75 record, if we look at 42953, please, we can see on this 1 record it's the entry of 23rd August 1977. Just so 2 I contextualise this, these are what I am describing as 3 the marks log. You will see, Members of the Panel, at 4 various times reference will be made to marks and 5 gradings in the text and then on the right-hand side 6 columns that seem to give marks. So this will be 7 a snapshot of -- particularly focused on behaviour 8 9 that's occurring, but alongside this there may well have been wider unit logs that unfortunately aren't 10 available, but we can see in the 23rd August: 11 "HIA248 put into shorts (along with RG65 and 12 ) 13 as they were planning to abscond -- bedclothes -- had clothes, money." 14 15 So you are caught in advance on this occasion, but this is a reference to being put into shorts. Can you 16 17 explain to the Panel what that was about? What happened whenever absconding either had taken place or in this 18 case was going to take place? What were the measures 19 that were taken to try to discourage you from 20 absconding? 21 22 Well, we were put into shorts and we were also put into 23 corners and also put to bed without supper for whatever 24 -- how long we got, you know. Say we got five days, you 25 had to be in your shorts for the five days, and there

in 1976. For example, at there were technical drawing classes which I found impossible to keep up with as we were never taught this in Rathgael.

- 14. School finished about 3.30pm and we could do whatever we wanted before bed time. There was a snooker table, some miniature tennis courts where we played "patter tennis", and a swimming pool. The site itself was quite open but we were all locked in at night. There were opportunities to abscond but I only absconded once, following the incident where I was returned to Rathgael because I was frightened about getting caught and punished.
- 15. If any boy did run away, the police usually caught them quite quickly. The staff would isolate you for a time after you were returned and you were made to wear shorts instead of jeans. The boys who ran away were closely supervised by a housemaster for a while after they were caught.
- 16. My father came to visit me every weekend when I was in Rathgael. My parents had separated at this stage and my mother had moved to She visited less frequently as it was difficult for her to travel. I don't remember any external visitors coming to Rathgael for example, social workers or health/education welfare visitors. I was able to talk to certain members of staff, for example, the staff who were my housemasters about the things which bothered me while I was there, RG 18 or RG 19. They were both good men, but there was a sense that if you complained about bullying, they were all in cahoots with each other and nothing would really be done to change behaviours.
- 17.1 remember Rathgael as an almost entirely negative experience. When I went there first although I was getting into trouble, it was not serious trouble and looking back, I can see that I was quite innocent. I was exposed to a lot of negative influences there and my own behaviour started to escalate into more serious drinking and crime. Things happened to me in Rathgael which made me feel very insecure about myself and have adversely affected my whole life. For example, I was never taught to value myself and I never had the confidence to push myself career wise. Consequently, because I missed

HIA 200 5

his hands behind his back. I saw RG 20 hitting RG 77 by punching him repeatedly in the back. I remember seeing this assault and then two members of staff took RG 77 upstairs.

- 4. I remember another incident when RG 78 and I absconded in the summer of 1988. The police caught us and returned us to Rathgael. We were locked in separate rooms. All our normal clothing was taken from us and we were left with just our underwear, a plastic mattress and a sheet. We were held in this way for 10-14 days. I did not have a watch or a clock and it was difficult to gauge time. The staff brought me food three times a day on a tray. We were left isolated and a member of staff from the next house kept an eye on us from time to time. At times, you had to wait hours to use the bathroom because there was no one in the building.
- 5. The education system in Rathgael was broken down into a form-based system regardless of age. If you were very clever, you were put in Form 5. The children who were least able were put in Form 1. I was in Form 4 because I was weak at English. I was about 14 at the time but the age group of the class was mixed. There was no set curriculum but I remember that English, Maths and Geography were taught. The teaching staff overall were quite good to me. They never hit me although some lost their tempers more easily than others and this made me apprehensive around them.
- 6. I was given two Training School Orders for two charges of theft around Easter 1987. These were both appealed and I was given an absolute discharge. The police normally escorted you to and from Court. On this occasion, RG 41 RG 41, a member of staff at Rathgael, took me there. After the hearing, a member of the police told RG 41 that it was his responsibility to take me back to Rathgael. She disagreed but he insisted. The police put me in a room on my own in the court building where the appeal was heard and they forgot about me. This was at approximately 11am in the morning. The police did not come to collect me until after midnight that night. I was only fourteen at the time and I should not have been held in this way as I was given an absolute discharge. I

# THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

# RESPONSE BY DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE TO WITNESS STATEMENT OF HIA 434 (HIA 434)

I, Karen Pearson, have been authorised to make this statement on behalf of the Department of Justice. I am Deputy Director for Criminal Justice Policy, a senior civil servant in the Department. The information contained in this statement is based on a review of files undertaken by staff under my supervision.

The Department of Justice will say as follows:

- 1. Records show that HIA 434 HIA 434, HIA 434 was committed to Rathgael School on 16 May 1986 on a Training School Order for non-school attendance (see Exhibit 1). He was granted leave to return home in July August 1986 and he returned to Rathgael on 1 September 1986 and regular weekend leave continued (see Exhibit 2).
- However, whilst at Rathgael, HIA had a history of absconding. He absconded on the following dates: 30 November 2 December 1986, 24 April 1 May 1987, 22 December 26 December 1987, 7 March 1988 8 March 1988, 30 March 31 March 1988, 31 March 1 April 1988, 14 September 15 September 1988, 5 October 8 October 1988, 17 October 20 October 1988, 29 October 2 November 1988, 9 December 10 December 1988, 11 December 13 December 1988, 22 December 23 December 1988, 28 December 29 December 1988, 30 December 31 December 1988, 5 February 7 February 1989 and 18 February 20 February 1989 (see Exhibit 3).

- HIA 434, was remanded to Lisnevin Training School on 21 February 1989 (see Exhibit 4) and sentenced to the Young Offenders Centre on 9 May 1989 (see Exhibit 5). Said history can be found at Exhibit 6.
- 4. The Department, to the best of its knowledge, has supplied all relevant information that it could find in its possession in relation to HIA 434. If additional information is discovered by the Department, it will be drawn to the attention of the Inquiry immediately.
- 5. The Department has not received a civil claim in respect of HIA 434.
- The Department has not received a request for disclosure of personal data (Form 81) from PSNI.
- 7. The Department notes the allegations of physical abuse at paragraphs 4 and 6 of the statement of HIA 434. To the best of the Department's knowledge and belief, the Department had no knowledge or record of such complaints prior to the receipt of HIA 434's statement to the Inquiry. It is also noted that HIA 434 alleges to have witnessed bullying at paragraph 10.
- 8. The Department condemns without reservation any act of abuse which may have been perpetrated against any individual at Rathgael Training School. Those who were placed in that facility had every right to expect that they would be cared for with dignity and respect, treated compassionately and protected from abuse. Those who operated the Rathgael facility on a day-to-day basis or who were responsible for its management, ought to have been fully aware of the high standards expected for them when caring for young people. They should have known that acts of physical, sexual or emotional abuse were unacceptable. They ought to have known that allegations of abuse, where they were raised, should have been reported to the appropriate authorities. The Department accepts that the evidence available to the

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE-PERSONAL

**RGL-996** 

Inquiry suggests that these standards were not always complied with in every case.

The Department regrets any abuse which did occur and condemns the perpetrators

of any such abuse as well as those who may have ignored the abuse or tolerated its

occurrence.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Date: 28/08/15

Kanen Peanson

# Exhibit 1

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Name	Address		Occupation	Relationship	
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Period of Detention Age on Discharge	: from t	months	Details of Parent Contribution Entered on File		
Orug Involvement – Type  M.S. Branch Notified (Committal)  Drug Squad Notified (Discharged)	: Date		Record of Information Received		
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# Exhibit 1

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CHANGES OF ADDRESS		
AGE ON ADMISSION 14 9//	86 HAIR 2. EYES COMPLEXION	5
SUP ENDS		
REASON FOR ADMISSIONBAIL PENDING ON APPEAL	HEARD	
DATE	COURT	REASON
LICENSED  RE-LICENSED	REASON	
РН	YSICAL CONDITION ON ADMISSION	
1 GENERAL 2 ANY SPECIAL DISABILITY 3 MEDICAL RECOMMENDATION 4 MENTAL CONDITION	nis	
FATHERS NAME ADDRESS CHANGE OF ADDRESS.	HIA 434	
MOTHERS NAME		
GUARDIANS NAME		
ADDRESS		

# Exhibit 1

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<sup>23</sup> 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> RGL-23801 – RGL-23805

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> RGL-27433

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Exhibit 6 - Fofany Cottage Project – the Official Opening – 27 May 1994

- Rathgael dealt with some of the most disturbed children in Northern Ireland<sup>6 7</sup>
   Over time the emphasis was increasingly on community treatment. There was very little violence in Rathgael and none against staff until the last few years when an increase in incidents could be seen.
- 16. When I arrived in Rathgael in 1973, all house master and house mother teams were husbands and wives who lived adjacent to the residents. There were no female staff other than domestic, kitchen and nursing.
- 17. There is no doubt that there was a difficulty in getting the balance right between care and control. This was a professional challenge that evolved as Rathgael developed from being a Reform School to a more caring and educating establishment. All staff were encouraged to follow this goal and I had aspirations for the school to become a Centre of Excellence in the treatment of children and young people.

# Services provided by Rathgael

18. Rathgael provided a range of services to the children as summarised below.

# Education<sup>9</sup>

- 19. Education was headed by a Deputy Director, Head of Education assisted by two deputies and teachers. The range of classroom education in the Junior School was similar in most aspects to the curriculum of junior intermediate schools in the community. The curriculum was designed in response to the needs of the young children and covered subjects including literacy, mathematics, geography, history and physical education. Timetables were geared around what was available in mainstream schools as best as possible and the Teachers Union was represented to ensure teachers were aware of what was going on in mainstream schools.
- 20. The children in the Senior School were of school age and older so both classroom and trade training was provided. Classroom education was optional for young people over school age. The trade departments provided training in building, metalwork, motor engineering, painting, brick laying, decorating, joinery, catering and horticulture to both boys and girls. City and Guilds was introduced in the 1980s so that the young people could receive training and skills and an opportunity to work towards qualifications from a recognised body.

<sup>7</sup> Exhibit 2 - A Social Psychological Evaluation of a Community Service Programme for Young Offenders in a Northern Ireland Training School, thesis presented for the degree of Master of Social Science, D. Campbell Whyte, August 1981, p32

<sup>9</sup> RGL2388 – RGL23890

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup>RGL-24845

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> RGL-27433

# Staffing and personnel aspects

- 28. I have read and noted the comments at paragraphs 35 38 in Mr. Whyte's statement. Many staff would have transferred from Malone to Rathgael, many of whom had been appointed in preparation for the move. All senior staff in the school in those early days came from a teaching background, and the house staff from children's homes and positions in the youth work sector, with some former RUC officers, army, navy and prison officers.
- 29. Working with some of the most disturbed and troubled individuals in Northern Ireland was demanding in so many ways with both verbal and physical assaults on staff not uncommon. Some staff dealt with this better than others but professionally their task was to deal with such behaviours and explore ways to modify and prevent the behaviour being repeated. An indicator of staff stress was the high level of staff sickness at particular times in the life of the Centre. To further monitor staff sickness and to explore ways of reducing stress, particularly in relation to the integration of Whiteabbey and Rathgael, a group was established by the Management Board on 3 January 1984<sup>9</sup>. This provides an insight to the levels of staff stress at the time.
- 30. Extracts from Board minutes over the years 10 clearly demonstrate that staff were regularly subject to assault by young people. Few reported these assaults to police and chose to deal with it as an internal matter in line with the internal disciplinary policy.

# Transfer of Girls from Whiteabbey<sup>11</sup>

The Board agreed that the amalgamation of Rathgael and Whiteabbey would take effect by 3 June 1985. Personally I recall working from Whiteabbey School on a weekly basis to negotiate the placement of as many girls as possible before the planned transfer. The objective of this was to minimize the number of girls having to be resettled in the new environment of the Rathgael site. Ideally the courts would have had the opportunity to refer girls directly to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> 1984 Management board minutes

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> RGL-22790 – 22797

<sup>11</sup> Exhibit 5 - Rathgael and Whiteabbey Schools Management Board – Amalgamation of Rathgael and Whiteabbey Schools - May 1985

# **ASSAULTS ON STAFF (a selection of extracts from Board Minutes)**

ASSAULTS ON STAFF

RATHGAEL & WHITEABBEY

(FROM BOARD MINUTES)

17/1/69

He reported on the measures he had taken to have the two boys dealt with at Bangor Juvenile Court on Wednesday, 19th instant.

The Committee approved the action taken.

RATHGAEL SCHOOL

The Secretary reminded the members that at the last meeting he had informed them that he had approached both the Insurance Brokers and their solicitor regarding the position of no had been attacked by two follows. At the date of the last meeting he had stated that the solution appeared to be an expratia payment but two points still remained at that stage to be determined, namely, the amount of the payment and whether the insurance company or the Board should make it.

He now reported that he had been in touch with the Brokers and had been informed that the local office of the insurance company concerned was prepared to agree to the making of an ex gratia payment of £50. was prepared to agree to the making of an ex gratia payment of £50. They were prepared also to go forward to head office for approval to the payment of £75 but if this line were taken it was possible that the head office might refuse payment altogether. The Board decided that the insurance company be asked to make an ex gratia payment of £50.

H2/70

# Ex-gratia payment

The Board were informed that a letter dated 21st ultimo from their brokers had been received with which they enclosed a cheque for £50 being an ex-gratia payment who had been assaulted recently by two ex-gratia payment who had been assaulted recently by two of the boys. In the letter the brokers stated that the Insurers had agreed to make the payment on the understanding that it was not to create a precedent and that in future they would not be asked to deal with claims involving moral rather than legal responsibility under the insurance. The Insurers had also offered a separate cover under the form of personal accident insurance applying regardless of right or wrong at a cost of £10 per employee. The brokers stated that as this cover was limited to injury by assault they considered the premium too high and they were making enquiries elsewhere to obtain alternative quotations. Noted.

The Secretary stated that he had writte the vary conscientious way in charged his duties and had received a reply dated 31st gravitude to the members of the Board and the staff for their kindness to him

# ASSAULTS ON STAFF BY JUNE 1974

#### Attack on

and nad been inspecting the outside of the premises prior to retiring. He had observed one person near the new staff flats and had approached him. He was pushed from behind by another person, fell to the ground and was kicked several times on the legs and back.

The Board thought that the purchase of a guard dog which could be trained should be considered. They authorised the payment of full salary to during his absence on sick leave.

# 5h For 1975

# WHITEABBEY SCHOOL

ave details of an incident in which two girls on remand attacked a temporary member of staff, took her keys and absconded. On their return to the school she had had them transferred to Armagh Prison, but their transfer had not been correct and so they were now back in the school. In the

meantime, however, the keys had been returned. The member of staff had not been seriously injured.

The Board regretted the incident and noted the outcome.

# 5 NOV 1970

# Incident in Reception

gave details of an incident on the night of 30th October when four boys absconded from the Reception Unit after over-powering a Night Supervisor and stealing a sum of money. He pointed out that one Might Supervisor and stealing a sum or money. He pointed out that one of the boys had previously been committed to Borstal at the instigation of the school and suggested that such a boy should not have been remanded in custody to Rathgael after he had completed his Borstal sentence.

The Board directed that a letter on this matter be sent to the Northern Ireland Office and that their good wishes be extended to the member of staff concerned.

# 3rd MARCH 1976

# Incident

Unit on 13th February last when Night Supervisor, had been assaulted by one of our boys and then he and two other boys had absconded.

October. will shortly be 64 years of age and therefore will retire in 1977. stated that the Secretary and he had visited at his home and during the visit had offered him alternative

The members were informed that the Chief Inspector at Bangor had been

- 156 -

most co-operative in dealing with the three boys and they instructed the Secretary to write to the Chief Superintendent and ask him to pass on to the officer the appreciation of the Board and staff for his help.

# OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE-PERSONAL

# 18 DEC 1976

The members were informed that the Junior School, had been on duty until 10.30 p.m., on 25th November last and, on his way home, had been stopped on the Rathgael Road and forced at gunpoint to drive two persons to Andersonstown where he had been detained in his car until almost 3.00 a.m.

The Board expressed concern at this incident and asked the officer to determine what steps might usefully be taken to reduce the likelihood of a

# 1LM SEPT 1977

#### Accident

The Secretary reported that when the staff of the Intensive Care Unit had taken the boys out for a game of pitch and accidentally struct one of the boys had several stitches had been necessary and the wound had heat very quickly. Unfortunately a nerve had been damaged and had no feeling in parts of one side of her face. The specialist mad advised that this may return eventually but that would depend on how badly the nerve had been damaged.

The Board instructed the Secretary to write to that they were very sorry to hear of the accident.

# RG 198 7N JUNE 1978

# COMMITTAL TO A REMAND HOME

gave details of the committal to a remand home for three months of a boy who had assaulted a member of staff when he had previously by the Police with assault and had been remanded in Prison.

The boy had appeared in Court earlier in the day and had been committed to a remand home for three months. The Unions representing the staff (N.U.P.E., N.A.S., and C.H.S.A.) had declared that, if the boy were returned to the school, their members would not deal with him. This

information had been passed to the Northern Ireland Office who were considering the matter.

with Northern Ireland Office and staff representatives. The matter was still unresolved when the Board meeting terminated.

# 7 MARCH 1979

#### Court Case

The Secretary reported that the case taken by RG 133 against the Board in connection with the assault against him by a boy had been dismissed in the Newtownards High Court. He further stated that he had consulted the Northern Ireland Office to enquire if the Board could make an ex-gratia payment to this officer if they so decided but the Northern Ireland Office had ruled against any possibility of their approval being given. Noted.

# Criminal Injuries Claim

The Secretary reported that a claim by Criminal Injuries Act had been settled.

RG 133

under the

# 3rd Aug 1985

# NOTED.

(xi) Members concerned to hear of an assault by a boy in the Centre on a member of the Board's staff. The incident had resulted

# OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE-PERSONAL

# ASSAULT ON STAFF

The Director reported on the worrying trend of assaults by pupils on staff. This had been highlighted recently by an assault on the National Association of Schoolmasters raising the matter of indemnities for staff who received injuries

2/3/88

ASSAULT ON STAFF. 2/3/88

On Wednesday, 10th February, was assaulted by a boy pupil.

33/21/4

# 238 WORKING PARTY REPORT ON VIOLENCE TO STAFF

This document had been considered by the Review Committee and a copy had been sent to NIO.  $\frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{1}{2} \right) = \frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{1}{2} \right) \left($ 

Mr. Conway pointed out that the reprt did not refer to the "Community Care" element of the staff.

It was decided that Mr. Conway produce a document for inclusion in the report which would be considered at the next Board meeting and it was stressed that the Union members of the Working Party should receive copies of any such document.

# 239 STRESS RELATED ILLNESS

The question of stress related illness had been the subject of discussion at the Staff Committee.

It had been decided to set up a working party to look at all aspects of stress related illness which would hold its first meeting early in the New Year. It was suggested that Miss Robinson should chair the working party and its composition should be similar to the one which recently produced the report on violence against staff.

# VIOLENCE TO STAFF

[b] aff - Community Care Element - Minute 238 refers

Mr. Conway reported that he had met with Mr. Whyte regarding an inclusion in the "Violence to Staff" report. They had decided that this inclusion would be deferred in the meantime.

NOTED. ASSAUCT ON STAFF

vii. A boy was given a Young Offenders' Centre sentence [one month] for assault on staff.

# STAFF STRESS 20/3/90

#### 367 STRESS AMONGST STAFF

introduced Mr. of the A.P.R.U. who had been invited to address the Board on the results of the recent survey on stress amongst Rathgael staff.

reported that 115 of the 130 questionnaires issued had been completed. Measuring stress was as yet as imperfect science but an attempt had been made to chart responses on a <u>sliding scale</u> ranging through "stress" to "distress" and on towards "burn out". Results to date did not indicate any general high level of stress throughout the Centre.

The Chairman thanked \_\_\_\_ for his attendance.

Mr

# TEAM LEADER MITE

11 111 111 111 111 111 111 111 111 111	2. Assaults on Staff  SIGNAL  Discussion ensued re. Care's policy on reporting such assaults to the Police. Mr
	along with RG 56 indicated that there was an agreed policy in Care. The senior member of staff on duty, having consulted with a senior manager should, if deemed appropriate, report the assault to uniform police (if outside normal working hours) and then to Juvenile Liaison at the earliest opportunity.
	Charlene Stevenson - assault on a member of staff.
The state of the s	stated that the Care Management Team abhorred all violence and that we would support staff in every way in their management of difficult children. He requested that a catalogue of violent incidents on other people involving Charlene, be drawn up and will be discussed by Senior Care Team re Action.
	Was removed to this
	was removed to 'time out' in Shamrock last night after a very volatile situation arose in Short Term Care.
	Concern was expressed by RG 236 regarding behaviour, ie absconding; damaging property; threatening staff and negative effect on group.
	advised that seem and if they feel that seem beyond their management, they can request consideration to be given to him being remanded to Lisnevin for a five week period with a view to proceeding under Schedule 5 for Unruly Behaviour. Meantime to stay in Shamrock.
<u>C</u>	harlene Stevenson - Update
	RG 16 had now received a report from RG 52 re , he had
no	ow an agreement (in written form) where has promised to accept the help
ap	oplication to proceed against under Schedule 5 providing there are no
tu	orther assaults on staff or young people.

ST TOAM LEADER MTG.

REQUESTS TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST A YOUNG PERSON
requested that unit staff must make the case for action to be taken against a young person and take responsibility for providing an in-depth report to substantiate the case. It is the responsibility of the Primary Worker and the Team Leader to provide a detailed report outlining the rationale for the young person being in their care, the interventions that have been thwarted by their behaviour and finally a detail list of incidents necessitating such action. To date reports generally have contained insufficient information necessitating Senior Staff to substantiate the application.
said this was symptomatic of a wider problem - there was an attitude in some cases that Primary Workers were responsible for a number of key children solely and were deficient in their knowledge and input into the care of the remainder of the group.  RG queried as to whether the Primary Worker system needed modification in light of these concerns.  R queried agreed that the matter lired further discussion placed it on the agenda for next week's Team Leaders' Meeting. Meantime R queried asked Team Leaders to discuss the issue with their teams in preparation for the debate.
2 YOUNG PEOPLE CHARGO WITH ASSAULT.
Assaults on Staff
in Court on the 14 March 1995 for a person) is charged with assault or
members) and (young person) is charged with assault on (staff member). RG 16 clarified the reporting procedures in Care in relation to alleged assaults against staff or young person. RG 16 said that it was each individual's right to report an assault on them to the Police, however, where the Centre report an incident to Police this decision should be taken by one of the Senior Care Team.
queried what the procedure would be if an alleged assault occurred during the weekend period.  RG said that he would not be opposed to being contacted at home in such cases. Both RG 14 and RG 41 felt the same.  RG 41 stressed the need for staff to adhere to guidelines in the event of an incident, ie to inform the appropriate person, observe and record any injuries with independent witness present (ie staff member from another unit) and organise medical examination / treatment, if necessary.

- 21. The Head of Education, Mr Cromey introduced a points system for education to encourage them. 'Contracting' was also introduced in classrooms for particularly disruptive pupils. This involved drawing up an agreement with the pupil to enable them to earn points if their behaviour in class improved.
- 22. I recall that the average teacher to pupils' ratio of the classes were in the region of: 1:6/8 in the main school; 1:5 in the short term reception classes and 1:3 in Shamrock House to reflect the varying demands and issues in each setting. Ancillary staff were also available to assist with particularly disruptive pupils.
- 23. There were Monday morning meetings with all teachers to discuss relevant issues and what was to be achieved for that week.
- 24. The school day started at 09:00 with assembly that was designed to provide positive messages and motivate the young people. This was held in a building called the "Chapel" although the services did not focus on religion.
- 25. This was followed by teaching until the classes broke up for lunch, which was served in the Units followed by further classes in the afternoon until about 16:00. The young people then returned to their units where they had dinner and undertook evening activities.
- 26. Each young person had an educational assessment on literacy and numeracy on entrance to provide a baseline with routine follow up assessments. Many on re-test showed a significant improvement.

# Support for the children

- 27. If a young person was unhappy, he or she could talk to numerous people key workers, team leaders, teachers, matrons/medical staff, chaplains, board members and staff at all levels. In addition, staff were instructed to report complaints by any of the residents to line management<sup>10</sup>.
- 28. In addition, staff from the Adolescent Psychological Research Unit (APRU)<sup>11</sup> headed by RG 220 assisted by four psychologists, attended Rathgael every day and RG 253 a psychiatrist, visited the school weekly. Individual cases were referred to the APRU by the team Leader in Rathgael. Often, the Individual Assessment Treatment Profile process would flag up individuals who would benefit from working with the APRU. The APRU would have engaged in one-to-one work with individuals in response to their needs.
- 29. I also ran group counselling sessions (I was a trained Counsellor) consisting of 10-12 boys. This was confidential unless criminal issues were raised.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> RGL-46333

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> RGL-27433

# Relationship with the Department

- 43. Rathgael was a statutory body and was therefore held responsible to the NIO. NIO officials focused on finance and macro matters whilst the SSI would have focused on the care of the young people.
- 44. Minutes from the Monthly Management Board meetings <sup>19</sup> <sup>20</sup> <sup>21</sup> and subcommittees (Finance and Property, Review (monthly review of children's cases), Staff and Runkerry) were provided to the NIO.
- 45. The Director's Report<sup>22</sup> also issued monthly to the NIO and covered routine reporting on issues such as disciplinary issues and anything that may result in publicity plus more serious issues, including allegations of abuse. There were no Key Performance Indicators to report against.
- 46. My Senior Management team and I developed a five-year business plan (commissioned to Price Waterhouse). This was presented to John Ledlie, the then Deputy Under Secretary at the NIO this reflected the division between care and justice young people and what the Centre aimed to achieve. This was reported against annually.

## Relationship with other Training Schools

47. The staff of Rathgael had good relationships with all the other Training Schools. We were able to discuss issues that impacted across the institutions.

## Rewards and points / disciplinary systems

- 48. A points system had been developed by Mr Cromey in the Education Department to reward good behaviour. This could result in a small monetary reward being awarded but also resulted in personal pride and positive reinforcement of good behaviour. Just having good behaviour recognised was a reward for the young people. The points were discussed with them at their weekly meetings.
- 49. Conversely, sanctions were deployed in response to bad behaviour. This could have meant a young person may not have been allowed to go on an outing, for example.

# Corporal punishment

50. I am aware that in the 1970s permissible use of the cane in the Junior School took place. This would have been administered by Senior Staff and entered in

<sup>20</sup> RGL-22955 - RGL-22957

<sup>21</sup> RGL-22969 – RGL-22975

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> RGL-22772 – RGL-22777

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Exhibit 5 – Letter from Mr Ledlie to C Whyte re Director's Report dated 30 July 1992

- **46.** Mentions Meeting were held on Friday afternoons during which marks were allocated to individual young people and House Points awarded for good behaviour or taken away for inappropriate behaviour (cross reference with paragraphs 48 49 of Mr. Whyte's statement). Individual marks were allocated to young people for good behaviour in class and unit, performance in school and workshop, house cleaning and tidiness of rooms. House points would have been awarded for sporting activities such as five-aside football, snooker and table tennis.
- 47. The Mentions meetings were attended by all young people and staff on duty held in the Common Rooms of each Unit. This is what the disciplinary system was based on and it was very much part of the culture all young people were made aware of this as part of their introduction to Rathgael. This system developed over the years resulting in a more assessment profiling approach and ultimately became the bronze, silver and gold awards scheme.
- **48.** The award of points allowed a young person full pocket money, full home leave and full participation in sporting and weekend activities. There was also the recognition of their good behaviour that was afforded by being awarded individual and house points in the first place.
- **49.** If a young person ended up in a negative points situation this could have resulted in sanctions such as reduction of pocket money, withdrawal of home leave, withdrawal of sporting activity and early beds.
- **50.** The Mentions meetings were also used to discuss home leave and activities for the forthcoming weekend. They generally afforded an opportunity for young people and staff to discuss routine matters within the Unit.
- 51. There was a less formal time-table during holiday times. Lengthy leave periods for young people would have been negotiated. I recall that leave would have been granted to those assessed as being eligible and with a suitable home base. These would have been in two-week blocks thus reducing the risk of returning to inappropriate behaviour. This leave would have been supervised and monitored by house staff using home visits and was part of the overall assessment of a young person's progress. For those periods outside term time

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Exhibit 5 – Letter from Mr Ledlie to C Whyte re Director's Report dated 30 July 1992

- a Punishment Book. I personally never administered or observed corporal punishment.
- 51. When corporal punishment was abolished in state schools a Directive issued stating that there was to be no more corporal punishment in Training Schools so this practice stopped. Withdrawal of privileges became the main form of discipline pocket money, TV, swimming pool, home leave and outings. This was part of the weekly Mentions Meeting. Major incidents would have involved Senior Staff, family Social Worker and Probation Officer if appropriate.

## **Absconding**

- 52. The "Pindown Report" 1991<sup>23</sup> was the subject of an SSI Inspection report at Rathgael<sup>24</sup>. There was no "pindown" at Rathgael as it was against the rules although it was recognised that running away was an endemic problem in open establishments.
- 53. Every time a young person absconded, this was reported to the local police. Rathgael received of a lot of criticism because of the high level of absconding. In response to criticism by the North Down MP Jim Kilfedder, the Spectator newspaper ran an article on the school on 22 September 1991<sup>25</sup>. Statistics at the time of the article in relation to absconding showed that in the previous six months, 54% had not absconded; 34% had absconded but many were just late back from home leave, a training programme or work whilst some were absent for a day or two; only 12% were persistent and serious absconders these were the cause of most concern.
- 54. The young people were counselled on the likely consequences of absconding and sanctions, such as depriving them of taking part in activities or freedom of movement were applied. In addition a number of measures were in place to reduce absconding in relation to: carrying out detailed research to ensure improvements, if any, could be measured; provision of a residential programme for homeless children outside North Down; and, continuation of work on providing a semi-secure building to enable the more serious absconders to be locked in their rooms at night.
- 55. Fofany Cottage, which opened on 27 May 1994,<sup>26</sup> was established as a result of Rathgaels' Mourne Cottage Project with the support of the Prince's Trust Young Offenders Group committee. The aim of the project was to provide a

 $\frac{https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/yourcouncil/dataprotection and freedom of information/publications scheme/}{The-Pindown-Experience-and-the-Protection-of-Children.pdf}$ 

<sup>23</sup> 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> RGL-23801 – RGL-23805

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> RGL-27433

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Exhibit 6 - Fofany Cottage Project – the Official Opening – 27 May 1994

- Rathgael dealt with some of the most disturbed children in Northern Ireland<sup>6 7</sup>
   Over time the emphasis was increasingly on community treatment. There was very little violence in Rathgael and none against staff until the last few years when an increase in incidents could be seen.
- 16. When I arrived in Rathgael in 1973, all house master and house mother teams were husbands and wives who lived adjacent to the residents. There were no female staff other than domestic, kitchen and nursing.
- 17. There is no doubt that there was a difficulty in getting the balance right between care and control. This was a professional challenge that evolved as Rathgael developed from being a Reform School to a more caring and educating establishment. All staff were encouraged to follow this goal and I had aspirations for the school to become a Centre of Excellence in the treatment of children and young people.

# Services provided by Rathgael

18. Rathgael provided a range of services to the children as summarised below.

# Education<sup>9</sup>

- 19. Education was headed by a Deputy Director, Head of Education assisted by two deputies and teachers. The range of classroom education in the Junior School was similar in most aspects to the curriculum of junior intermediate schools in the community. The curriculum was designed in response to the needs of the young children and covered subjects including literacy, mathematics, geography, history and physical education. Timetables were geared around what was available in mainstream schools as best as possible and the Teachers Union was represented to ensure teachers were aware of what was going on in mainstream schools.
- 20. The children in the Senior School were of school age and older so both classroom and trade training was provided. Classroom education was optional for young people over school age. The trade departments provided training in building, metalwork, motor engineering, painting, brick laying, decorating, joinery, catering and horticulture to both boys and girls. City and Guilds was introduced in the 1980s so that the young people could receive training and skills and an opportunity to work towards qualifications from a recognised body.

<sup>7</sup> Exhibit 2 - A Social Psychological Evaluation of a Community Service Programme for Young Offenders in a Northern Ireland Training School, thesis presented for the degree of Master of Social Science, D. Campbell Whyte, August 1981, p32

<sup>9</sup> RGL2388 – RGL23890

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup>RGL-24845

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> RGL-27433

#### **PRIVATE**

- 21. RG 2 a member of staff was very heavy handed. He was verbally abusive to me, he would shout and swear at me, calling me names like 'bitch' and would threaten me by saying 'I am your worst nightmare'.
- 22. On one occasion I was restrained by a member of staff called RG 3, who was exmilitary. He put my arm right up my back and pressed on a pressure point on my thumb which paralysed me with pain.
- 23. On another occasion I did not get out of the swimming pool with other residents. I had just been in the pool a short time when a staff member, that I believe was called RG 232 took me out of the pool using a large hook and sat on me. I would estimate him to be 18 stone weight. My face was pushed against the tiles I screamed for help but no one assisted me nor did he stop. Another staff member called RG 5 was also present and did nothing to help me.
- 24. A punishment at Rathgael was to be sent to the Shamrock room. The room was approximately four foot square. This room was empty and had a very rough carpet. Punishment was to be locked in there for 72 hours in solitary confinement. When I was put in the Shamrock room I would pull at my hair through boredom.
- was responsible for giving us cigarettes. If I was in any trouble, RG 5 would cut the cigarettes to make them shorter. At times the cigarettes would have been shortened to an inch long. This was another method staff used to control us, in reality this led to tensions between the residents.
- 26. During the evenings we were not allowed to select a particular television programme to view. We had to watch the staff's choice of programme.
- 27. There was a pool room at Rathgael. We were not allowed to use this facility unless accompanied by a member of staff. In practice this happened quite infrequently.

Page 108

- 1 Q. -- and the process of either taking cigarettes off you
- 2 --
- 3 A. Uh-huh.
- 4 Q. -- or cutting cigarettes down so there was less of them
- as part of the punishment system, the rewards and
- 6 privileges system, to try and get behaviour. You were
- 7 saying to me earlier -- do you want to just explain to
- 8 the Panel that that was --
- 9 A. That wasn't part of rewards. That was her way of doing
- it. I mean, these -- well, me and other residents in
- there had an addiction of nicotine and to get your
- cigarette maybe cut down to there (gesturing), it was
- only going to cause tensions in the unit.
- 14 Q. So she was the only person who did this?
- 15 A. Yes. She was the only person that cut them down.
- 16 Q. Right. Did other people take them off you completely?
- 17 A. Other members of staff would have confiscated them, but
- you would have been able to earn them back that way, but
- she actually cut them. There was no coming back.
- 20 Q. It is that, the doing -- the cutting of the cigarettes,
- 21 that you regarded as --
- 22 A. Yes. It would have caused tensions, because if you were
- going in to have a smoke, you maybe had that left in
- your cigarette (gesturing).
- 25 Q. In paragraph 30 of your --

#### **PRIVATE**

- 7. I remember another incident where RG 4 had told the boys they were not allowed to hang on the monkey bars inside the school. I was away when he said this and I didn't know that he had forbidden us to hang on the bars. I was leaning against them when he walked back later that day and RG 4 took me to his office. I refused to hold my hand out to be caned. He lost his temper and beat me with such force that his cane broke and he started thumping me with his fists. I was only thirteen at the time and I was terrified. I remember hearing about another incident where one of the teachers, RG 66 who was a small man with glasses, hit a boy called RG 68 on the lip. RG 68 had to get four of five stitches. These sorts of violent incidents were the norm rather than the exception.
- 8. There was other incident with a boy who had come from Kincora. He was a big lad and he was very withdrawn. We called him RG 69 He just wandered around with his hands in his pockets and never spoke to anyone or about anything. I remember we were told that he had taken his own life by throwing himself off one of the ferries going to Scotland.
- 9. In the summer of 1976 we were made to work chipping small mosaic tiles from a swimming pool which was on site as a form of punishment. We were given small hammers and told to chip away the tiles. We spent hours at this task and our hands were covered in blisters when we finished. The dust was overwhelming and we had no masks or protective clothing. It was a form of child labour and I felt degraded doing this work.
- 10.I remember being afraid constantly at Rathgael. For example, there was a night watchman, I think his name was RG 13 He used to patrol the grounds at night. He had two big Alsatians and he used to bring those dogs into the houses at night. He used to come up right up beside you with these two big, barking dogs. It was just an example of another thing that really scared me.
- 11. The general level of care was good at Rathgael. I have no complaints about the living conditions as such. For example, the food was good and the environment was clean. The laundry was done every week and your clothing

Board and to me, as Director. The recommendations were generally accepted and implemented.

- 63. I do, however, recall challenging one recommendation in relation to night supervisors. Following one inspection, the SSI was keen to remove night supervisors (these were unqualified staff) and bring in qualified sleep over staff. There were at least three suicide attempts at Rathgael that I was aware of but none were successful due to the vigilance of the night supervisors. On one occasion, the night supervisor had checked in on a young person and, although the young person was attempting to conceal that he had cut himself, the supervisor detected blood dripping onto the floor. The emergency services were called immediately and the young person was taken to hospital. The recommendation to remove night supervisors was not implemented.
- 64. There were follow up inspections to ensure the recommendations had been implemented and I do not recall any issues as a result of these inspections.
- 65. I cannot recall if any Social Work Advisory Group (SWAG) inspections took place in the in 1970's and early 1980's but I am aware that they would have visited and provided advice from time to time.

## Self-harm

- 66. In addition to the suicide attempts I was aware of as outlined in paragraph 63, there were incidents of children cutting themselves and swallowing glass. The young persons involved in such incidents would have received medical attention and been taken to hospital if required.<sup>28</sup>
- 67. Due to serious concerns about self-harm I set up a Self-injury Monitoring Group that I chaired on a monthly basis. It was attended by our medical nurse, RG 220 (APRU) and other relevant staff. The purpose of the group was to monitor patterns of self-injurious behaviour. Where we were concerned about particular individuals or a group we would make the staff aware and place the child or children under closer supervision or assign extra staff to a particular unit.

# Peer abuse / bullying

68. Bullying went on at peer level – this was monitored, reported and action was taken. Unfortunately, it is an endemic problem in all institutes and impacted both staff and other children.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> RGL-46319

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> RGL-46326 - RGL-46327

never to the same extent. This demanded specialist training for teaching and residential staff. In the case of Training Schools this was provided by the APRU. The APRU also worked one-to-one with young people who were presenting with any form of self-harm behaviour. This would have manifested itself in numerous ways and Rathgael staff, including medical staff, were trained to detect and report them. Often, self-harming resulted in a transfer to one of the two specialist Units, Shamrock House or Fox Lodge, where such behaviour was more easily monitored and managed. APRU worked with individuals in these units on a daily basis and supported staff in respect of best practice in the treatment of these young people.

- **68.** Given the profile of children being admitted to Training School, a high proportion had been abused prior to admission and their behaviour was often very much associated with that hurt and their sense of low self-worth and even lower self-esteem.
- **69.** As the Key Worker model developed, there were regular opportunities to address the individual needs of young people. Also, it would not be unusual in the care environment for other young people to detect and report incidents of bullying and other behaviours.
- **70.** VOYPIC, the Voice of Young People in Care <sup>24</sup> in Northern Ireland was established in July 1993 and other peer support groups would have been used to address this emerging issue and other issues relating to young people in care. These support mechanisms formed part of the wider after care structure available to the young people.

## **Aftercare**

71. The 1952 Training School Rules<sup>25</sup> were innovative in that they gave priority to "placing out and aftercare" as integral to the care of young people (Rules 46 – 49). The Rules gave the Management Board the power to place out children on license to schools, suitable employment and to seek appropriate

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Exhibit 13 - http://www.voypic.org/about-us

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> SPT-80001 - 80062

#### **PRIVATE**

## Rathgael (1994)

- 14. Initially I was sent to Rathgael for 15 weeks assessment. My older sister HIA 389 was also a resident there although I was not allowed to see her as staff believed she was a bad influence on me.
- 15. In my room at Rathgael there was no handle on the inside of my door which was locked at night. There was a glass window in the door and staff would peer through this at night when I was in bed. We had buzzers in our room that we had to ring for staff to accompany us to the bathroom. I have always suffered from a weak bladder and would have to urinate frequently. When I would press the buzzer, staff would ignore it and I would have had to urinate in a container and dispose of the contents out the window.
- 16. In place of a mattress I had a blue gymnastic mat. I had no bed sheet to cover the mat. I had one thin blanket and a pillow. During the winter months I was very cold.
- 17. The window in my room could only be opened a small amount and during the summer the air was stifling which meant it was difficult to sleep.
- 18. There was no choice during meal times. I am a vegetarian, although I was provided with a vegetarian meal I was never given a choice of vegetarian meals. I was given the same vegetarian pastry dish every day. Also water was only available to me during meal times.
- 19. When bathing in Rathgael I had to keep the bathroom door open. Both male and female staff members would have stood at the door. I found this lack of privacy disgraceful and degrading.
- 20. I was sent to Chapel every morning. This I could not understand as I am not a Catholic. I never felt comfortable with this.

Page 91

- 1 Q. Do you want to tell the Panel what you think should have
- 2 been done?
- 3 A. I think the child should have been -- me as a child,
- I should have been talked to, maybe, you know, talked
- 5 round or something, just not put up the stairs out of
- 6 the way as if -- it was inhuman just getting put away,
- 7 just locked up. That was it.
- 8 Q. Okay, and the -- very quickly a case conference takes
- 9 place then with the various people involved in designing
- a care plan for you and that initial case conference
- 11 takes place on 14th December 1993.
- 12 A. Uh-huh.
- 13 Q. We can look at 882, please, which shows the type of
- 14 people who were involved in the care plan. So you had
- 15 the residential social worker from
- You had the field social worker, who was Social
- 17 Services in that area, RG 233 . Then you had RG41,
- 18 who was the in Rathgael. I think
- 19 you remember RG41.
- 20 A. I remember RG41.
- 21 Q. Then you were able to give me the first name of
- 22 RG 234 It was RG 234
- 23 A. Uh-huh.
- 24 Q. Who was the residential social worker, key worker
- working with you at the time. I'm not going to go

#### **PRIVATE**

member of staff called RG 2 and I used to dread him working because he would flirt with all the teenage girls. As a result of everything that had happened in my life I had learned by this stage to keep my head down.

- 28. Three specific boys who where regularly pinned to the floor by staff members using chairs. When the boys wanted released the staff refused. This resulted in the boys getting angry and having to be restrained. A member of staff called RG 2 was renowned for this.
- 29. A senior staff member called RG 41 had a favourite female resident. She would punish and threaten to punish the other residents if this girl was annoyed in any way.
- 30. We were taken to the shop once by a member of staff called RG 20 to spend our pocket money. I was mouthy to him in the shop and when we returned to Rathgael I refused to go into house 3. I was sitting outside on the grass. He came back out of the house and I told him to "fuck off". He grabbed me with both his hands around the chest area and pulled me into the house. I yelled for him to stop but he did not.
- 31. On one occasion I remember falling down the stairs in House 3. I was clumsy with stairs. I was fined some of my pocket money as when I had fallen I used bad language. Staff did not help me up nor check if I sustained any injuries.
- 32. The secure unit was called Shamrock House. I spent around six months in Shamrock House. In my bedroom I had a plastic mattress and a plastic cube to place my clothes on. I found the bed extremely uncomfortable to sleep on and the bed sheet would always slide off the mattress. When I was in Shamrock House the doors were locked and I had to ask for permission for everything. If I wanted to go to the toilet or get a drink I had to ask permission and a member of staff came with me, I always had to wait. We all had to stay in the one room and watch television. We were never allowed to be on our own. The only time we were allowed out of the unit was to have a cigarette. Our bedroom doors were locked at night time. During my time in Shamrock House I attended school, although at most I would have coloured in pictures, completed crosswords

HIA 198 PRIVATE 6

#### **PRIVATE**

puzzles and played games on the computer. I did not receive the same education as children in mainstream education.

- 33. The food I was received in Rathgael was disgusting; I do not believe the food was fit for human consumption. When I was in Shamrock House the meals I received were nearly cold and had a rubber texture.
- 34. There was no medical or dental care. There was a Matron called RG 75 but she just seem to dispense Strepsils for every ailment. On one occasion I had an injury to my foot and I was given a Strepsil.
- 35. I never received a hair cut during my time in Rathgael.
- 36. Despite all my problems I was not given any medication or any help. I had very little education as no-one understood my problems.
- 37. I did not receive any life sills during my time spent in Rathgael, for example, how to look after my appearance or respect myself. I was not prepared for life when I left care.

## **Life After Care**

- 38. I left Rathgael when I was seventeen years old. I was deemed 'high risk' and discharged to the care of my father. My parents had since divorced and my father had no knowledge of how to manage me nor did he want to manage me. My father, brother and sister were drinking heavily. I contacted Rathgael and social services regarding this and I was told 'it's a good home', 'there is nowhere else for you to go' and that social services had no legal obligation towards me. I believe my family had a huge resentment for me as I was blamed for breaking up the family. To this day I feel consumed with guilt and find it very difficult to accept that I deserve a future.
- 39. I registered with a dentist when I left Rathgael. I required eight fillings as my teeth had been neglected throughout my childhood.

Page 72

- 1 that you received, but, as I have explained to you --
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. -- the Inquiry is limited in what it can look at --
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. -- and what it can hear from you, but that's not to say
- 6 that your entire statement has not been considered and
- 7 read by the Panel.
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. But is there anything about your time in Rathgael that
- 10 you feel that we haven't covered or anything more that
- 11 you wanted to say about Rathgael in particular?
- 12 A. There was no due care and attention. There was nothing,
- you know, specific to any individual. It was all --
- I can nearly say it was just all basically sitting about
- doing nothing, the children. There was no activities.
- 16 Like in Shamrock House we were all just sitting in the
- living room watching TV. That's what I did for eight to
- nine months, and then try to go to school in the
- 19 Shamrock, and, you know, you've got other kids kicking
- off and being frustrated about what they can do and what
- they can't do. Then there's no teacher. The teacher
- has been taken out of the classroom for a while, you
- know, dealing with that situation and you are still left
- there sitting.
- 25 Q. Well, HIA198, you will be glad to know that that's all

## Control and Restraint

- 69. In England and Wales staff dealing with young offenders were trained in control and restraint (C&R) by the prison service, for example at Aycliffe in Durham. However, this resulted in children being hurt so this approach was not taken forward in Rathgael. In the 1990s, C&R training more appropriate for use on young children was provided to teachers, social workers and other staff in Rathgael by an agency other than NIPS. I recall this had been approved by the SSI.
- 70. I don't recall guidance from the NIO as this would have been a matter more for the SSI.

# Transfer of Children<sup>30</sup>

71. If it was necessary to remove a young person from Rathgael to Millilse or the Young Offenders Centre<sup>31</sup> because they were a serious danger to others and themselves, permission would first be sought from the NIO; an order would be signed by a Lay Magistrate, which was then presented to the police to effect the move. I recall doing this twice.

# Complaints / Allegations of abuse

- 72. There was a complaints procedure in place and less serious issues were generally handled at house level by Key Workers and House Team Leaders.
- 73. Serious allegations <u>had</u> to be reported to senior managers. The first step was to establish the facts (e.g. was the staff member allegedly involved actually there). If there were reasonable grounds for suspicion, the issue was routinely reported to the local police, NIO and Rathgael Board of Management. The member of staff was placed on precautionary suspension pending the investigation.
- 74. My responsibilities with regards to responding to complaints and allegations were very clear the welfare, care and control of the children under my responsibility was of primary importance and, therefore, policies and procedures had to be followed to deliver this.

#### **Aftercare**

75. There was a Training School Aftercare Group established by SSI at which each Training School was represented. The purpose of the group was to implement

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 $<sup>^{30}</sup>$  RGL-100635 – RGL-100637 – schedule 5, 10(1) Children and Young Persons Act (NI) 1968

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup>RGL-42135 - RGL-42144

- 30. Young Teenage Mothers were referred to Parents and Children Together (Barnardos) and Thorndale Family Centre (Salvation Army)
- 31. In 1982, I helped introduce Independent Assessment Treatment Profiles<sup>12</sup> <sup>13</sup> in conjunction with the APRU for each resident. This innovation enabled staff to assess and treat each person individually and covered issues such as family background, education, social skills, and physical and psychiatric problems. An interdisciplinary approach was adopted, which involved social workers, teachers, psychologists, medical staff and the school's consultant psychiatrist working together to identify and ease each young person's particular problems. Although this proved to be an effective model for a lot of kids, it was very challenging to deliver effectively to all. This approach had particular success in reducing and eliminating individual problems. The Social Services Inspectorate agreed this approach as a suitable model.

## Community Service Programme

- 32. I could see the benefits of community-based treatments whilst recognising that some young people would benefit better from a residential experience.
- 33. In 1974, I approached the then Director of Rathgael, proposal to establish the Community Service Programme (CSP)<sup>1415</sup>. This involved the young people being placed in a variety of Community-based projects aimed at turning them into 'treaters' rather than being treated themselves. RG 269 agreed to this proposal which I then implemented. For example, they would work with kids in the Rudolf Steiner village at Glencraig on activities such as gardening and sport. They also went to Kilcooley Primary School to teach the children how to play football. Other projects attended by the young people included the Physically Handicapped and Able-Bodied (PHAB) Club in Bangor, the Avoca Playgoup, Beacon House Club and swimming with the handicapped.
- 34. The young people were supervised by two Community Service Volunteers (CSVs) who were also resident at the school for a minimum period of six months. The Volunteers were selected by the CSV Organisation in conjunction with Rathgael's Community Service Supervisor. These activities put the Rathgael residents into a caring role. Only two abscondings and two alleged thefts were recorded during the first five and half years of the programme in which over 150 boys had participated. This was regarded as an indication of the respect the young people had for the programme and how much they got

<sup>14</sup> Exhibit 3 – A Social Psychological Evaluation of a Community Service Programme for Young Offenders in a Northern Ireland Training School, thesis presented for the degree of Master of Social Science, D. Campbell Whyte, August 1981, pp33-42

15 RGL-27433

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup>Exhibit 3 – Initial case conference – 14 Dec 1993

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> RGL-46505 – RGL-46508

Occasionally, Residential staff would have also slept in the 'link rooms' when required, for example when a child needed additional supervision during the night, perhaps because they were upset, or possibly at risk of self-harming.

## Night supervisors

Awake all night 10.30 - 7.00/7.30

Night supervisors were not qualified but they were trained to supervise the young people at night to ensure their safety. Regular checks were carried out on each dorm, with particular attention given to those requiring special attention. Additional sleep-in staff were available in the event of an emergency and senior staff were on call.

- **55.** Teaching and ancillary staff also worked in the residential Units in the evenings, weekends and holiday periods.
- **56.** In addition to the routine daily life at Rathgael, special occasions such as birthdays were celebrated as well as Christmas, Easter, Halloween and school concerts.
- 57. Day to day life was recorded and administered through the maintenance of daily and night sheets for each unit. These were filled out by unit staff and covered all aspects of life such as numbers in Unit, names of absconders, court appearances, medical appointments, visits, work placements, etc. The Friday daily sheets would also have covered weekend home leave arrangements.
- 58. Night sheets detailed who was on duty, what young person was in each room, issues that required observation during the night, for example those who had been ill during the day or fretful. These would have been filled in at different times during the night and then the relevant issues discussed with day staff when they came on duty.
- 59. Incidents sheets were filled in separately by residential or teaching staff detailing the incident, those involved and the action to be taken (e.g. removal of marks or a period of time-out in their bedrooms or to go for a walk with a member of staff). Depending on the seriousness of the issue, an incident could be brought to the attention of the relevant senior staff. Other documents

- 21. The Head of Education, Mr Cromey introduced a points system for education to encourage them. 'Contracting' was also introduced in classrooms for particularly disruptive pupils. This involved drawing up an agreement with the pupil to enable them to earn points if their behaviour in class improved.
- 22. I recall that the average teacher to pupils' ratio of the classes were in the region of: 1:6/8 in the main school; 1:5 in the short term reception classes and 1:3 in Shamrock House to reflect the varying demands and issues in each setting. Ancillary staff were also available to assist with particularly disruptive pupils.
- 23. There were Monday morning meetings with all teachers to discuss relevant issues and what was to be achieved for that week.
- 24. The school day started at 09:00 with assembly that was designed to provide positive messages and motivate the young people. This was held in a building called the "Chapel" although the services did not focus on religion.
- 25. This was followed by teaching until the classes broke up for lunch, which was served in the Units followed by further classes in the afternoon until about 16:00. The young people then returned to their units where they had dinner and undertook evening activities.
- 26. Each young person had an educational assessment on literacy and numeracy on entrance to provide a baseline with routine follow up assessments. Many on re-test showed a significant improvement.

# Support for the children

- 27. If a young person was unhappy, he or she could talk to numerous people key workers, team leaders, teachers, matrons/medical staff, chaplains, board members and staff at all levels. In addition, staff were instructed to report complaints by any of the residents to line management<sup>10</sup>.
- 28. In addition, staff from the Adolescent Psychological Research Unit (APRU)<sup>11</sup> headed by RG 220 assisted by four psychologists, attended Rathgael every day and Dr Clenaghan, a psychiatrist, visited the school weekly. Individual cases were referred to the APRU by the team Leader in Rathgael. Often, the Individual Assessment Treatment Profile process would flag up individuals who would benefit from working with the APRU. The APRU would have engaged in one-to-one work with individuals in response to their needs.
- 29. I also ran group counselling sessions (I was a trained Counsellor) consisting of 10-12 boys. This was confidential unless criminal issues were raised.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> RGL-46333

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> RGL-27433

young people that was adopted by the Management Board and endorsed by the Secretary of State.

# Placement of Young People in Training Schools

- 10. The majority of young people were admitted to Rathgael as a result of difficulties experienced in the Care and Education systems. Generally, they were admitted on a short-term, interim basis to the Training School as a result of a crisis in their personal or family life, or committed by the Juvenile Court because no alternative placement was available. Some were admitted by reason of their offending behaviour. The Children and Young Person's Act (NI) 1968 made it difficult to be flexible and innovative, in relation to length of placement and a planned return to their community. An indeterminate order was issued that resulted in uncertainty and was often added to by subsequent Training School Orders as a result of further offences effectively extending their period of detention and delaying their release on license to the community. I recollect many young people reaching their peak within the first year of their detention and thereafter regressing as a result of the uncertainty of future placements.
- 11. Rathgael was a regional resource and as such often dislocated young people form their community and family. Being admitted from the four health and Social Services Boards and five Education and Library Board areas, although there was financial assistance available it was difficult for families outside the greater Belfast area to visit Rathgael on a regular basis. This also meant that young people going on home lave had to travel long distances on their own. At no time in the Centre's history was there a direct bus service to the Rathgael Road.
- 12. My impression was that there was often reluctance on behalf of the Magistrate to commit young people to Training Schools but they were afforded no other option. In real terms, the Training School was the only option. Few specialized units were being developed in Northern Ireland and child and adolescent psychiatry was totally inadequate. The substantive response to this was the

the placing out in aftercare element of the 1952 Training School Rules<sup>32</sup> (also referenced in the Children and Young Persons Act (NI) 1968<sup>33</sup>). This was all embracing and progressive legislation that provided for statutory aftercare for all young persons leaving Training Schools and ultimately influenced The Children (NI) Order 1995<sup>34</sup>. Aftercare was provided across Northern Ireland to every child that left Training School.

- 76. A formula was used to calculate how long aftercare applied to each young person but it would have been for a minimum of one year and up to three years minus one day. Factors such as their age and why they had been assigned to a Training School were used to determine this. A Review Committee met monthly to discuss the progress of each child and to consider their discharge on License.
- The primary function of aftercare on discharge was to ensure that each young person was housed in approved accommodation; this could be their family home, the children's home they had come from or boarding out, depending on what age they were discharged from the Training School. For older individuals leaving Training Schools, there was initially an approved landlady scheme that was replaced by supported housing.
- A further function of aftercare was to help secure education or employment for each young person, depending on age and, return to mainstream education for the younger individuals. Young persons were generally supported up to the age of 18, with some receiving support up to the age 21 in exceptional circumstances where they undertook A' levels and went on to attend university.
- Youth Training Programmes were run by the employment agencies in the 1970s and 1980s and provided supervised work placements for young persons.
- 80. The legislation was robust in that it required aftercare to be monitored and included the ultimate sanction of recall if progress was not satisfactory<sup>35</sup>.
- The Eastside project was a product of the Black Report (1979)<sup>36</sup> providing support for young people as an alternative to going to a Training School and after they had been discharged from a Training School. It was established by the NIO in conjunction with east Belfast and Castlereagh Unit of Management of the Eastern Health and Social Services Board and opened in the early 1980s. It is now located in Dundonald and prompted the establishment of the Northside project and Whitefield projects throughout Northern Ireland.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> SPT-80063 – SPT-80073 - para 49-49, Training School Rules 1952

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> SPT-100587 – s89 Children and Young Persons Act (NI) 1968

<sup>34</sup> http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1995/755/contents/made

<sup>35</sup> SPT-100587- Ibid s89(3)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> SPT-100717 – SPT-100785

out from participating in it. The number of young people who volunteered generally exceeded the number of projects so some had to wait until a place became available. Some young people may have been excluded from specific projects because, for example, a boy with a history of sexual offending would have been excluded from nursery group work or a non-swimmer would have been excluded from the swimming project.

35. The CSP was introduced when Rathgael School was undergoing a number of changes. Over time, child-care practices, counselling, individual assessment and treatment approaches were replacing the more custodial and punitive practices that had previously been in place. There was also a growing realisation that isolating boys from the community was inconsistent with the treatment policy which aimed to rehabilitate and prepare boys for return to their own communities better equipped to cope and to lead productive and trouble-free lives. The programme developed as a voluntary option for both school-age and over school-age young people and became established as both a curricular and extra-curricular activity. It was still running in 1991<sup>16</sup> but I am not sure when the programme stopped running.

## Children on license or extended leave

36. Rathgael was legally responsible for its care children, including those who had left the centre on licence or on extended leave. There was a small Community Care department that supervised those young children, including the East Side Project<sup>17</sup>, which offered 24 hour support to young people who had settled in east Belfast. This project won a national award in 1984 and went on to take referrals from all over Belfast. The centre also ran three houses for young people who left Rathgael with nowhere to go.

# Leisure and recreation

30. Evening activities included classes in photography, art and typing. Alternatively, the young people could play pool, do hairdressing or watch television. They also had opportunities to participate in specific projects. For example, in 1976, the young people, under supervision, converted an old Ulsterbus into a play bus, which was used by the Voluntary Service Bureau in the community for children to play in. This involved the young people using the metalwork, painting and motor engineering skills they had learnt in class. The play bus formed part of the Community Service Programme referred to above and provided an opportunity for a young person to act as an Assistant Playbus leader in support of the two ladies who were in charge. For this project it was normal practice for the volunteer to have come from one of the

<sup>17</sup> RGL-23888

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> RGL-27433

accommodation. It also ensured that adequate arrangements were made for the aftercare of every pupil until their license expired and to the appointment of a suitable person to carry his or her aftercare.

- 72. The Rathgael Board interpreted this by establishing an Aftercare Team which in time evolved into a social work department with a Community Care Strategy with a Community Care Team. This eventually ensured that young people were supported from admission to discharge, for example the appointment of an Intake social worker as part of the Community Care Team. From recollection, the Community Care Team was responsible for the following:
  - To provide the supervision and support for each young person being released from the Centre, having been introduced to them as early as possible within their stay at Rathgael. This was vital in the individual cases that required placements in residential care, foster care or supported living;
  - To liaise with schools, and negotiate their return when appropriate and to provide support both to the young person and to the school for the duration of their supervision;
  - iii. To arrange employment, work schemes and placements to those beyond school leaving age;
  - iv. To liaise with Social Services and Probation Service in relation to any joint working and/or with the family;
  - v. To provide reports to other agencies in relation to progress whilst under supervision; and
  - vi. To provide court reports in the event of reoffending or other appearances before the juvenile bench.
- 73. Young people were allocated to a member of the Community Care Team for the duration of their license and supervision on release. The purpose of this was to provide a stable transition from care to the community and fulfilled the statutory requirement to ensure the young person could see out the balance of their sentence under supervision in the community. This was often done on a

Rathgael Centre for Children and Young People Youth Treatment Education Provision

Aim

To provide a specialist education programme, within a safe and secure environment, designed to meet the individual needs of each boy or girl and in which all pupils are motivated to learn and develop to their maximum potential.

#### Assessment

All children are assessed initially by specialist teachers using standardised testing procedures to ascertain their basic potential, their attainment levels and specialist areas of interest, thus building up an individual educational profile of each child.

Differentiated education programmes are developed to meet the individual needs of the pupil. Regular review and monitoring of pupil progress ensures that differentiated learning experiences are relevant to the changing needs of the pupil.

#### Curriculum

The school provides programmes of education, as far as possible consistent with the National Curriculum, appropriate to the age and aptitudes of individual children. The curriculum is sufficiently broadly based to meet the educational needs of all pupils, including those described under the Education Act 1981 as having "learning difficulties."

The timetable provides pupils with the opportunity to study the following subject and cross-curiculum themes:

Mathematics	English	Geography	History
General Science	Health Ed.	Art & Craft	Home Economics
Physical Ed.	C.D.T.	Religous Ed.	Music

Social & Life Skills, Preparation for Work & Work experience.

#### Remedial Education

Remedial education is offered where necessary to all age groups. This provision is monitored by teachers qualified to assess and teach pupils with special educational needs.

#### Vocational Education

Social and Life Skills and Preparation for Work play a major role in the education timetable for older boys and girls. Vocational Training is offered in Motor Engineering and Rathgael Centre is approved by the City and Guilds Of London Institute to provide courses validated by them. Craft Design and Technology is also offered to pupils.

Page 44

- 1 He was very -- he would have
- been -- worked with the leadership or whatever of
- Rathgael. He would have came and saw me for some months
- 4 after I got out.
- 5 Q. And when you say came to see you, was he just asking how
- 6 you were getting on --
- 7 A. Yes, yes.
- 8 Q. -- or was he offering you advice about anything, jobs or
- 9 whatever?
- 10 A. No, he was just checking -- he was actually just
- checking to see I was okay, and actually at one time
- 12 I was in court again for disorderly behaviour, and he
- came to the court case to -- the court with me, you
- 14 know, to support me.
- 15 Q. I see. What was his name again?
- 16 A. I think it was . Is it
- 17 MS SMITH: I think the name might be Conway.
- 18 A.
- 19 CHAIRMAN: And was it your impression that they were really
- doing that in their own time or as part of an official
- 21 programme?
- 22 A. No, I think RG18 was probably doing it on his own time,
- 23 but I think , I think he was doing that as
- a follow-up from Rathgael itself.
- 25 Q. Thank you very much.

#### **PRIVATE**

RG 27 would make excuses to get me on my own and kiss me. This continued over a period of around 2 years. There was no sex just kissing and friendship. We did attempt to have sex but RG 27 could not achieve an erection. RG 27 was 32 years older than me. He was more of a father figure to me and I had a bond with him. I believe the staff in Rathgael were aware about our relationship. I believe someone reported RG 27 and he was sacked or made to take early redundancy. No one from Rathgael ever asked me about my relationship with RG 27

- 20. On one occasion I had been sniffing glue with two other girls. RG 33 the Vice Principal took us to his office. RG 34 and RG 35 were also there. RG 33 was shouting at me. RG 35 was standing at the door. There was a window open so I attempted to leave via it. I had one leg out of the window and RG 33 knocked me against the wall and pinned me there by my throat. I was knocked unconscious. When I regained consciousness blood was running from my head. He again knocked me against the wall. I was taken to Newtownards hospital by Mr RG 36 I received 6 stitches for the injury on my head. I told my mother about this incident but I am not sure if she reported this to the police.
- 21. During my time in Rathgael another resident and my friend, RG 37 who was from advised staff that she did not want to return to live with her grandparent as she was being abused. Staff ignored this and when she was sixteen she was sent back to live with her abusers. I was informed by staff that
- 22. I received no visits from my family when I was resident in Rathgael. On occasion I would have visited my brother in the Royal Victoria Hospital. He suffered from cystic fibrosis and spent a lot of time in hospital. My brother died in from cystic fibrosis
- 23. I spent two years in Rathgael and left in August 1987 when I was nearly seventeen years old.

# Rathgael Centre for Children and Young People

(Rathgael and Whiteabbey Schools Management Board)

Director - RG

Tel: Bangor (0247) 454276

Rathgael Centre 169 Rathgael Road BANGOR Co. Down BT19 1TA

5th February, 1987.

# CONFIDENTIAL REPORT RE

RG 37

At the N.A.I. Review held in Lisburn Social Services Office on 30th July, 1986 it was agreed that Rathgael Centre would pursue an appointment for RG 37 with However, during the following four weeks RG 37 displayed very marked mood swings, had cut her wrist badly and on another occasion had threatened to take her own life. This was prevented by intensive counselling. In view of this felt that would be more suitable to assess RG 37 moods.

At a Case Conference held in Rathgael Centre on 21st August, 1986 (Senior Social Worker - Lisburn Social Services) advised that were even more definite that they did not want RG 37 back or have anything to do with her - especially after the Runkerry incident.

Later that afternoon, as a result of staff concern that RG 37 was extremely depressed and suicidal, talked with RG 37 and decided to contact After talking to RG 37 for approximately three hours decided that she was not clinically depressed but confirmed that she may be suicidal. He arranged to see RG 37 again on 1st September. A member of staff was assigned to Rand a fifteen minute observation sheet was kept for the next

Earlier in the evening RG37 had requested speaking to her parents and had a closely monitored telephone conversation with her father who had to be persuaded to talk to her. However, the conversation would seem to have achieved nothing and left RG37 extremely angry.

At a further Case Conference on 29th August it was agreed that RG 37 would return to House I on 1st September. RG 37 settled well in the Unit and was readily accepted by the other girls. Gradually her self-esteem increased and she became less nervous. RG 37 h continued to talk openly with her Primary Worker during the weekly formal and informal counselling sessions.

Having met with RG 37 on 1st September and on another occasion a few weeks later, advised that he no longer needed to see RG 37 unless she requested to see him.

Worker) on 16th September, it was agreed by both agencies that RG37 would visit her grandparents on 20th September. Her Primary Worker would transport her both ways and initially RG37 would be left in their care for one hour. This proved successful as both grandparents openly showed their love and affection for RG37 Gradually the time she spent with them increased and during the period from October to mid-November she was spending seven hours each Saturday from 11.00 a.m. - 6.00 p.m. in their care. Rathgael staff continued to transport

Following a request by RG37 to stay at her grandparents home overnight from Friday to Saturday and having received approval for this from senior staff at Rath-the visits were closely monitored by the Primary Worker who called with the grand-parents informally and also carried out frequent home visits.

On 25th November at an Internal Review held in Rathgael and attended by RG 37 it was noted that RG 37 self-esteem had increased and so also had her confidence. The visits to her grandparents were discussed and viewed positively in had neither absconded nor injured herself since August. A request by RG 37 for a meeting with her parents was also agreed at the Review having had prior consultation with RG 37 parents had not visited her

As RG37 did not wish to visit the family home and had stated that he would not visit Rathgael again, it was decided that the meeting should take place in an office at Lisburn Social Services on 2nd December. RG37 stated clearly from the time of her request that she did not want to be left alone with her parents and this was adhered to. In view of the detrimental effect her parents have had on her in the past, all concerned felt that a preliminary discussion should take place between RG37 her Primary Worker, (Senior Residential Social Worker) and

Both meetings took place - the first RG 37 found invaluable in coping with the second as we had role-played some of the discussion we felt might arise. Tried, unsuccessfully, to anger and annoy RG 37 He continually boasted about presents etc., bought for the other two children and attempted to blame RG 37 absence from the home as the cause of her brother's lack of achievement at school. However, Tescued' RG 37 by diverting her father's attention to another aspect of the conversation. RG 37 emained calm although initially she had been nervous. Afterwards RG 37 verbalized her surprise and pleasure at her ability to cope with her parents' attitude to her.

It was agreed at the close of that meeting that would arrange with to bring the other two children to visit RG37 at Rathgael before Christmas as RG37 was keen to meet with her siblings. However, the visit never took place as a did not contact

On the 10th December, following a discussion RG 37 had with another girl in the Unit who was having difficulty coping with an incestuous relationship, RG 37 asked her Primary Worker if it would help if she told the other girl about the incident involving her father's friend and herself. RG 37 was advised to think carefully before doing this and was made aware of possible consequences. RG 37 was keen to help the girl and assured the Primary Worker of her ability to cope. A group discussion took place that evening between RG 37 her Primary Worker, and the other girl. RG 37 talked openly and confidently and at one stage urged the other girl to behave in a more serious and responsible manner.

RG37 self-esteem and confidence continued to increase - so much so that she participated in the school Christmas Concert in three different items. These involved singing, dancing and acting.

Over the Christmas/New Year holidays RG 37 spent several periods of leave at her grandparents which usually included two overnights.

Recommenced the New Year by looking positively at her life. Almost every day she was involved in an activity of her choice. On Tuesday morning she helped at the local Play Group with the C.S.V. (Community Service Volunteer) student

- 3 -

attached to Rathgael Centre. On Wednesday evening she was to commence craft classes in Bangor Technical College on 28th January. Thursday evening was spent Circuit Training with staff and some pupils in the school and Friday to Sunday she was at her grandparents.

On her return from leave, on 18th January, RG et scratched her wrists. This did not come to staff attention until the evening of the 19th when, following an argument with another girl, it was drawn to staff attention by the girls that PRG 37 had broken glass in her possession and intended to use it. This was obtained after lengthy talks with PRG 37 by both girls and staff. The next morning was advised of this and he instructed staff to monitor PRG behaviour and should there be any deterioration then a place should be sought in Shamrock House (Semi-secure Unit).

During a discussion between RG 37 and her Primary Worker on the 20th January RG 37 said that she told herself she was going to cut her wrist and that was why she did it. She did not seem depressed and chatted for some time.

On the evenings of the 21st and 22nd Ms Paul was on duty and spent a lot of time with RG 37 who was cheerful and participated in activities with the other girls and staff. On 22nd she and went shopping for clothes for RG 37 and later to the Unit in good form and enthusiastically joined in the jovial interaction prevalent in the Unit that evening.

The following day RG 37 went on leave to her grandparents. Again she appeared happy and chatted to Ms paul prior to leaving on the Centre's minibus. For the past two weeks RG 37 had travelled by minibus with other residents to Central Station in Belfast. There she boarded a train to Finaghy. On her return on Sunday morning she travelled by train from Finaghy to Bangor and was collected at the Station by a member of Rathgael staff. RG 37 was given this freedom in response to her excellent behaviour over the past few months when she had proven she could be trusted not to abscond. This decision was taken after consultation with Mr. Curran, Senior Staff at Rathgael Centre and Kate Anderson. RG 37 died at her grandparents' home on Friday, 23rd January, 1987.

MAUREEN PAUL Primary Worker

- estates it operated in and was the only project in which a volunteer travelled unsupervised to and from the project.
- 31. The school also ran a number of sporting competitions, mostly for football, pool and gymnastics. In fact, there was a Rathgael Gymnastics Club, which consisted of boys mainly and would put on shows. The Bangor Rotary Club would arrange for residents from nursing homes to come into the school so that young people could put on a show for them.

## Medical and dental

- 32. There were daily "Sick Bay Parades" and a qualified Doctor came in every week in support of the Medical Department that was on-site. In addition, there were twice yearly medical examinations. This was staffed by a matron and two qualified nurses. First aid provision was available on site 24 hours a day so if a resident suffered an injury they could see a nurse or to be brought to a hospital, depending on the circumstances. The medical services were also subject to inspection.
- 32. A dentist also came in regularly but this did not work as well as the young people attending their own dentists so this practice stopped.

## Food and clothing

- 33. The young people were required to wear a uniform in the early days of Rathgael until the early 1980s at which point they wore their own clothes. There was a laundry department where some of the older residents would also work under supervision.
- 34. There was a kitchen with three cooks supported by some of the older residents that provided food to all of the Units. The young people could also prepare supper and snacks for themselves in the kitchen facilities provided in the Units. A hot breakfast, lunch and dinner were available, and the diet was varied. There were complaints about this in the 1970s and early 198s but steps were taken to improve the standard of food provided and the chef was replaced.

## Staffing and personnel aspects

- 35. Rathgael consisted of Care and Youth Treatment staff supported by administrative, medical and legal personnel in addition to those servicing facilities and accommodation, e.g. the laundry and kitchen.
- 36. All the teachers were qualified. The care and youth treatment staff were either qualified in the Certificate of Qualification in Social Work (CQSW) or Certificate of Social Services (CSS) Social Workers. Unqualified care and youth treatment staff were also recruited but were required to become qualified within five years.

short-term accommodation for young people who had nowhere to go on leave weekends or during holiday periods.

# NIO funding and impact of cutbacks

- 56. In the early days of Rathgael, funding was adequate, perhaps generous. For example, when I started in 1973 I was brought in to teach boys who were now required to stay on at school for a further year because the school leaving age had gone up by a year<sup>27</sup>. I was given whatever resources I required to set up the classroom for these boys.
- 57. The budget cuts started to impact in the 1980s.
- 58. The cutbacks resulted in staff redundancies with the senior management team being reduced by about 50%, though I do recognise that Rathgael was rather top heavy at the time. I attempted to protect the resources directly involved in caring for the young people but this was not always possible. In total I made 20 members of staff redundant from various departments. This had the unfortunate knock-on effect that some workshops were closed (for example, painting and bricklaying). There is no doubt that this was a loss for the young people.
- 59. I recollect that these were purely financial decisions as a result of the importance of the workshops not being recognised by the funders but I can't remember how these decisions were made.

# **Training**

60. The Rathgael staff generally was highly qualified and motivated. They were trained in all relevant aspects of their work, including the general care of the young people in line with the ethos of the Centre. Staff were also required to keep up to date with best practice. We attended local and national conferences that were relevant to our work; this was funded by NIO out of the Rathgael budget. Newly appointed unqualified staff had to become trained within five years from the date of their appointment. If unsuccessful, management could dispense of their services.

## <u>Inspections</u>

- 61. The SSI provided expertise in relation to the care of the young people and inspections took place regularly. I can recall recommendations being made and there should be follow up inspections a year later.
- 62. I think we were told in advance of impending inspections. I do not recall any spot inspections. The inspection reports were provided to the Management

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup>Exhibit 7 – s36 Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1972

Page 61

- order in the Inquiry statement. So if we work through
- the chronology, we will come across these individuals
- and you can explain the set-up, but can you assist the
- 4 Panel? In each of the units that you went to you would
- 5 have had two members of staff, two male members of staff
- 6 generally, who were in charge of running the unit.
- 7 A. Uh-huh. There was two members of staff in like every
- 8 house.
- 9 Q. And just to bring some definition for the Panel when we
- 10 are talking about some of the particular individuals,
- 11 you remembered as we talked and looked at these records
- that RG202 worked with a man called RG 208
- 13 A. RG 208 , yes.
- 14 Q. And you were saying to me when we looked at some of the
- records that jogged your memory, RG 208 was
- 16 a very decent guy --
- 17 A. Uh-huh.
- 18 Q. -- who spent a lot of time helping you --
- 19 A. Helping out, yes.
- 20 Q. -- and working with you. We will see him in some of the
- 21 records. That as far as RG39 and his unit -- and you
- say he perhaps moved around at times --
- 23 A. That's right.
- 24 Q. -- was in one unit and then ran another unit, but
- 25 a RG 209 worked alongside him --

- Board and to me, as Director. The recommendations were generally accepted and implemented.
- 63. I do, however, recall challenging one recommendation in relation to night supervisors. Following one inspection, the SSI was keen to remove night supervisors (these were unqualified staff) and bring in qualified sleep over staff. There were at least three suicide attempts at Rathgael that I was aware of but none were successful due to the vigilance of the night supervisors. On one occasion, the night supervisor had checked in on a young person and, although the young person was attempting to conceal that he had cut himself, the supervisor detected blood dripping onto the floor. The emergency services were called immediately and the young person was taken to hospital. The recommendation to remove night supervisors was not implemented.
- 64. There were follow up inspections to ensure the recommendations had been implemented and I do not recall any issues as a result of these inspections.
- 65. I cannot recall if any Social Work Advisory Group (SWAG) inspections took place in the in 1970's and early 1980's but I am aware that they would have visited and provided advice from time to time.

## Self-harm

- 66. In addition to the suicide attempts I was aware of as outlined in paragraph 63, there were incidents of children cutting themselves and swallowing glass. The young persons involved in such incidents would have received medical attention and been taken to hospital if required.<sup>28</sup>
- 67. Due to serious concerns about self-harm I set up a Self-injury Monitoring Group that I chaired on a monthly basis. It was attended by our medical nurse, RG 220 (APRU) and other relevant staff. The purpose of the group was to monitor patterns of self-injurious behaviour. Where we were concerned about particular individuals or a group we would make the staff aware and place the child or children under closer supervision or assign extra staff to a particular unit.

# Peer abuse / bullying

68. Bullying went on at peer level – this was monitored, reported and action was taken. Unfortunately, it is an endemic problem in all institutes and impacted both staff and other children.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> RGL-46319

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> RGL-46326 - RGL-46327

- 37. There were also Night Supervisors. These were unqualified staff who were responsible for keeping an eye on the young people at night and, therefore, had to stay awake all night. They would produce a report each morning for the day staff coming in. I recall one Night Supervisor being disciplined because he had fallen asleep whilst in duty. A senior member of staff was also on duty on site until 22:30 every evening. As Director, I would also have been contactable out of hours.
- 38. There were staff houses situated on campus but separate from the young people. I chose not to take one as I was keen to keep my personal life separate from work.

#### Home leave

39. The amount of home leave a young person received and the date of their ultimate release depended largely on progress in Rathgael. Progress in terms of education and response to education was continually monitored and recorded by a system of marks and grades.

# Transfer of Girls from Whiteabbey<sup>18</sup>

- 40. A fire had been started in Whiteabbey Training School in 1985 by some of the residents and it was fortunate that no one was seriously injured or killed. This triggered the closure of the Training School with Rathgael and Whiteabbey being amalgamated.
- 41. I had pressed for a phasing out of Whiteabbey with girls being allowed to leave from there when appropriate and new residents being sent to Rathgael so that they had no previous experience of Whiteabbey. However, the decision was made by the Rathgael/Whiteabbey Joint Management Board and sanctioned by the NIO to immediately close Whiteabbey and transfer the girls to Rathgael. This resulted in a culture change for the girls, boys and staff alike that was initially difficult to manage.
- 42. There was limited time to prepare for the arrival of the girls and they did not want to be there. The girls were initially put together in one unit but this proved to be a mistake and resulted in some very disruptive and challenging behaviour they probably felt that they had been forced to go there and may well have been scared. Everyone had to adjust, which took a long time and it is my opinion that it should have been planned better.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> RGL-22199 – RGL-22201

much members of the Rathgael Community and developed greatly over the years. As well as conducting regular Assemblies, they provided Pastoral Care to both young people and staff alike. This met the statutory requirement set out in section 31 of the Training School Rules.<sup>7</sup>

# **Education**

- 19. I note from their statements that some Applicants (for example, HIA172 and HIA198) are critical of the standard of education provided at Rathgael. HIA 172 was admitted at the age of 12, which would assume that he had basic English and Math's on admission. His comments would also infer that he returned from Pepper Harrow unable to read and write, which in my opinion is difficult to comprehend. HIA198's recollection of Shamrock does not align with my experience staff to pupil ratios were low and individual teaching plans were developed and followed. Additional activities such as colouring in, crosswords and television would have also been part of the normal routine. Mr Whyte's statement at paragraphs 19 26 also discusses provision of education at Rathgael.
- 20. Further to that, high ability young people, mostly Care residents, attended local schools in the Bangor area, e.g. Gransha High and Bangor Girls High School, to allow them to continue mainstream education and obtain qualifications. The individual's parent school would have linked with the donor school to ensure continuity of education.
- 21. With regards to school refusers, I am of the opinion that Rathgael introduced many to a positive education experience for the first time, introducing them to a school routine and afforded them an opportunity to progress with their own personal development. It must be stated that many of the young people had been admitted having been excluded from school or having a negative experience of education, some of whom were unable to read or write. Assessments will show that many were admitted with low attainments, many of which were related to absenteeism as opposed to intelligence levels. The older

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> SPT-80001 - 80062

#### Control and Restraint

- 69. In England and Wales staff dealing with young offenders were trained in control and restraint (C&R) by the prison service, for example at Aycliffe in Durham. However, this resulted in children being hurt so this approach was not taken forward in Rathgael. In the 1990s, C&R training more appropriate for use on young children was provided to teachers, social workers and other staff in Rathgael by an agency other than NIPS. I recall this had been approved by the SSI.
- 70. I don't recall guidance from the NIO as this would have been a matter more for the SSI.

# Transfer of Children<sup>30</sup>

71. If it was necessary to remove a young person from Rathgael to Millilse or the Young Offenders Centre<sup>31</sup> because they were a serious danger to others and themselves, permission would first be sought from the NIO; an order would be signed by a Lay Magistrate, which was then presented to the police to effect the move. I recall doing this twice.

# Complaints / Allegations of abuse

- 72. There was a complaints procedure in place and less serious issues were generally handled at house level by Key Workers and House Team Leaders.
- 73. Serious allegations <u>had</u> to be reported to senior managers. The first step was to establish the facts (e.g. was the staff member allegedly involved actually there). If there were reasonable grounds for suspicion, the issue was routinely reported to the local police, NIO and Rathgael Board of Management. The member of staff was placed on precautionary suspension pending the investigation.
- 74. My responsibilities with regards to responding to complaints and allegations were very clear the welfare, care and control of the children under my responsibility was of primary importance and, therefore, policies and procedures had to be followed to deliver this.

#### **Aftercare**

75. There was a Training School Aftercare Group established by SSI at which each Training School was represented. The purpose of the group was to implement

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 $<sup>^{30}</sup>$  RGL-100635 – RGL-100637 – schedule 5, 10(1) Children and Young Persons Act (NI) 1968

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup>RGL-42135 - RGL-42144

- 21. The Head of Education, Mr Cromey introduced a points system for education to encourage them. 'Contracting' was also introduced in classrooms for particularly disruptive pupils. This involved drawing up an agreement with the pupil to enable them to earn points if their behaviour in class improved.
- 22. I recall that the average teacher to pupils' ratio of the classes were in the region of: 1:6/8 in the main school; 1:5 in the short term reception classes and 1:3 in Shamrock House to reflect the varying demands and issues in each setting. Ancillary staff were also available to assist with particularly disruptive pupils.
- 23. There were Monday morning meetings with all teachers to discuss relevant issues and what was to be achieved for that week.
- 24. The school day started at 09:00 with assembly that was designed to provide positive messages and motivate the young people. This was held in a building called the "Chapel" although the services did not focus on religion.
- 25. This was followed by teaching until the classes broke up for lunch, which was served in the Units followed by further classes in the afternoon until about 16:00. The young people then returned to their units where they had dinner and undertook evening activities.
- 26. Each young person had an educational assessment on literacy and numeracy on entrance to provide a baseline with routine follow up assessments. Many on re-test showed a significant improvement.

# Support for the children

- 27. If a young person was unhappy, he or she could talk to numerous people key workers, team leaders, teachers, matrons/medical staff, chaplains, board members and staff at all levels. In addition, staff were instructed to report complaints by any of the residents to line management<sup>10</sup>.
- 28. In addition, staff from the Adolescent Psychological Research Unit (APRU)<sup>11</sup> headed by RG 220 assisted by four psychologists, attended Rathgael every day and Dr Clenaghan, a psychiatrist, visited the school weekly. Individual cases were referred to the APRU by the team Leader in Rathgael. Often, the Individual Assessment Treatment Profile process would flag up individuals who would benefit from working with the APRU. The APRU would have engaged in one-to-one work with individuals in response to their needs.
- 29. I also ran group counselling sessions (I was a trained Counsellor) consisting of 10-12 boys. This was confidential unless criminal issues were raised.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> RGL-46333

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> RGL-27433

# Adolescent Psychology and Research Unit.

Lisnevin School, Millisle 861846 Rathgael Centre, Bangor 454276 St. Joseph's School, Caledon 568525 St. Patrick's School, Belfast 301123 Whitefield House, Belfast 301611

Enquiries to: -UNIT SECRETARY, WHITEFIELD HOUSE, 2 THE HAWTHORNS, BELFAST BT10 ONR

101 Burnsiel?

Mrs. H. Heasley

My Moylinn

Ctaligavon

12th September 1989

Dear Mrs. Heasley,

I hope you will not mind me contacting you by letter.

My name is Michael Lenaghan and I work at Rathgael Centre, Bangor. As part of my work I have been asked to meet with and to talk with Michelle.

If it is possible I try to meet, even once, with the parent or parents of the boys and girls I talk with. I was wondering if I could call out with you sometime?

Would it be possible for me to call out on Wednesday 20th September at around 11.00 a.m.? If this time or date does not suit you could you leave a message at Rathgael (0247) 454276 (ext. 204). Many thanks.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Lenaghan

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup>RGL-42135 - RGL-42144

personal to the individual young person were kept on file – these would have detailed issues such as educational attainment, medical records, home visits and visits by family, excursions and review reports.

#### Rathgael Management Board

- 60. Mr. Whyte's statement describes the relationship between Rathgael and the NIO at paragraph 40. Further to this I wish to add that the relationship between the Management Board and the NIO and with other training Schools was good it had a familiarity and openness that enabled positive working whilst allowing challenges to be made when appropriate. It is my opinion that the Training Schools and NIO had ready access to advice form SWAG, and then SSI when required and that contact was frequent. The progress and innovative practice that we embarked on after the Black Report was published in 1979 was encouraged and supported by the NIO. The Eastside Project with its supported housing scheme was an example of this innovative approach to exploring alternatives to custody.
- **61.** A further example of providing an alternative to custody to the Courts is the Portcamman Project<sup>20</sup> this was available to young probationers and afforded them with opportunities to address their offending behaviour outside the custody environment by increasing self-confidence and self-esteem, improving social and life skills, providing exciting and satisfying physical challenges, individual and group counselling, and introducing new vocational and educational skills.
- **62.** Further to paragraphs 43 46 of Mr. Whyte's statement, the Management Board was appointed by the Secretary of State for a three year term, with a maximum of two terms allowed. From recollection, the board consisted of representatives from a cross section of the community, including clergymen, councillors, trade union representatives and independent individuals with an interest in youth care.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Exhibit 11 - Runkerry Centre brochure

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Exhibit 11 - Runkerry Centre brochure

personal to the individual young person were kept on file – these would have detailed issues such as educational attainment, medical records, home visits and visits by family, excursions and review reports.

#### Rathgael Management Board

- 60. Mr. Whyte's statement describes the relationship between Rathgael and the NIO at paragraph 40. Further to this I wish to add that the relationship between the Management Board and the NIO and with other training Schools was good it had a familiarity and openness that enabled positive working whilst allowing challenges to be made when appropriate. It is my opinion that the Training Schools and NIO had ready access to advice form SWAG, and then SSI when required and that contact was frequent. The progress and innovative practice that we embarked on after the Black Report was published in 1979 was encouraged and supported by the NIO. The Eastside Project with its supported housing scheme was an example of this innovative approach to exploring alternatives to custody.
- **61.** A further example of providing an alternative to custody to the Courts is the Portcamman Project<sup>20</sup> this was available to young probationers and afforded them with opportunities to address their offending behaviour outside the custody environment by increasing self-confidence and self-esteem, improving social and life skills, providing exciting and satisfying physical challenges, individual and group counselling, and introducing new vocational and educational skills.
- **62.** Further to paragraphs 43 46 of Mr. Whyte's statement, the Management Board was appointed by the Secretary of State for a three year term, with a maximum of two terms allowed. From recollection, the board consisted of representatives from a cross section of the community, including clergymen, councillors, trade union representatives and independent individuals with an interest in youth care.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Exhibit 11 - Runkerry Centre brochure

- 63. The Board met monthly with the exception of July and August and had three sub-committees Finance, Staff and Review. Board members visited the school on a monthly basis, recording their visits, the departments visited and who they spoke to <sup>21</sup>. These were monitoring visits that allowed Board members the opportunity to observe first hand different aspects of life at Rathgael. They often visited the classrooms and interacted with both pupils and teachers; the residential units speaking to young people and staff; and ancillary areas such as the kitchen and sickbay to ensure conditions were fit for purpose. The visits would also have included a tour of the grounds and major facilities such as sports hall, swimming pool and playing fields. Some of these visits may have taken place in the evening to allow Board members time to interact with the young people and staff outside routine school hours. Many Board members would have attended special events, such as Sports Day, school concerts and Carol Service.
- 64. The Board had oversight of the implementation of innovative thinking. Mr. Whyte's statement already discusses the Community Service Programme at paragraphs 32 35. Further examples include the participation by young people in the Duke of Edinburgh Awards scheme, Circus Skills, Mourne Ramble Scheme, organised by the Community Relations Branch of the RUC, Princes Trust (Employment Programme) and activities at the Runkerry Outdoor Pursuit Centre. These were available to all young people in Rathgael and other Training Schools and fully funded by the NIO.

## **Review Committee**

**65.** I was Secretary to the Review Committee from 1978 to 1995. The Review Committee met monthly and discussed all committals and complied with Rules 46 – 49 of the Training School Rules 1952<sup>22</sup>. All young people had to be reviewed after a year and then on a six-monthly basis thereafter. Detailed reports were submitted to Board Members in advance of the meeting from teachers, care staff, psychological staff and medical staff if required.

 $<sup>^{21}</sup>$  Exhibit 12 – Monthly visits by board members 1/3/1968 – 5/6/1989

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> SPT-80001 - 80062

#### Staffing and personnel aspects

- 28. I have read and noted the comments at paragraphs 35 38 in Mr. Whyte's statement. Many staff would have transferred from Malone to Rathgael, many of whom had been appointed in preparation for the move. All senior staff in the school in those early days came from a teaching background, and the house staff from children's homes and positions in the youth work sector, with some former RUC officers, army, navy and prison officers.
- 29. Working with some of the most disturbed and troubled individuals in Northern Ireland was demanding in so many ways with both verbal and physical assaults on staff not uncommon. Some staff dealt with this better than others but professionally their task was to deal with such behaviours and explore ways to modify and prevent the behaviour being repeated. An indicator of staff stress was the high level of staff sickness at particular times in the life of the Centre. To further monitor staff sickness and to explore ways of reducing stress, particularly in relation to the integration of Whiteabbey and Rathgael, a group was established by the Management Board on 3 January 1984<sup>9</sup>. This provides an insight to the levels of staff stress at the time.
- 30. Extracts from Board minutes over the years 10 clearly demonstrate that staff were regularly subject to assault by young people. Few reported these assaults to police and chose to deal with it as an internal matter in line with the internal disciplinary policy.

# Transfer of Girls from Whiteabbey<sup>11</sup>

The Board agreed that the amalgamation of Rathgael and Whiteabbey would take effect by 3 June 1985. Personally I recall working from Whiteabbey School on a weekly basis to negotiate the placement of as many girls as possible before the planned transfer. The objective of this was to minimize the number of girls having to be resettled in the new environment of the Rathgael site. Ideally the courts would have had the opportunity to refer girls directly to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> 1984 Management board minutes

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> RGL-22790 – 22797

<sup>11</sup> Exhibit 5 - Rathgael and Whiteabbey Schools Management Board – Amalgamation of Rathgael and Whiteabbey Schools - May 1985

- 63. The Board met monthly with the exception of July and August and had three sub-committees Finance, Staff and Review. Board members visited the school on a monthly basis, recording their visits, the departments visited and who they spoke to <sup>21</sup>. These were monitoring visits that allowed Board members the opportunity to observe first hand different aspects of life at Rathgael. They often visited the classrooms and interacted with both pupils and teachers; the residential units speaking to young people and staff; and ancillary areas such as the kitchen and sickbay to ensure conditions were fit for purpose. The visits would also have included a tour of the grounds and major facilities such as sports hall, swimming pool and playing fields. Some of these visits may have taken place in the evening to allow Board members time to interact with the young people and staff outside routine school hours. Many Board members would have attended special events, such as Sports Day, school concerts and Carol Service.
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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> SPT-80001 - 80062

# Relationship with the Department

- 43. Rathgael was a statutory body and was therefore held responsible to the NIO. NIO officials focused on finance and macro matters whilst the SSI would have focused on the care of the young people.
- 44. Minutes from the Monthly Management Board meetings <sup>19</sup> <sup>20</sup> <sup>21</sup> and subcommittees (Finance and Property, Review (monthly review of children's cases), Staff and Runkerry) were provided to the NIO.
- 45. The Director's Report<sup>22</sup> also issued monthly to the NIO and covered routine reporting on issues such as disciplinary issues and anything that may result in publicity plus more serious issues, including allegations of abuse. There were no Key Performance Indicators to report against.
- 46. My Senior Management team and I developed a five-year business plan (commissioned to Price Waterhouse). This was presented to John Ledlie, the then Deputy Under Secretary at the NIO this reflected the division between care and justice young people and what the Centre aimed to achieve. This was reported against annually.

#### Relationship with other Training Schools

47. The staff of Rathgael had good relationships with all the other Training Schools. We were able to discuss issues that impacted across the institutions.

## Rewards and points / disciplinary systems

- 48. A points system had been developed by Mr Cromey in the Education Department to reward good behaviour. This could result in a small monetary reward being awarded but also resulted in personal pride and positive reinforcement of good behaviour. Just having good behaviour recognised was a reward for the young people. The points were discussed with them at their weekly meetings.
- 49. Conversely, sanctions were deployed in response to bad behaviour. This could have meant a young person may not have been allowed to go on an outing, for example.

# Corporal punishment

50. I am aware that in the 1970s permissible use of the cane in the Junior School took place. This would have been administered by Senior Staff and entered in

<sup>20</sup> RGL-22955 - RGL-22957

<sup>21</sup> RGL-22969 – RGL-22975

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> RGL-22772 – RGL-22777

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Exhibit 5 – Letter from Mr Ledlie to C Whyte re Director's Report dated 30 July 1992

short-term accommodation for young people who had nowhere to go on leave weekends or during holiday periods.

# NIO funding and impact of cutbacks

- 56. In the early days of Rathgael, funding was adequate, perhaps generous. For example, when I started in 1973 I was brought in to teach boys who were now required to stay on at school for a further year because the school leaving age had gone up by a year<sup>27</sup>. I was given whatever resources I required to set up the classroom for these boys.
- 57. The budget cuts started to impact in the 1980s.
- 58. The cutbacks resulted in staff redundancies with the senior management team being reduced by about 50%, though I do recognise that Rathgael was rather top heavy at the time. I attempted to protect the resources directly involved in caring for the young people but this was not always possible. In total I made 20 members of staff redundant from various departments. This had the unfortunate knock-on effect that some workshops were closed (for example, painting and bricklaying). There is no doubt that this was a loss for the young people.
- 59. I recollect that these were purely financial decisions as a result of the importance of the workshops not being recognised by the funders but I can't remember how these decisions were made.

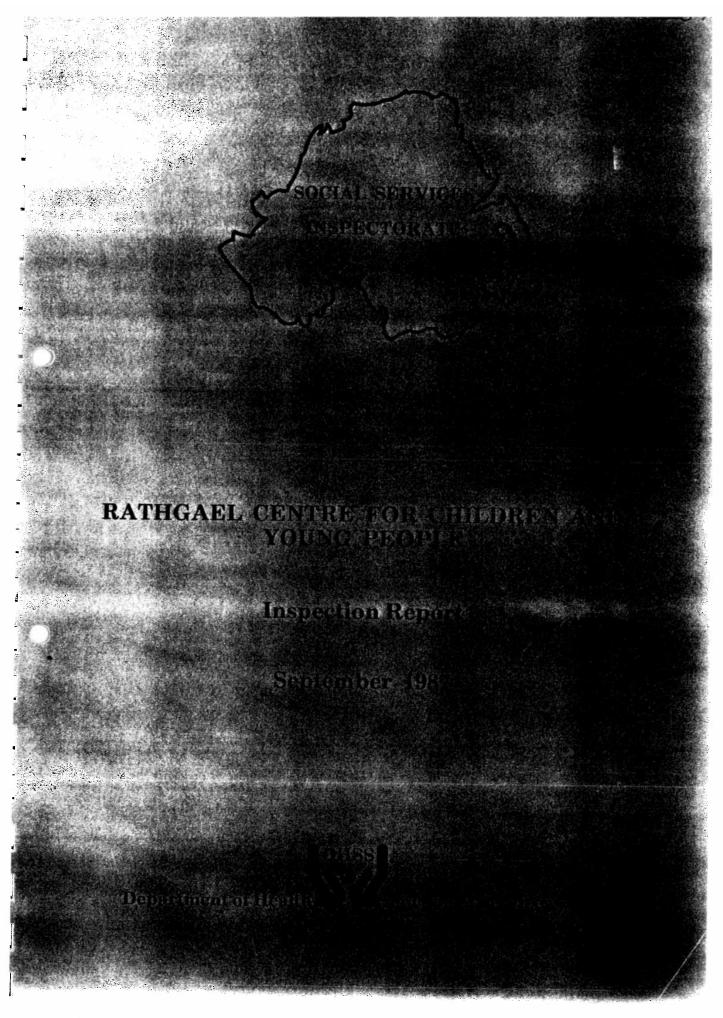
# **Training**

60. The Rathgael staff generally was highly qualified and motivated. They were trained in all relevant aspects of their work, including the general care of the young people in line with the ethos of the Centre. Staff were also required to keep up to date with best practice. We attended local and national conferences that were relevant to our work; this was funded by NIO out of the Rathgael budget. Newly appointed unqualified staff had to become trained within five years from the date of their appointment. If unsuccessful, management could dispense of their services.

#### <u>Inspections</u>

- 61. The SSI provided expertise in relation to the care of the young people and inspections took place regularly. I can recall recommendations being made and there should be follow up inspections a year later.
- 62. I think we were told in advance of impending inspections. I do not recall any spot inspections. The inspection reports were provided to the Management

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup>Exhibit 7 – s36 Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1972



# OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE-PERSONAL

# RGL-23627

INTR	ODUCTION CONTENTS	PAGE
1.	HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	1-2
2.	THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS RESIDENT	3
3.	MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING	3-16
4.	LOCATION AND PREMISES	17-18
5.	SHORT-TERM CARE	19-35
6.	ADOLESCENT CARE UNITS (LONG-TERM CARE)	36-53
7.	YOUTH TREATMENT	54-70
8.	COMMUNITY CARE	71-80
9.	EDUCATION/VOCATIONAL TRAINING	81-83
10.	DIET AND KITCHEN	84-87
11.	HEALTH CARE ARRANGEMENTS	88-91
12.	RELIGION	92
13.	OFFICIAL VISITORS	93-94
14.	OFFICIAL RECORDS	95-97
15.	PSYCHOLOGICAL/PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES	98 <b>-99</b>
16.	INTEGRATION WITH THE COMMUNITY	100
17.	VOLUNTEERS/COMMUNITY SERVICE VOLUNTEERS	101
18.	BARNARDO'S HOME FINDING PROJECT	102-103
19.	CONCLUSIONS	104-105
20.	RECOMMENDATIONS	106-110

APPENDICES

#### INTRODUCTION

The inspection of Rathgael Training School, known as the Rathgael Centre for Children and Young People was carried out by the Social Services Inspectorate of the Department of Health and Social Services under the powers contained in Section 168 Children and Young Persons Act (NI) 1968 and Rule 55 of the Training School Rules (SRO) 1952 No 132. The inspection was carried out at the request of the Northern Ireland Office. The team comprised of Dr K F McCoy, Miss J A Chaddock, Mr D P O'Brien and Mr C W Donnell. The inspection took place during the period of 14 September to 2 October 1987. The inspection côvêred all times of the day, and included the week-ends.

The Inspectors would like to record their sincere thanks and appreciation to the Management Board, the Director Mr Tom Baxter and all the staff for their co-operation. A special word of thanks is due to the boys and girls of Rathgael Centre, for the manner in which they made the Inspectors welcome and their willingness to co-operate fully in the inspection.

# 1.0 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- RG 269 traced the history of the school from the beginnings of the old Reformitories and Industrial schools of the mid-19th Century to the opening of Rathgael on its present site in January 1968. The new school reflected a considerable change in architectural thinking. In 1956 amalgamation of the existing Junior school (Balmoral School) and the Senior school (Malone Training School and the Gürls' Training School at Whiteabbey under the control of a new Board of Management.
- 1.2 The original membership of the Board consisted of 4 members of Belfast Corporation, because of the previous members of the old Balmoral Training School, several members of the principal religious denominations and addition there were representatives from the, then, was appointed by the then, Ministry of Home Affairs and State for Northern Ireland.
- 1.3 From 1956 the Board was responsible for the Management of a 2 site operation, the boys' school at Rathgael and the girls' school at Whiteabbey on the north side of Belfast further, In 1985 a decision was taken to amalgamate, yet with the closure of the girls' school and the geographical amalgamation was based on a more effective use of existing by enabling boys and girls to share the same facilities
- Today the facility is known as the Rathgael Centre for 1.4 Children and Young people as the Management Board felt the name more accurately reflected the nature of the work carried out there. Following protracted discussions on the future of the training schools, which stemmed from the Report of the Black Committee, the Secretary of State decided that, in future, training schools should be segregated into 2 main parts ie Care and Youth Treatment. The Secretary of State added that the greatest possible degree of separation of young offenders and young people in care should be pursued and that it would be necessary to establish clear public identities for the "Care" units as distinct for those for young offenders. A detailed analysis of the extent of the segregation, its operation and methodology will be examined later in this Report. Currently both sides of the school are jointly managed and share common resources as far as possible.

# OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE-PERSONAL

**RGL-23630** 

- Little remains today of the early beginnings of the training schools in Northern Ireland. In the mid-19th Century the activities of the junior school were actually carried out on board an old tall sailing ship, acquired from the Admiralty and known as the Gibraltar, which was finally moored in the Musgrave channel at the Twin Islands. Some of the old nautical terminology, together with local place names associated with the early days of the Industrial Schools remains to this day. Throughout the Report those familiar names will emerge as many of the houses on the campus get their names from the past.
- 1.6 Legally, Rathgael Centre for Children and Young People, referred to hereafter as the Centre, is a training school as defined in Section 137 of the Children and Young Persons Act (Northern Ireland) 1968. It operates within the existing legislation with children only being admitted who are the subject of a Training School Order, a Place of Safety Order, Interim Fit Person Orders and those remanded by the Courts. The new arrangement of the split campus, greater use of short-term care and extended leave is an indication of the more enlightened thought that now permeates the training school system and where the spirit of the legislation is paramount to the welfare of the children.

#### 2.0 THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS RESIDENT

- 2.1 On 7 September 1987 there were 147 young persons on the Rathgael roll. However at that time only 85 boys and girls were in residence but another six boys, who were participating in an outdoor pursuit course at Runkerry Centre, Co Antrim, were temporarily absent. Thirty-nine young persons were living with relatives while on "extended leave", and one girl was boarded out with foster parents. Four boys had been transferred to the secure unit at Lisnevin training school and 4 others, who were absent from Rathgael without permission, were deemed to have absconded. A further 8 young people (6 boys and 2 girls) who were living at home and travelling to the Centre on week-days were classified as "day attenders".
- 2.2 One hundred and twenty-seven boys and girls were the subjects of Training School Orders, 5 of Interim Detention Orders and 11 had been admitted to Rathgael on Place of Safety Orders. Four others had been remanded pending a court appearance.
- 2.3 The Centre had responsibility for 41 girls and 106 boys whose ages range from 12 to 18 years. However the majority (114) were between 15 and 17 years old. Prior to being placed in Rathgael 92 of the young people were living at home, 40 were in children's homes and 3 were in foster care.
- 2.4 The Youth Treatment side of the Centre was responsible for 66 boys all of whom had been committed to Rathgael for offending and 4 boys who were charged with offences and remanded in custody. However the Care side had responsibility for 41 girls and 36 boys of whom only 2 of the girls were committed for offences prior to coming to the Centre. Sixteen of this group came to Rathgael following court proceedings instigated by the Education and Library Boards for non-school attendance. Twenty one girls and 22 boys had previously been in the care of one of the Health and Social Services Boards and another 9 girls and 7 boys had been sent to Rathgael by the Courts following proceedings instigated by social services. All 4 Boards had been involved ie Eastern - 33, Northern - 21, Southern - 3 and Western - 2.
- 2.5 Further information about the residents, including some reference to the nature of the problems with which they confront the Rathgael staff, is given later in this report.

#### 3.0 MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING

- The Rathgael Centre is a large multi-functional complex compr.sing mainly of residential accommod tion for young persons and of facilities for education and vocational training which are available to them on the premises. number of young people go out from the Centre each day ( a variety of work schemes. In addition the Centre cater for day attenders and is responsible for a large number former residents who are on licence or extended leave as living within the community, ie mainly with parents, guardians or relatives. Through the use of a questionnaire the inspectors collected information on the sex, age, designation, length of service, previous care experience, training and qualifications of the Rathgael management, the social workers involved in community ca and all staff contributing to the residential care task Included in the latter group were teachers and instruct who perform extraneous duties in the house units outsid of school hours.
- 3.2 One hundred and seven returns were completed and the following table indicates the establishment of manageme fieldwork and residential staff at the time of inspecti It excludes night supervisors, administrative and ancillary staff and those teachers who are not involved the residential child care task.

#### TABLE 1

DIRECTOR	1
SENIOR DEPUTY DIRECTOR	1
DEPUTY DIRECTOR	2
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	4
DEPUTY ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	4
PRINCIPAL SOCIAL WORKER (HEAD OF COMMUNITY CARE)	1
SENIOR RESIDENTIAL SOCIAL WORKER	8
	7
WARDEN	48
RESIDENTIAL SOCIAL WORKER	11
HOUSEMOTHER	3
SOCIAL WORKER (AFTER CARE)	J
INTAKE SOCIAL WORKER	1
TEACHER/INSTRUCTOR (EXTRANEOUS DUTIES)	15

The return included a social worker employed by the Eastern Health and Social Services Board, who is secon full-time to the East Side Project. There were 2 vacancies a warden and a residential social worker, an when these are included there is an establishment of 7 full-time staff of all grades working in the house uniplus 15 others undertaking extraneous duties.

3.3 The deployment of full-time staff at unit level is set in the table overleaf:-

TABLE 2
HOUSE UNIT STAFF DEPLOYMENT

DESIGNATIONS	UNIT CAPACITY	H1 (14)	H2 (14)	НЗ (15)	H4 (8)	Н5 (12)	Н6 (15)	Н7 (15)	Н8 (15)	H9 (11)	H9A (11)	H10 (10)
SENIOR RESIDENTIAL SOCIAL WORKER		0	1	, 0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
WARDEN		1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	v	1
RESIDENTIAL SOCIAL WORKER	-	1	1	1 .	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
RESIDENTIAL SOCIAL WORKER		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
RESIDENTIAL SOCIAL WORKER		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
RESIDENTIAL SOCIAL WORKER		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1 .	1	1
RESIDENTIAL SOCIAL WORKER		v	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
HOUSEMOTHER		1	1.	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
HOUSEMOTHER		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	TOTALS	6	7	7	7	6	7	6	6	7	6	9

ESTABLISHED

76

IN POST 74

V = VACANCY

TOTALS

- 3.4 All units have at least 3 staff grades and in half of them there are 4 ie senior residential social worker, warden, residential social worker and housemother. In some cases this applies to units with only 7 staff. A scrutin of the staff job descriptions (Appendix A) indicated that there was no significant difference between the role of the senior residential social worker and warden grades. The rationale for having 2 senior staff appears to have been to allow separate leaders for 2 teams working on opposite shifts. The Inspectors feel that more flexible staffing arrangements could be achieved in the units if there were one team leader. It is recommended that each house unit should be led by a senior residential social worker. Housemothers appear to have a quasi domestic role which restricts the contribution they can make to the growth and development of the boys and girls. Therefore it is recommended that there should be 2 grades of staff within the units. Warden and housemother grades should be gradually phased out and replaced by residential social worker grade.

#### Staff Establishment

- 3.5 Daily population returns made by Rathgael on weekdays between August and October 1987 are set out in the table overleaf. It is recognised that the number of residents fluctuates over time and that some of these figures apply to the summer holiday period when many of the boys and girls were home on leave. This set of figures has been used to give some indication of the occupancy in the Centre during a relatively short period and serves only for illustrative purposes. During discussions with staff on some of the inferences being drawn from information supplied by the Centre it became clear that the information base was not as useful as first thought by the Inspectors and it is recommended that the information system within the Centre is reviewed and regularly monitored.
- In order to calculate the level of staffing required to provide adequate supervision and care for the residents and others who use the facilities of the Centre it is necessary to determine the overall work load. Staffing must be sufficient to meet the needs of not only all the children resident on a given day but children placed in other settings outwith the Centre who may be returned at short notice. In addition there should be some (small) capacity to cope with the unexpected. For these reasons it is recommended that the number of staffed beds for the school (ie the number of residential places to be provided and covered by residential social workers) should be calculated using the following criteria:
  - a. children resident;
  - b. children in hospital;
  - c. children at home on leave;
  - d. children on extended leave for less than 3 months;
  - e. children who have absconded for less than 3 months; plus
  - f. 2 contingency places.

TABLE 3

NUMBER OF BOTS AND CIRLS AT RATHCAEL CENTRE

номи	AIKAUST	SEPTE <b>HTER</b>	OCTORER
	M T W T F M T W T F M T W T F M T W T F M T W T	F M T W T F M T W T F M T W T F M T W T F M	1 T W T F M T W T F M T W T F M T W T F
DATE	3 4 5 6 7 10 11 12 13 14 17 18 19 20 21 24 25 26 27 28 31 1 2 3	4 7 8 9 10 11 14 15 16 17 18 21 22 23 24 25 28 29 30 1 2 5	6 7 8 9 12 13 14 15 16 19 20 21 22 23 26 27 28 29 30
CARE	30 24 25 23 24 27 26 28 27 25 22 34 33 35 33 41 24 30 27 28 37 38 46 4	49 50 52 45 49 49 43 38 38 40 39 46 43 41 42 40 47 48 48 51 48 47	7 54 48 53 53 49 47 51 52 51 51 53 53 52 51 49 41 51 53 40
LI	24 23 23 23 23 23 23 38 36 35 26 26 15 15 17 19 27 23 24 24 23 22 21 45 4	45 39 36 33 36 35 42 39 31 36 40 38 33 34 36 36 35 42 39 41 38 33	3 44 42 44 45 39 29 37 37 40 37 41 41 43 42 39 40 40 41 21
TOTAL	54 47 48 46 47 50 64 64 62 51 48 49 48 52 52 68 47 54 51 51 59 59 91 9:	94 89 88 78 85 84 85 77 69 76 79 84 76 75 78 76 82 90 87 92 86 80	0 98 90 97 98 88 76 88 89 91 88 94 94 95 93 88 81 91 94 61

3.7 Using historical data for the last 14 months the Director has calculated that the number of staffed beds for the Centre should be 130 distributed among house units as set out below. This has enabled the Inspectors to calculate the level of staffing required for a facility of this size. However it must be stressed that the number of beds to be covered by staff is a matter for agreement between the Rathgael Management Board and the Northern Ireland

```
Houses 1, 2, 3, 6, 7 and 8 (13 x 6) - 78 places
Houses 9 and 9A (11 x 2) - 22 places
House 5
House 10
House 4

TOTAL - 78 places
- 12 places
- 10 places
- 8 places
- 130 places
```

3.8 The Castle Priory method of calculating staffing requirements involves the following equation:

Children's Waking Week Capacity of Units

\_\_\_\_\_X

Staff Working Week Number of Children requiring one staff

In addition to this basic formula account is taken of staff leave entitlement and extra staff hours required during the children's school holidays.

- The staff at Rathgael work a 39 hour week. The children's 3.9 waking week is 75 hours during term time and the number of beds in individual house units are set out above. It is important to emphasise that the formula is designed to arrive at an overall staffing complement for the facility and not to prescribe staffing levels for each unit. It is a matter for management to determine the level of staffing required in each house unit in accordance with the needs pertaining there at any point in time. However, there are some significant differences in the needs of children in various units which necessitate using different staffing ratios to arrive at an overall complement. The ratios used are one staff to 2 children in houses 4 and 10, secure accommodation; one staff to 3.5 children in houses 5, 9 and 9A which contain the most recently arrived and unsettled children; and one staff to 4 children in houses 1, 2, 3, 6, 7 and 8, the long term units.
- 3.10 Using these figures the staffing required for the groups of houses referred to above are as follows:-

Houses 1, 2, 3, 6, 7 and 8 - = 48.78 Houses 5, 9 and 9A - = 24.30 House 10 - = 12.51 House 4 - = 10.00

TOTAL 95.59

In effect this means that if the number of staffed beds at the Centre is agreed as 130 there should be 96 whole time staff or equivalent at senior residential social worker and residential social worker grades. This is recommended.

- 3.11 Over a six month period prior to the inspection the 75 full time staff operating at house unit level ie senior residential social workers, wardens, residential social workers and housemothers, worked a considerable number of additional hours for which they were remunerated. In addition they were supplemented by other Rathgael staff, mainly teachers and instructors, doing extraneous duties and by the employment of casual staff. Together these groups accounted for 21% of all hours worked in the residential units over the 6 months ending 30 June 1977. Altogether 96,175 hours of duty were recorded ie the whole time equivalent of 95 staff working a 39 hour week. When compared with the recommended staffing complement at paragraph 3.10 above, the equivalent of one full time staff is required to bring the staffing level up to Castle Priory standard.
- 3.12 The Inspectors examined the duty rosters used in the Centre to assess how staff were deployed during the working week. It was apparent that the majority of extra duties undertaken by permanent staff and those performed by the casual staff were worked mainly in the evenings and at the weekends. The number of casual staff used was considerable eg in the period 21 September-18 October 1987, 21 of them were used on the care side of the campus. The Inspectors take the view that full time staff provide a more comprehensive service to the residents and ensure continuity of care. Therefore it is recommended that the staffing arrangements at the Centre are reviewed so as to provide a single corps of staff at unit level to cover days, evenings and weekends.
- 3.13 The Inspectors found also that unit staff were not being rostered in a manner which would allow the most efficient use of their duty time in discharging the residential care task to a mainly adolescent population. Frequently on weekdays the same number of staff were rostered for duty in the mornings, when the boys and girls were at school, as there were in the evenings when the young people were under the supervision of the residential workers. The evening shift ends at 10.00pm save for one member of staff in each unit who remains until 10.30pm after which the night supervisors take responsibility for the residents. In effect this means that generally the young people are in bed by 9.30am. The Inspectors feel that this is much too early for teenagers particularly on Friday and Saturday evenings as they do not have to rise early the following morning for school. Therefore it is recommended that the duty rosters are revised to give better staff cover in the evenings and to facilitate later bedtimes for the boys and girls.

#### Length of Service

3.14 Table 4 indicates the length of time in the training school service of staff employed at the Centre. This reflects service given to the Rathgael and Whiteabbey Management Board both in the former Whiteabbey and Rathgael Training Schools before they merged and became Rathgael Centre. Nevertheless the table demonstrates the there is a very low staff turnover, 78% have more than 2 years service and 54% have more than 6 years service and this should provide stability for the Centre and security for the young persons living there. There is also an exceptionally high correlation between staff length of service and length of time spent in residential child care.

#### Level of Qualifications

3.15 The professional qualifications held by the Rathgael sta are set out in the table overleaf against their designations.

Fifty-two staff (49%) have professional qualifications i social work or residential child care (21 CQSW, 5 CSS, 2 SCRCCYP, 24 CCRCCYP), 6 others hold a Certificate in Education and one is a qualified nurse. Preliminary or in-service courses in social care have been taken by another 4 of the child care staff. Taken together this means that almost 60% of the staff hold relevant qualifications and this must be commended.

#### Male/Female Balance

- 3.16 Two of the senior management group, a deputy director ar an assistant director are women. Of the 42 staff involvat unit level on the Care side of the Centre 23 are wome At first sight there would seem to be an imbalance of male/female staff in favour of the women. However 7 out of the 23 posts are housemothers ie posts traditionally held only by females, and this leaves 16 women and 15 mi involved in the professional side of the residential social work task.
- 3.17 There are 11 females and 21 male staff working at unit level in Youth Treatment. Four of the women are housemothers so this leaves a ratio of 2 male to 1 fema staff. None of the 6 promoted posts ie senior resident social workers or wardens, are held by women in Youth Treatment. In some way this would seem to reflect the historical position of Rathgael as a boys' training sch with a predominantly male staff. However the Inspector were encouraged to find male and female staff in each house unit.

TABLE 4

DEG TOWARD ONE	LENGTH OF SERVICE									
DESIGNATIONS	0-1	2-5	6-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25+	TOTAL		
DIRECTOR	0	0	0	0	0	. 0	1	1		
SENIOR DEPUTY DIRECTOR	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	<b>90</b>		
DEPUTY DIRECTOR	0	0	0	0 (	. 2	0	0	2		
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	4		
DEPUTY ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	4		
SENIOR RESIDENTIAL SOCIAL WORKER	0	1	0	6	2	0	0	9		
WARDEN	0	0	0 ·	5	2	0	0	7		
RESIDENTIAL SOCIAL WORKER	10.00	7	14	14	1	0	0	47		
HOUSEMOTHER	2	1	2	4	1	1	0	11		
FIELD SOCIAL WORKER (AFTER CARE)	0	. 0	0	3	. 1	1	0	5		
TEACHER/INSTRUCTOR (EOA)	American Ame	2	7	4	· <b>0</b>	0	1	15		
TOTALS	14	11	24	42	12	3	`2.	106		

TABLE 5

	QUALIFICATIONS								
DESIGNATIONS	cqsw	css	SCRCCYP	CCRCCYP	CERT ED	SRN	ICSC	PCSC	
DIRECTOR	0	o	1	0	1	0	0	0	
SENIOR DEPUTY DIRECTOR	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	
DEPUTY DIRECTOR	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	
DEPUTY ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	
SENIOR RESIDENTIAL SOCIAL WORKER	2	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	
WARDEN	0	0	0	6	. 0	0	0	0	
RESIDENTIAL SOCIAL WORKER	13	5	0	10	o	0	1	0	
HOUSEMOTHER	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	2	
FIELD SOCIAL WORKER (AFTER CARE)	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
TEACHER/INSTRUCTOR (EDA)	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	
TEACHER/ INSTRUCTOR (EDA)	Ů								
TOTALS	21	· 5	2	24	12	1	2	2	

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# Functional Management

- 3.18 The Rathgael Centre's management team is comprised of a director, a senior deputy director, 2 deputy directors, 4 assistant directors, 4 deputy assistant directors and a principal social worker (head of community care). The 3 deputy directors and the principal social worker are accountable to the director for the following areas respectively, Care, Youth Treatment, Education and Community Care. Of these Community Care is the smallest with a principal social worker leading a team of 4 fieldworkers. However he also has responsibility on behalf of the Rathgael Board for the East Side Project and therefore he does not play an active role in the management of activity on the Bangor site.
- 3.19 The deputy director (Care) has 2 assistant directors and 2 deputy assistant directors. An assistant director and a deputy assistant director are involved in the day to day management of 3 adolescent care units with 43 places for boys and girls while the other pair have broadly similar duties in respect of 2 short term units with 22 places and a secure unit with 10 places.
- 3.20 The deputy director (Youth Treatment) also has an assistant and a deputy assistant director who have oversight of 5 residential units with 65 places for boys including a secure facility which can provide for up to 8 residents. However at the time of the inspection the last mentioned house unit was closed for structural alterations. There are 3 senior staff responsible for education and they also participate in the rota for senior staff cover during the evenings and at weekends ie there are always 2 seniors on duty or "on call", one each on the Care and Youth Treatment sides of the Centre. This rota includes deputy directors, assistant directors, deputy assistant directors and senior residential social worker
- 3.21 There appears to be a considerable overlap between the job descriptions of the deputy directors, assistant directors and deputy assistant directors on both the Care and the Youth Treatment sides of the Centre. Indeed in some areas for example "the development of individual care programmes" there appears to be some encroachment on the role of staff working in the units and in particular with the senior residential social workers/wardens. The Inspectors felt that some third and fourth line managers spent a disproportionate amount of their time on administrative, estate management and health and safety functions. Though these may be important they should be given a lower priority rating in the duties of senior professional managers.

3.22 In paragraph 3.4 above reference is made to the staffing structure within the units and the Inspectors have recommended that each of these should be led by a senior residential social worker. This grade already contributes to the senior management cover of the Centre during evenings and at the weekends. The Inspectors take the view that senior residential social workers should also be responsible for timetabling staff cover within the units thus relieving the 3 deputy assistant directors of this task. In view of the foregoing it is recommended that the role, function and structure of the senior management team should be reviewed by the Management Board.

## Staff Supervision

3.23 It was disappointing to find that there was no regular formal system of staff supervision at the Rathgael Centre. Almost 2 years prior to the inspection the deputy director (Care) had drawn up procedures and guidelines for staff supervision but the assistant directors and deputy assistant directors had been unable to implement them. On the Youth Treatment side of the Centre the groundwork for a formal system of staff supervision had not been done. Some residential staff throughout the Centre were unclear about lines of accountability. The Inspectors recommend that individual supervision should be introduced throughout the Centre with senior residential social workers taking the lead within the house units.

## Staff Training

- 3.24 The Rathgael management have a policy of recruiting trained staff to fill any vacancies which may arise. Where untrained staff are employed they are encouraged to obtain professional qualifications and may be seconded to full time training courses. Four staff have completed post qualifying courses. Three of these were in child care and one in management. An assistant director (Care) was seconded to a post-qualifying course in management at Queen's University Belfast while the inspection was takin place.
- 3.25 Every opportunity is taken to send the residential child care staff on relevant short courses organised by the Department, Boards, Voluntary Organisations, Universitie etc. However management have also found it beneficial t make arrangements for in-service training for groups of staff through buying in the services of recognised trainers/organisations involved in training. For examp in the 12 months prior to the inspection the following training courses were held within the Rathgael Centre a attended by groups of staff:

# OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE-PERSONAL

# **RGL-23643**

"Sexuality in a Child Care Setting"

- The Northern Ireland Marriage Guidance Council

"Developing a Child Care Role in the Rathgael Centre"

- North Down College of Further Education

"Child Sexual Abuse"

- Constance Nightingale

"Staff Supervision"

- Queen's University Belfast

#### Staff Meetings

- 3.26 A variety of meetings are held at the Rathgael Centre, both at management and unit level. The director meets his deputies twice weekly ie on Mondays at 11.00 am and on Thursdays at 3.00 pm. Minutes confirmed that these are held regularly for the purpose of sharing information, reviewing policies, forward planning, etc. The deputy director (Care) meets monthly with her assistant directors and deputy assistant directors and again these meetings are minuted. They focus on the development of policies and procedures for implementation on the Care side of the complex.
- 3.27 Senior staff meetings are held weekly on the Youth Treatment side by the deputy director and these are attended by all grades down to warden. Similar meetings are held by the deputy/assistant director (Care) but here there are separate meetings for short term and adolescent care. At unit level all staff teams meet on Friday afternoons between 2.00 pm and 4.00 pm. There is an open agenda for the first hour followed by a brief review of each young person's progress within the units and then by the formulation of an assessment/treatment profile on one particular resident.

#### Night Supervision

3.28 A team of night supervisors take over from the residential social work staff at 10.00 pm each evening and they cover the Centre through to the morning rise at 7.30 am. At the time of the inspection 9 of them, 5 men and 4 women, were on site each evening though this may increase to 10 when House 4 is commissioned. When they come on duty the boys and girls are normally in bed and will have been settled down by the evening shift. A minimum of 2 senior staff are "on call" from their homes during the night and may be contacted by the night supervisors in an emergency. None of the residential social workers are required to perform "sleeping in" duties.

# OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE-PERSONAL

# **RGL-23644**

- 3.29 There are 18 night supervisors, 9 full time and 9 part time (whole time equivalent of 15) and 2 of these occupy promoted posts ie senior night supervisor, deputy senior. They are all mature men and women with an average age of 44 years within a range of 29 to 65 years. Seven of them have fairly long service, the others are less than 2 years on the job, but none of them are qualified in social work/child care.
- 3.30 The Inspectors take the view that boys and girls with a problematic social/emotional history, which can become manifest in extreme/disruptive behaviour at any time, need to have familiar staff, who know their case histories and care plans, available to them at all times. Therefore it is recommended that at least one residential social worker sleeps in each house unit during the night.
- 3.31 When this measure is introduced the number of night supervisors on duty each night should be reduced from 9 to 5 and they should be located in the following areas:-

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1 to Unit 10;
1 to Units 9 and 9A;
1 to Units 1, 2 and 3;
1 to Units 5 and 6;
1 to Units 7 and 8.
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A further (6th) night supervisor could be based in Unit 4 when it re-opens. The night supervisors will provide security for the campus and act in support of the sleeping in staff. The gender of the night supervisors and the sleeping in staff should be co-ordinated to allow male and female staff to be available to the young people during the night.

# Staff Effectiveness

3.32 In general the Inspectors were impressed by the staff's professionalism and commitment to their work. However it was also apparent that some of them were experiencing difficulty in accepting new policies and innovative practices which had been introduced to the Centre over the past 2 years. They still subscribe to an older more rigid practice framework and have a cynical attitude to colleagues who have accepted new challenges with enthusiasm. This can confuse the residents and may also affect their behaviour and could be described as "counter productive". It is recommended that management monitors this situation carefully and takes whatever action necessary to find a remedy.

#### 4.0 LOCATION AND PREMISES

- Rathgael Centre is located on the outskirts of Bangor a out 2 miles from the middle of the town. It occupies a large site of approximately 75-80 acres and is bounded on 3 sides by roads and on one side by a housing estate. The campus is surrounded by a non-secure fence of hedges wire-netting and brick in places. Driving in through the main entrance the impression is of a pleasant, tree-lined drive.
- The units are spread throughout the grounds and are mainly modern, flat-roofed structures built in the 1960s style. The main office block is sited opposite the chapel. There are 2 large school blocks. The kitchen, which is currently being renovated is built on the side of the administrative block. At the moment, the kitchen is sited temporarily in a building opposite. A plan of the site is shown in Appendix B.
- 4.3 The grounds close to the buildings are well maintained with lawns and mature trees. The central portion is the administrative block with the modern chapel opposite. The school blocks are adjacent. To the rear are outbuildings, workshops, and garage. Beyond this, is grassland and trees.
- In the main administrative block on the ground floor are offices for 2 of the deputy directors, one assistant director, one deputy assistant director, head of community care, a walk-in safe for files and photocopier, other offices, and at one end an office for part of the community social work team. There is a small reception area with seats, plus a window hatch on the other side of which sits the receptionist/telephonist by the switchboard. On the first floor, there is office accommodation for the director, his secretary, a rest-room for female staff and toilet, a dining room, kitchen, boardroom, staff room where staff meet up for morning, lunch and afternoon breaks. A surgery, dental surgery, sick bay and storage room completes the accommodation.
- 4.5 Adjacent to this block, is the main school block which includes classrooms, domestic science room, library area and an art/craft/pottery centre. The deputy director and the assistant director (Education) offices, together with the staff room, are located on the ground floor.

## Recreational facilities

4.6 A swimming pool and gymnastics hall is contained in the school building within easy reach of the units. The gym hall is equipped for gymnastics and has a stage suitable for concerts, plays etc. The swimming pool is large, oblong-shaped with changing rooms and showers.

# OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE-PERSONAL

**RGL-23646** 

# Staff Accommodation

A number of staff live in accommodation provided on the site. Some distance from the rear of the Youth Treatment units are a number of staff houses, one detached and 6 semi-detached. All of the buildings are finished in white and have well maintained exteriors.

# Fire/Safety Precautions

4.8 The buildings are equipped with a break glass fire alarm system and smoke sensors have been installed. There are three types of fire-fighting equipment ie hose reel, fire extinguishers attached to the walls, and fire blankets in each kitchen. The Tann Sychronome Alarm system is designed to operate at all times and will activate the alarm bell, local control panels and master control panel (in Reception) in response to a signal from any of the

#### 5.0 SHORT TERM CARE

- There are 6 care units at the Rathgael Centre and these provide 75 places for boys and girls. Two reception/ assessment units with 22 places are juxtaposed with a 10 place close supervision unit and located on the south side of the site close to the Rathgael Road. On the other side of the Centre, with the administration and school blocks in between, lie 3 Adolescent Care Units with 43 places for boys and girls.
- The general philosophy for the care units in Rathgael is "to meet the needs of individual children ...... taking into account their personality, stage of development and particular difficulties" however each child's need for security "in the form of personal respect and control" is also given consideration. The units should have "sufficient structure to ensure smooth running and to minimise friction arising from uncertainty and manipulation". A flexible but unified approach to the young persons by the teams of staff operating within the units is advocated. The remainder of Chapter 5 makes a detailed examination of Short Term Care and the Adolescent Care Units are dealt with in Chapter 6.

#### Description of Houses 9 and 9(A)

5.3 The Short Term Care Units, 9 (White) for 11 boys and 9A (Abbey) for 11 girls are sited in the first building which is seen on the left on entering the gates of the centre. The building is a modern, sixties "box" style building, where the paint work is beginning to peel. At the end of the building is Shamrock House. In the central area there are well furnished and equipped offices for management staff, the intake social worker and psychologist.

#### Boys Units Ground Floor

There is a door through to the boys' unit, which is always 5.4 kept locked, giving entry immediately into one of the offices where there is a desk, chair and telephone. This is most unsatisfactory as it is used as a corridor and it is impossible for staff to have a confidential telephone call about a resident. On the right is the boys' unit main office, with desk, chairs, locked filing cabinet and telephone which has glass windows looking out on the play room. This area contains two pool tables and is very cramped. There are no windows, and the walls are covered with posters and photographs. Leading off from here are the toilets and showers which need modernising. For some reason, the plumbing has never been satisfactory and there are persistent leaks. Leading off the other side is the entrance to the boys' lounge which appeared very stark. The use of beige curtains, grey carpet tiles and the absence of a lightshade added to the starkness. There was a bookcase with a few, tatty paperbacks but no newspapers.

Although some attempt has been made, the room could look more homely with the addition of pictures, plants and cushions etc. It is recommended that these be pr vided to make it look less institutionalised. There is a small office off the lounge where the secretary to the unit is based. This room houses her typewriter, desk, chair and telephone and is kept locked.

- 5.5 There is a corridor linking the boys' unit to the girls' unit. The pay phone is located here. Opening off the corridor is the dining room where boys and girls eat together at long tables. The tablecloths were made of plastic, torn in places which is unhygienic. Children seemed to spend as little time as possible at the table and rushed off as soon as they had eaten to continue what they were doing. The atmosphere was not inviting. As mealtimes should be a time when news is exchanged and somewhat of a social occasion, it is recommended that this room should be made more homely with bright poster prints on the walls, small round tables instead of the institutional-style long tables, bright seersucker tablecloths and napkins and modern oven-to-table china.
- 5.6 The kitchen has a counter where serving of the meals takes place. It is quite well-equipped with a Tricity cooker and fridge/freezer. There is a sink containing some institutional-looking draining baskets. At one end are storage cupboards. There is no microwave cooker or heated trolley for keeping meals hot. Arrangements regarding hygiene appeared satisfactory. After each meal, the floor is brushed and mopped over.

### Girls Units Ground Floor

- 5.7 At the other end is the girls' unit. Again there is a play area with a pool table. The walls are covered with posters. There is the main office with an outside window and glass partition and door, desk, locked filing cabinet, telephone and chairs and a room which is used for small meetings which contains a coffee table, chairs, and cassette radio player. There are windows here looking over to the drive. Opening off the pool room are toilets and showers.
- 5.8 Off the downstairs corridor is the girls' lounge which is furnished with chairs, carpets, curtains, electric fire and fireplace, and television. There are a couple of pictures on the wall and this room is more homely than the boys' lounge. Opening off there is a small room which is used as an office and for visits in privacy by families. It contains a desk, chair, locked First Aid cabinet and telephone. The door is usually kept locked. In both units no pets are kept and no musical instruments are played. Just round the corner is another kitchen with a sink unit, Tricity Marquis Cooker automatic washing machine and drier. All the personal washing is done here

**RGL-23649** 

every day. Leading off opposite the kitchen door are the stairs up to the bedrooms.

### Girls' Bedrooms

5.9 In the girls' unit, there is a mixture of single and shared rooms. There are times when staff feel that shared accommodation is useful although the ideal would be for a single room for each child. There are 2 rooms containing 3 beds, one containing 2 beds and 3 single bedrooms. There is a wardrobe and chest allocated to each child which appeared to be sturdy, durable and attractive. There were 2 bathrooms containing toilet, hand basin and bath. The Inspectors were told that these facilities were adequate but when the children were getting up it was noted that the children used the downstairs toilets as well.

#### Boys' Bedrooms

- On the boys' side, there are 6 single bedrooms, one bedroom with 2 beds and one with 3 beds. Again there were similar wardrobes and chests. There were strip glass sections in each door to enable staff to check on the children. There were no curtains or lampshades in some of the bedrooms and the duvet covers and pillow slips looked decidedly washed up and old. The Inspectors were struck by the lack of personal possessions around and the starkness of the bedrooms in contrast to bedrooms in children's homes. Few children appeared to have stamped their individuality on their rooms with posters, photographs, possessions etc. It seemed that children who had been in the unit the longest had taken firmer possession of their rooms through the placement of posters and other such means of stamping their individuality. However, perhaps the message of the starkness of the Short Term Care units is unwelcoming and punitive and perhaps this is the children's response to this rather hostile, unwelcoming atmosphere. The Inspectors feel that particular care should be taken to make the Short Term Care unit as welcoming as possible, to enable the children to settle quickly and so to enable a more accurate assessment of their personality and needs to be made. is therefore recommended that new bedlinen, curtains, lampshades should be provided to give the bedrooms a more homely feel.
- 5.11 It was noted that there appeared to be some difficulty in controlling the temperatures in the units. At the time of the inspection the heating had not been turned on, despite the fact that the air temperature had dropped considerably. This was drawn to the attention of management and when the heating was turned on there was still some difficulty in regulating the level of heat in the Unit.

**RGL-23650** 

5.12 It is noted that plans are in hand to refurbish the Short Term Care Units. This actually is long overdue. The unit is rather stark and depressing and it is hoped that the suggestions hade by the Inspectors will bring about, in the short term, some improvement to the environment. It is to the credit of staff that they have managed to create a satsifactory standard of care in such unsuitable conditions.

The Children and Young Persons Resident

#### Girls

- 5.13 At the time of the Inspection, there were 10 girls in House 9(a) aged between 13 years 1 month to 16 years 7 months with an average age of 15 years 2 months. None of the children were related. On the above date, 9 girls were in residence and one had absconded. Two girls were the subjects of Interim Detention Orders, 5 on Place of Safety Orders, and 3 on Training School Orders. Six girls were from the Eastern Health and Social Services Board; 2 from the Northern Board, one from Southern Board and one the responsibility of the Probation Service.
- 5.14 Some of this group of girls had experienced several placements during their careers in care. Four children had come from their own homes, 5 had been living in children's homes just before their admission to the Centre and one child had been in hospital. Only one of the 10 children had previously been in a Training School. Nine children were receiving education at the Centre, only one, the eldest, was not, as she had absconded. One had been living at the Centre for 5 months, 2 for 3 months, 2 for 2 months, 3 for one month, and 2 had just been admitted.
- 5.15 The future plans of the children at this stage were tentative; 3 were transferring to a children's home, 2 to an Adolescent Care Unit; 4 had no plans made one was an absconder. There were no tentative plans made for 3 of the more recent admissions as case conferences had not been held.

#### Boys

5.16 On the day of the census, there were 11 boys in House 9 aged between 13 years 5 months and 17 years, with an average age of 14 years 9 months. None of the children were related. On the above date 9 boys were in residence, 2 were on extended leave. Four children were the subject of a Training School Order, 4 were the subject of Place of Safety Orders, and 3 the subject of Interim Detention Orders. Four children were from the Eastern Health and Social Services Board, 3 were from the Northern Board while 4 were the responsibility of the Education and Library Boards.

# **RGL-23651**

- 5.17 Some of this group of boys had experienced several placements during their careers in care. Seven children came from their own homes, 2 from children's homes, one had come from a foster home and one from Youth Treatment at the Centre. Five children had been in training schools before, 6 had not.
- 5.18 Nine children were receiving education at the Centre, one was going out to school and one, the eldest was not receiving any education. One child had been living at Rathgael for 7 months, 4 for 3 months, 2 for 2 months, 3 for one month and one had only just been admitted.
- 5.19 The future plans of the children at this stage were tentative. Two were transferring to a children's home, one will be discharged home, one will transfer to either a children's home or be licensed to live with relatives, one is on extended leave with relatives, 6 were transferring to one of the Adolescent Care Units.
- 5.20 The view expressed by the staff on the unit was that all the children were appropriately placed. Most are generally disturbed adolescents, some of whom have a tendency towards aggressive behaviour and self mutilation or destruction. A number of the children come from deprived circumstances and some have been assaulted, sexually abused and/or are the survivors of incestuous relationships. The following vignettes are indicative of the type of presenting problems confronting staff at the Centre:-

#### SHARON

"Sharon was admitted to Rathgael for the purposes of assessment, from a Child Psychiatric Unit, her admission to which had been precipitated by a serious drug overdose. Within previous placements and at school, she exhibited severe problematic behaviour such as stealing, alcohol abuse and defiance towards those in authority.

Sharon was first admitted to care at a very early age, the victim of serious physical abuse. Since admission, Sharon has made considerable progress particularly with regard to her ability to form relationships. Although currently the subject of a Training School Order it is hoped that in the near future she may be returned to a more community based setting."

#### **IIARRY**

"Harry was admitted to Rathgael Centre after presenting behavioural difficulties within a children's home. He had repeatedly broken his behavioural contract within that home. Harry presents no problems of control within the unit and continues to attend Rupert Stanley College each day. Harry was made the subject of an Interim Order. It

# **RGL-23652**

is the Centre's intention to request a Training School Order in order to allow time to try to either:-

1. gradually phase lim back to his parents' home.

Or to:-

2. phase him back to the Children's Home.

An immediate return to either of these placements is not felt to be feasible at this time as Harry requires the greater security and control provided within Rathgael."

#### Care of the Individual

- 5.21 If a new child is to be admitted to the unit, staff do not always have a great deal of advance warning. However it is understood there is now more planning and considerable background information about the child, his family and the reason for admission is obtained. If there is time, children in the unit are told that another child is to be admitted. Often one child is designated to show the newcomer around and explain the routine of fire drill, bedroom and bathroom. There is no introductory booklet about the Centre and its units (See later in Paragraph 5.33).
- 5.22 A primary worker system is used in the unit. The worker helps each individual child to learn as much as possible about their own family and history. The system appears to work reasonably well.
- 5.23 When a case review or conference is to be held, the children are advised. It is now becoming a feature in many residential establishments for children to attend their reviews. Whilst it is recognised that not all children may wish to attend or may feel able to cope with the process it is to the credit of management that they are mindful of current thinking and practices elsewhere and encourage children to attend their reviews at the Centre. If children are unable to attend for any reason or prefer to make a contribution in writing, the outcome of the review would be discussed with them by the staff.
- 5.24 Case conferences are held in the Boardroom and are usually chaired by an assistant director or his deputy with the worker from the unit taking notes and being responsible for ensuring that these are typed up and distributed. Children attend the case conference at the end to give their own views and also to hear the decisions of conference. This arrangement is to be commended.
- 5.25 Children are allowed some degree of privacy if they so desire. If they receive letters, it is policy that staff open these as it is felt that their content may be harmful to an emotional child. However, staff are often involved

**RGL-23653** 

in helping the children to write outgoing letters. It can be argued that the children in this unit are not as well known to the staff and that the agencies who have referred them to the Centre may have requested that contact with specific persons is curtailed. Whilst accepting the validity of these reasons the Inspectors feel that the application of a policy of 'censorship' in the care of all the children may be an infringement of their individual rights. It is therefore recommended that the current policy of a blanket censorship of mail and telephone calls be reviewed. There is a telephone pay phone in the corridor joining the two units where children can make calls. Incoming calls are answered by staff who then tell the child if they are allowed to receive the call. If a child wishes to make a telephone call, a member of staff is advised so that they can ensure that the correct number is being dialled. If an inappropriate telephone call is made by the child, then the normal sanction would be not to allow telephone calls to be made for a number of days. Use of the telephone is restricted to 6 pm to 9 pm at night and at weekends.

- 5.26 The children were dressed appropriately for their ages and wear their own clothes after school. School uniform is simple consisting of navy shirt or trousers, blouse or shirt, tie and sweater. These are provided by the Centre. In the morning, the children are called around 7.30 am with breakfast at 8 am. Those who attend the main school are escorted over to school or assembly at about 9 am. Breaks and lunch are also taken back at the units. As soon as they arrive back from school, the children change into casual clothes. There is no homework to be done. The children are taught how to use the automatic washer and drier on the unit and do their own personal washing. Large items of washing such as bedding, duvet covers etc go over to the laundry every Tuesday.
- 5.27 Children's teatime is at 5 pm when a meal such as a pie or burger and chips is served. There is a rota for washing-up and clearing up. Then it is back to the television, radio, cassette recorder or pool table for most of the evening. Supper snacks can be prepared if the children wish but usually it consists of a bag of crisps, biscuits or apple and a drink. The evening is relaxed and staff feel that this is often the best time to work with the residents. Bedtime is at  $10~\mathrm{pm}$  and this is adhered to as the day staff finish their shift and the night supervisors come on. Even at weekends bedtime is strictly adhered to. It is felt that this is probably more for the convenience of staff than children. The Inspectors feel that more latitude could be given for children to watch live TV programmes on Friday/Saturday nights if they wish Whilst the children were settling down for the night, the were locked in their rooms. The rooms were later unlocke by the night staff. The Inspectors point out that this i

not a secure unit and it is recommended that this practice should be discontinued.

- 5.28 Staff try to be consistent in their approach to discipline. Sanctions, such as the withdrawal of privileges or missing a favourite television programme are used. If wilful damage is caused, part of the damage would be paid out of pocket money. The Inspectors feel there would be merit in considering an incentive scheme for rewarding good behaviour, courtesy, kindness etc.
- 5.29 Visits from families usually take place at the weekends. It has to be said that there are not many visits from children's friends because often a considerable distance is involved. The office is usually used for visits so that some privacy can be ensured.
- 5.30 Pocket money is "paper" pocket money and recorded in a book for the purpose which is in accordance with the rates. There seems to be little actual experience in handling cash on site, apart from those occasions when the young people are going home on leave or on day trips. The Inspectors regret this and feel that more direct experience should be given. Pocket money often goes on cigarettes although smoking is not allowed under the age of 16 unless parental permission has been given. Cigarettes are handed over to the staff and children request a cigarette. A maximum of seven per day is allowed and there are sensible no-smoking rules in bedrooms and the dining room. The policy over smoking is under constant review. Perhaps a policy of incentives for non-smoking could be considered.
- 5.31 Visiting between the boys' and girls' units is allowed every night except for Monday evenings where there is a group meeting in the girls' unit. This is often to make plans for outings. However, as the children from both units meet up for meals in any case, the Inspectors recommend that consideration should be given to mixing boys and girls in Houses 9-9(a).
- 5.32 Holidays are arranged in the school holidays with due regard for court appearances. Last summer 5 girls and boys went camping in Enniskillen and some children spent a week at Runkerry Centre. At weekends outings are arranged. The unit has a minibus (there are 3 in the Centre) and days out are arranged as requested, usually to the Mournes or other places of interest.
- 5.33 There is no brochure about the Centre which provides information for children and relatives. Information is given by the residential staff and fieldworkers as required. However, it is felt that such an introductory brochure would be a useful addition and it is recommended that this be introduced.

- 5.34 Staff from the unit have a good relationship with the fieldworkers who visit the children as required. The children know where they are based and can contact them if they wish. A great deal of contact between field and residential staff takes place on the telephone.
- 5.35 At the weekends, the routine is more relaxed. The children are allowed to have a lie-in and then have their assigned task to complete. The television is usually on and children watch this whilst talking or knitting. Some listen to the radio in the small lounge off the snooker area. In the boys' unit, there are 2 snooker tables and more of the boys play with the staff than girls. There is scope for more imaginative activities aimed at preparing children for independence to be devised by staff and built into the daily programmes. Similarly there appears to be scope for the involvement of the wider community in sporting and leisure activities.
- 5.36 The Inspectors met most of the children in the unit at some time during their time at the Centre. Some of these contacts happened informally but others were initiated by the young people some were poor communicators but other freely gave their perceptions of life in the centre and compared it to other placements. Their views were wide-ranging but a consistent theme emerging was their high regard of the Centre. Generally they were content with the treatment they received and their only main complaint was about the food. This matter is referred to again in Chapter 10.

#### Children's Files

- 5.37 The children's files are held in locked filing cabinets in the individual offices of the boys' and girls' unit.

  There is a file for each child and all relevant staff have access to them.
- 5.38 About half of the files were examined by the Inspectors. Generally the files consist of a front card giving details of name; address; change of address; date of birth; date of admission; age; first review; date order expires. There are details of height; hair; eyes; complexion; build; distinguishing marks; reason for admission; Court; legal status; re-committals in the Centre giving date, Court; reason; reasons for revocation of the licence; physical condition on admission; any special disability; medical recommendation; father's name and address; mother's name and address; guardian's name and address; allocated to; date, home transfer and date.
- 5.39 The files are split up into five sections:-
  - Yellow-folder for daily occurrence sheets by staff.
  - Orange-Intake.
  - 3. Green-Case Conference

# **RGL-23656**

- 4. Pink-Court report.
- 5. Blue-Court report care plans, process records of family meetings, "contracts" between the Centre's staff, the child and family.
- 5.40 Birth certificates are not held on these files. These are normally retained by the social services unless a Training School Order is made in which case the Birth Certificate is held. The amount of material held on each file is variable according to the length of time the child has been in the unit and consistent with the programme of care being followed. While the Inspectors were generally satisfied with the standard of recording, it is felt that some of the daily summaries could perhaps be more analytical in detail with a summary every three months. Front sheets were missing from some of the files. A photograph included on the file would be useful and the Inspectors recommend that arrangements are made for this to be included.
- 5.41 Recording is done almost daily by the staff on the evening/morning shift. The Inspectors found that these records were a blend of factual information and an honest account of the feelings of the staff at the time the entries were made.
- 5.42 Medical records are kept in the medical file in the sick bay. Education records are kept by the teacher responsible for the unit. He then sends education reports on to the school when the child leaves. The teacher attends the Problem Profile Meeting to ensure effective communication.
- 5.43 The fact that the assessment/short term care programme takes between 5 and 15 weeks means that the work tends to be focussed more on reception/assessment and preparation for onward placement. Progress is reviewed weekly at the unit meeting and case conferences are called with representatives from all agencies involved. Where appropriate an assessment report is prepared for the Court. If the child is transferring to another unit then an initial plan is made for their future care. In a few cases there was a lack of clarity about long-term plans for children and the timescale within which it was hoped they would be achieved. Attention should be paid to the need to elucidate long-term plans with clear dates and provisional discharge plans indicated as part of the care plan for every child perhaps by means of a clearer form. It is recommended that such a form be considered.
- 5.44 A number of general information leaflets, practice guidelines and policy statements are held in each unit. The Inspectors noted that on the girls' unit the paper on sex-related issues involving girls was missing and this was pointed out. If such guidelines are available for

**RGL-23657** 

girls then the same should be available for boys. It is understood that these are being prepared.

#### Unit Records

- 5.45 Night book. This contains details of admissions, discharges, remands, committals, absconders, absentees and reasons, court extended leave, leave, changes, activities, bedroom placements, remarks for night staff, night supervisors' report. These are initialled at half-hourly intervals. There is a space for remarks plus signatures of staff.
- 5.46 Fire drills. These are contained in a small bound book. At the front, there is a warning that fire drills must be carried out once a month and each team leader/warden is responsible for ensuring that this is done. This requirement is also made explicit in each member of staff's employment documents. Details regarding fire policy, working of appliances and all requirements are carefully explained. This is to be commended. The following information has to be noted after completion of each drill - date and home of drill, name of member of staff exercising the drill; name of each participant; time taken; remarks. Each member of staff should be encouraged to exercise at least one fire drill. The last drill took place on 15 September 1987 where the unit was cleared in one minute. There was no drill held in August. The previous fire drills took place on 1 July 1987, 30 January 1987, 29 November 1986, 1 October 1986; 29 April 1986; 4 March 1986; 30 January 1986; 22 January 1986; 7 January 1986 and 17 November 1985.
- 5.47 It is noted that there seems to be some long gaps between drills, which is most unsatisfactory. It is recommended that fire-drills should take place more frequently in accordance with standing instructions. It was also noted that the names of the children do not appear in the records. It is therefore recommended that a record of fire drills be kept which shall include the names of children and staff taking part and the time taken to evacuate the building.
- Punishment book. This book is bound and contains details of the child; the offence and whether the child is handicapped. The team leader checks this daily and the deputy director monthly and they initial this. Most punishments tend to be early to beds and missing favourite television programmes.
- 5.49 A weekly record sheet contains name; order issued/expiry/Case Conference date; Court date; remarks; disposal. The senior staff diary is kept in the assistant director's office. A record of pocket money which is distributed on Thursdays, is kept and the amounts are put on the children's cards.

Staffing

House 9(a)

- 5.50 In House 9A, there are seven members of staff, consisting of a senior residential social worker, five residential social workers, one housemother. Five are male and two female. The children in this unit are boys and subsequently the staff is weighted to the male element. However it is felt that children need the opportunity to relate to both male and female models in their life and it is desirable to have more female members in this team.
- 5.51 The age range of the staff varies from 24 to 43 years. The length of time in their current post varies from 9 months to twelve years, and service in the training school service varies from  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 14 years. The length of time spent in residential child care work varies from one year to a maximum of 14 years. Thus there is a high level of experience and expertise in this area.
- 5.52 The senior residential social worker holds the CRCCYP, one member the CQSW and ICSC, one the CRCCYP, 3 hold degrees (one with a Diploma in Occupational Psychology) and one member is unqualified. One staff member, who holds a degree, has obtained a place on a CQSW course and took up his place in October 1987.
- 5.53 Staff attendance at training courses has been low with four members out of the 7 attending no courses at all. Three members of staff each attended 3, 2 and 1 courses respectively. The Inspectors wish to highlight the importance of ongoing in-service training and wish to stress that all staff take advantage of a minimum number of courses per year. Staff should have the opportunity to attend appropriate training courses and a Training Needs Assessment should be introduced. It is recommended that this be undertaken.
- 5.54 In House 9, there are also 7 members of staff consisting of a senior residential social work, team leader (warden), 4 residential social workers and one housemother. The senior residential social worker is male, the others are female. The children in this unit are female and the staff appear to be weighted this way. However, the Inspectors feel that it would be appropriate to have a more evenly balanced male/female ratio and as in House 9A and consideration should be given to this.
- 5.55 The age range of the staff ranges from 19 to 50, the average being 38 years. The length of time spent in their current post varies from one year to 11 years, the average being 3 years. The length of time spent in the training school service varies from one year to 14 years. The length of time spent in residential child care work varies from one year to 14 years, the average being 9 years

# **RGL-23659**

- again. Thus there is a high level of experience and expertise in this area. Two members of staff hold the CQSW, one the CSS, 2 hold the CRCCYP and ICSC, one the PCSC. Only one member holds no qualifications.
- 5.56 Staff attendance at training courses has been higher than House 9A with only one member not having attended any courses. Four members have attended one course each, one 2 courses and the other 5 courses. The importance of staff attending courses to keep abreast of new skills and techniques to gain support and to enhance their own professional development cannot be stressed too highly. The comments in a previous paragraph 5.53 apply here.
- 5.57 On both units, staff supervision has not been formalised. Whilst a number of staff have considerable experience and expertise, formal supervision means that professional support and advice can be sought and shared. The Inspectors recognise that some steps have been taken to mitigate this but feel that an annual appraisal system has become mixed up with the concept of professional supervision. It is recommended that a formal system of staff supervision be introduced.
- 5.58 Every Friday informal meetings are held in the Units to discuss the individual problems of the residents and to discuss care plans. Policy matters are also raised here. These meetings are not recorded and no formal agenda is set. There are also Problem Profiling meetings held to discuss a child in great detail following Dr Masud Hoghughi's format in his book, "Assessing Problem Children".
- 5.59 There are 2 offices in the boys unit. One office is equipped with desk, chairs, and locked filing cabinet. Another desk with a telephone is just outside in a room which is used as a corridor to gain entry to some senior management offices. This is most unsatisfactory as it is impossible to work or make telephone calls. Unit meetings are usually held in the boys' lounge.
- 5.60 There are 2 offices in the girls' unit. One office is small with desk, chair, filing cabinet and telephone. It is glazed and and opens off the room with the snooker table. Unit meetings are usually held in the room next door which has seating and a coffee table and radio. There is another office opening off the television lounge which has a desk, chairs and phone. The locked medicine cabinet is kept in this room. All rooms are normally kept locked when not in use.
- 5.61 Each member of staff has a job description and a booklet containing employment documents and has a clear idea of their role. The majority of staff were seen during the course of the inspection. The staff group appear to be committed to the aims of the centre. They were confident

in the discharge of their duties. The senior residential staff also felt that staff operate well as a group. They share their problems and support is given informally if needed, often in the evenings or weekends when it is more relaxed.

- 5.62 Each team is split in 2 with each half working a shift system. Usually 3 members of staff work each shift as follows:-
  - 7.30 am-9.30 am supervision of children getting up, washing, tidying, kitchen chores, breakfast, attendance at morning service.
  - 9.30 am-10.30 am administration tasks concerned ie files, interviews, telephone, supervision of children to court, hospital, dental appointments etc.
  - 10.30 am-11.30 am supervision of children's normal break and own break.
  - 11.30 am-12.45 pm administrative tasks.
  - 12.45 pm-2.00 pm supervision of lunch and lunch time activities.
- 5.63 The morning shift ends at 2.00 pm. Some staff commence duty at 2pm and some at 4pm, thus, enabling contact between morning and evening shifts to be achieved. This period covers supervision of children in their house unit and includes tea and supper as well as chores, recreational activities, individual and group counselling, outings, home visiting, going to bed. The following day the shifts are reversed. The shifts are 6½ hours in length, although there is a variation on Fridays when all staff are in attendance from 2-4 pm. The period from 10.30 pm to 7.30 am is covered by night supervisors with at least one member of senior staff on the Care and Youth Treatment side acting as back-up to the night staff.
- 5.64 In addition all residential staff work one weekend in 3 again on a shift basis (8 am to 5 pm Saturday and 5 pm to 10.30 pm Sunday) and again vice versa. This accounts for another 14½ hours per 3 weeks or approximately an additional 5 hours per week. Residential staff work a 39 hour week. At weekends there are usually 2 members of staff on duty. Sometimes this is supplemented by part-time cover.
- 5.65 Communication among the senior residential social workers and team leaders/wardens is enhanced by a weekly team meeting every Wednesday afternoon. An agenda is drawn up and notes of the meetings are circulated and filed. This meeting is chaired by the assistant director (Care) and the issues covered tend to be related to policy.

- 5.66 The senior residential social workers are responsible for daily management to the deputy assistant director, through him to the assistant director and through him to the deputy director (Care).
- 5.67 Administration for Houses 9, 9(a) and 10 is dealt with by a full-time clerical officer. She is based in a small office just off the boys' lounge in House 9.
- 5.68 The overall aim of this unit is to assess the children's/young person's needs in relation to their admission to 'Care'. This will be achieved through work with them in the unit and through consultation with the referring agencies. As far as is possible, provision is made to meet their needs in an effective and appropriate manner.
- 5.69 The function of the Short-Term Care is to:-
  - i. provide a comprehensive assessment where requested by referring agencies;
  - ii. provide a "crisis" facility for children who are presenting management problems in other settings;
  - iii. provide, prior to transfer to Adolescent Care Unit a child profile in respect of each child who has been made subject to a Training School Order.
- 5.70 The assessment in each case is comprehensive, utilising appropriate interdisciplinary resources educational/medical/psychological/psychiatric/social work, thus facilitating the most effective intervention.

#### INTAKE CO-ORDINATION

### Pre-admission

5.71 The Intake Team social worker acts as a consultative reference point when the unit is being considered in a range of options for a particular child. This may include an involvement in case conferences concerning children whose placement is presenting problems.

#### Admission

5.72 All referrals to the unit are made through the intake team. If emergency admission is required after 5.00 pm, a member of the intake team is always available. The placing agent at point of admission is in a position to provide some details of relevant medical/behavioural problems and other pertinent information.

#### Post Admission

- 5.73 A case conference involving all interested agencies is convened as soon as possible after admission, to discuss the aim of the placement and to set a date for a pre-court review. As soon as possible after this case conference, the referring social worker, the intake social worker and primary worker compile a child profile prioritising identified problems and appropriate action. A placement may last 15 weeks to facilitate fuller assessment which may include a phased return to a community based setting. This may be achieved by application being made in the Juvenile Court for either an Interim Order of Detention or an Interim Fit Person Order. Where the former is considered, full details of any re-integration programme is clearly outlined in court reports, otherwise children will be detained in the Centre for the duration of the Order. In any case the Place of Safety Order may only be extended by a maximum of 2 further consecutive 5 week Orders.
- An assessment report is made available to facilitate the referring agency and its details will reflect the nature of the initial referral. The report is presented at an allocation meeting which would determine whether a five week placement for assessment or a fifteen week placement on an Interim Fit Person Order, for example, would be more appropriate to meet the chlid's needs. A court report would be made available automatically for chldren appearing in courts where a Training School Order is recommended, together with the assessment report, the child's profile and all available background information. From time to time, children come straight to the Centre on a Training School Order for school non-attendance when this occurs, a similar procedure is followed.
- 5.75 The ambiance of the Short-Term Care Units is somewhat drab which could have an unhelpful affect on staff. Despite these difficulties, staff have tried to make the best of the physical conditions, although some straightforward additions could be made to make the units more homely and welcoming. Team leaders have tried to develop team spirit to enable their staff to develop and to play a positive role within the unit. Sometimes short-term assessment work can be frustrating in that there is a constant turnover of children through the unit with new residents testing out the limits of acceptable behaviour of the Centre.
- 5.76 The importance of the Short-Term Unit is that for many children previous testings have led to rejection and for some ultimate committal to Rathgael. It is vital that the concept of emotional security be nurtured from the minute a child is admitted. To promote and to practise this

**RGL-23663** 

concept places heavy demands upon the Short- Term Care staff and it is only by the support and encouragement from each level of staff that this important objective can be achieved.

### 6.0 ADOLESCENT CARE UNITS

Description of the Houses 1, 2 and 3

- The 3 two-storey brick built units are clustered together at the bottom of a slight rise. They overlook the main school block but to the rear there is open countryside ie fields and a lake. They have recently undergone extensive renovations and are well furnished and tastefully decorated throughout. Houses 2 and 3 are joined together where their respective dining rooms meet. There is a connecting door but generally this is closed. House 1 sits at 90 degrees to houses 2 and 3. There is staff accommodation associated with all 3 units.
- The interior design of the units is similar. Sleeping accommodation is upstairs mainly in single and double bedrooms with each house having one bedroom which can accommodate 3 or 4 residents. All were furnished with wardrobes, a small chest of drawers, and beds. The windows were curtained in flameproof material which matched the duvet covers on the beds and the bedroom floors were covered with flotex carpeting. Space is provided on the bedroom walls for posters, photographs etc and some of the boys and girls had made use of this to display pop memorabilia, sports day prizes etc. An upstairs toilet is provided for use during the night and each unit also has an office/interview room at first floor level.
- 6.3 The ground floor of the units comprises a living room, with soft furnishings, TV and a pool table, a dining room, kitchen/servery, storage space and an office. Each house also has 2 bathrooms, 2 showers and 2 WCs on the ground floor. Generally these units were found to be clean comfortable and well equipped and a pleasant living environment was created for the occupants.

### Fire Precautions

An automatic fire/smoke detector system is installed throughout the units. Fire fighting equipment ie hose reels, extinquishers and fire blankets is provided in each though only House 1 has an external fire escape. The Inspectors were told that the means of escape in case of fire was through the staff accommodation at the ends of houses 2 and 3. Since these were unoccupied when the inspection took place the Inspectors have reservations about this procedure and recommend that it should be reviewed perhaps when the fire inspection requested by the director (paragraph 14.8 refers) is undertaken.

### Staffing

6.5 Normally each of the Adolescent Care Units has 7 full-time staff but there was a vacancy for a residential social

## **RGL-23665**

worker in House 1 when the inspection was taking place. The full-time staff are assisted in the evenings and at the weekends by teachers/instructors doing extraneous duties or by part-time staff. The staff team in House 2 is lead by a senior residential social worker while in the other 2 units the highest grade is warden. The question of gradings and leadership at unit level is referred to in paragraph 3.4 above.

6.6 There are men and women working in all 3 units though House 3 has only 2 females ie one residential social worker and 1 housemother. Five staff in House 1 and another 5 in House 2 hold relevant qualifications but with the exception of 2 holders of the CCRCCYP the staff of House 3 are unqualified.

#### The Children

- All of the children in the Adolescent Care Units are placed following assessment in short-term care through an allocation meeting chaired by the director. However the sex of the young people plays a crucial role in this process as House 2 is the only unit catering for boys and girls. In effect House 1 is for girls only and House 3 is exclusively for boys. The Inspectors were advised that following the merger of Rathgael and Whiteabbey one unit for girls and 2 units for boys were planned but that the integration of boys and girls in House 2 came about because of a demand for more places for girls than had been anticipated. The Inspectors observed that in the single sex units a good deal of staff time and energy was spent keeping the boys and girls from meeting both inside and outside of the units. Strict boundaries were set for the young people and staff felt that they could not let them "out of their sight". By comparison the ethos of House 2 where the children were integrated appeared to be more relaxed. There seemed to be appropriate relationships between the boys and girls and staff supervision was subtle but effective nonetheless. Therefore it is recommended that all 3 Adolescent Care Units should be integrated gradually bearing in mind the availability of a balanced male/female staff group and the recommendations made about unit's staffing structure at paragraph 3.4 above.
- During the first week of September 1987 the Adolescent Care Units were responsible for 23 girls and 22 boys. However only 16 boys and 8 girls were residents. Fifteen young people, 11 girls and 4 boys, were on extended leave from the Centre and another 4 ie 2 boys and 2 girls were day attenders. One girl was boarded out with foster parents and another had absconded. In effect this means that 53% of the boys and girls were non-resident.

## RGL-23666

- 6.9 The Inspectors wish to record their support for the Rathgael Centre's policy of allowing young persons to live at home on extended leave prior to being formally released on licence. Some of these attend the school as day pupils. However supervision of these young people for a 3 month period while at the same time meeting the needs of a group of residents on a day to day basis must place a considerable burden on the residential staff. Therefore it is recommended that the responsibility for young persons on extended leave from the Centre should be transferred from the residential units to the community care team after one month.
- been committed there on a Training School Order for non school attendance to continue to live at home when practicable. However these young people come to Rathgael each week day for their education. They are attached to one of the Adolescent Care Units for supervision and guidance while in the Centre and they also go to the units for their tea-breaks, mid-day meal and to obtain travel warrants, etc. Although small in number the Inspectors feel that the day attenders also make demands on the unit staff at times when they should be supervising the residents. Since the day attenders are coming in to the school the Inspectors recommend that the Centres teaching staff take full responsibility for them thereby relieving the residential social work staff.
- 6.11 Included in the population of the Care side of Rathgael are a number of girls who have received Training School Orders for offending. The Inspectors were advised that whereas boys are transferred to Youth Treatment if they are convicted of offending the present organisation of the Centre does not provide for the transfer of girls. This appears to be inequitable and some staff felt that the operation of this policy was difficult to justify to the residents and not always in the best interests of the young people involved. The Inspectors acknowledge that separate provision has not been made within the training school system for girl offenders and that this has a bearing on the anomalous situation set out above. However it is felt that a more flexible approach could be taken to the transfer of boys from Care to Youth Treatment and this is recommended.
- Management of the Rathgael Centre are justifiably proud of the record of diversion of young persons away from long term residential care as subjects of Training School Orders. However while a return to the community may be the decision for up to 85% of boys and girls coming to the Centre for assessment, the residual group has to be catered for in the Adolescent Care Units together with some others committed directly by the Courts. Generally these are maladaptive adolescents some of whom have been deprived and abused to such an extent that they have

## **RGL-23667**

become withdrawn, manipulative, or aggressive. Indeed at the time of the inspection some of the residents on the Care side of Rathgael were being supervised by a Consultant Psychiatrist and receiving daily medication to ameliorate their behaviour. The following vignettes illustrate the needs and problems of some of the residents in House Unis 1, 2 and 3:-

#### CYNTHIA

"During the first 2 months of Cynthia's placement she absconded on 2 occasions and was involved in 10 assault situations. During these violent contacts with Cynthia some particularly disturbing behaviour was noted. Following a confrontation with staff which necessitated her removal from the group, Cynthia would appear to regress into a childlike state in which she would scream for her mother claiming that she was being hurt by a man. This regressive state could last for a number of hours. Cynthia has consistently refused to discuss these states which along with her almost total lack of childhood memories, was felt to be consistent with her having experienced some form of childhood sexual trauma. Over an 11 month period the centres psychologists and psychiatrist were consistently involved including intensive work with Cynthia and her mother related to her home situation. During this period Cynthia was involved in between some 50 and 60 incidents ranging from absconding, assaulting staff with knives and attempting to set her room on fire. A number of intervention strategies were attempted in order to modify her behaviour the most effective being the use of isolation for limited periods. Ongoing problems which remain are frequent absconding, a strong anti-authoritorian attitude and her relationship with her mother which remains poor."

#### DENNIS

"Dennis is unaware of his parents whereabouts. He knows that he is an illegitimate child and although his adoptive and fostering placements in the past have proved very negative, Dennis very much wants a mum and dad and still wishes to be fostered. On admission to Rathgael Dennis presented as a very aggressive disturbed boy. The consultant psychiatrist described him in the following terms - Dennis has had an extremely deprived life. His severe emmotional deprivation has resulted in his aggressive, destructive, delinquent behaviour - Dennis's behaviour has very gradually been modified with the help of behaviour modification programmes and he no longer presents many of his physical and verbal problems. He has worked through a lot of feelings about his natural parents and would now like to be fostered."

DEREK

"Derek was involved in 27 recorded assaults on staff and residents in his last placement prior to being removed to Rathgael. On several occasions Derek was caught glue sniffing and has also been involved in assaults on other boys and abuse of staff. Because of increasingly bizarre behaviour which resulted in a lacerated arm, Derek was admitted to a psychiatric hospital. Since he returned to the Centre aggressive behaviour coupled to unpredictable mood swings have led Derek to being admitted to a psychiatric hospital on two more occasions. He is presently receiving medication to moderate his behaviour. Derek has attacked one boy with a knife and burnt another boy's penis with a cigarette. He has been found glue sniffing and was suspended from a training scheme for fighting. He has killed his own pet hamster and pets belonging to other boys in the unit. He became obsessed with his health and imagined he had contracted every conceivable illness. On several occasions he was observed talking to himself in the mirror".

# Appraisal of the Adolescent Care Units

- 6.13 House 1 (Ballysillan) accommodates girls only and they will usually come to the unit from short term care following an assessment. Nevertheless it was clear that some staff felt that a number of the girls had been inappropriately placed in this unit. It was found that they were unhappy about having 3 girl offenders there including one who had been given 4 Training School Orders by the Courts. Staff felt that they could not cater successfully for delinquent girls within a caring environment and referred to the removal of 2 other girls to prison some 6 weeks before the inspection as confirmation of this. However the physical care of the children was adequate and the interior of the building was pleasant and in good decorative order.
  - 6.14 The approach to the child care task is similar for all of the Adolescent Care Units and involves individual counselling, group work and behaviour modification programmes through contracts and a marks system. A primary worker is identified at the allocation meeting held prior to the transfer of a young person from short term care and a staff member is chosen taking into consideration the personality and needs of the girl concerned. The primary worker also has responsibility for liaising with social services and the girl's family, for preparing the ground work for the Assessment Treatment Profile and for accurately recording the decisions of this meeting on the girl's file.
    - 6.15 The general impression given to the Inspectors was that there were differences in philosophy and approach between the staff group members working in House 1. They did not

# **RGL-23669**

appear to be working as a team and were vulnerable to manipulation by the girls. Indeed at times some of the girls appear to have the initiative and this was particularly evident at the marks meeting. The staff in this unit could profit from regular professional supervision and strong leadership.

- 6.16 House 2 (Lislea) accommodates boys and girls. It was clear upon entering the unit that everything possible was being done to create a homely atmosphere for the children. The living area was tastefully furnished and decorated with bric-a-brac belonging to the children which was prominently placed around the room. The boys and girls changed from their outdoor shoes to slippers in the front hall to protect the carpets and soft furnishings. Tropical fish flourished in a clean and well maintained tank and there was also a bird cage though unfortunately the former occupant had passed away a few days before the inspection. However plans were in hand to find a replacement and also to keep a pet goat once a stall was built for it at the rear of the unit. The young people were obviously proud of their unit and go out of their wave to make visitors welcome.
- 6.17 There was a pleasant relaxed atmosphere in House 2 when staff and children were together. They are on first name terms and work co-operately when sharing the chores. Staff join with the children in playing pool, card games, etc during the evenings and sometimes there is communal singing to guitar music. The children's friends may visit them providing they are not disruptive. On Monday evenings there is a meeting attended by all the boys and girls and by the staff on duty. It provides a forum for children and staff to share their views on a range of issues arising from communal living. It is also used to plan future outings, activities, holidays etc. At the meeting attended by one of the inspectors the group were planning a sponsored swim to raise funds for a Halloween trip to Blackpool. Minutes of the meetings are taken by one of the children. On Tuesday mornings there is a formal discussion of each child's progress and realistic targets are set for individuals by the staff for the coming week.
  - Acting out behaviour by the young people is confronted and handled by the staff. The fact that incident reports are rarely if ever filed by this unit is indicative of the skilled and tolerant approach by staff to difficult situations. Some emotionally deprived children have gone through a period of regression while in the unit and these situations have been managed with consideration and patience. The staff group make appropriate use of the psychological and psychiatric advice which is available to them but are prepared to undertake therapeutic interventions themselves. They present as a cohesive mutually supportive team which profits from strong,

## **RGL-23670**

- enlightened, professional leadership given by the senior residential social worker.
- 6.19 House 3 (Malone) was in good decorative order and well appointed. However since only boys are accommodated there and as a majority of the staff are men there is a distinctly male climate within the unit and the "woman's touch" was not apparent. Nonetheless the physical care of the boys was adequate, a good routine had been established and order and control was maintained by the staff.
- 6.20 The majority of the unit staff have several years of experience in the training school service though only 2 of them hold a relevant qualfication. Some of them had reservations about, and were reluctant to give their full commitment to the current philosophy of the Care side of the Centre. They seemed unhappy about the changes that had been made and frequently reminisced about how things had been handled in the past. In general they felt isolated in the Adolescent Care Units, said that they had little contact with management and were critical of the support offered by them and by the psychologists. It was clear also that the staff of House 3 had reservations about the placement of some of the boys there. In particular two of them had been diagnosed as having a psychiatric disorder and required regular medication to keep them under control. The Inspector felt that the staff were managing these two cases well under the circumstances and that changes in attitude and approach could only be achieved through a programme of in-service training and by the introduction of regular professional supervision.

#### The Close Supervision Unit

### Physical Description

- 6.21 House 10 (Shamrock) is a 2-storey brick built building wedged between the short term care units (Houses 9 and 9a) and a staff house. The main entrance hall faces the Rathgael Road but there is access to short term care through an internal door and to the outside through the kitchen at the rear of the building. All doors leading out of the unit are kept locked but in no way could they be described as secure.
- 6.22 On the ground floor to one side of the entrance hall is the bathroom and associated toilet. Originally the building was intended to accommodate boys only (it is now a mixed unit) and the washing and toilet facilites were constructed as an ablutions area with open showers, urinals, bath and 2 WCs. It has a Dickensian appearance and is totally unsuitable for use by boys and girls. There are long term plans for making alterations to this area and to the complete unit. It is the Inspectors view that House 10 requires urgent attention and should be

# **RGL-23671**

- given priority. If this work cannot be brought forward then it is recommended steps should be taken to modify the bathroom area ahead of the main schedule of work.
- 6.23 The main living area comprises of a lounge, quiet room, dining area, kitchen and a staff office. All divisions between the rooms are glazed so the young people can be kept under observation at all times. The ground floor rooms are spacious, bright, tastefully decorated and well appointed.
- 6.24 Access to the first floor is up a wide staircase leading from the entrance hall. At the top to one side is a former staff flat which is used for classrooms by the teachers during the day and afterwards provides a base for the night supervisor. To the right hand side of the staircase a narrow corridor runs the full length of the building. There are 10 single bedrooms, 5 on each side of the passageway, all with glass covered observation slits on their doors.
- 6.25 In terms of space the bedrooms all meet the area recommended by the Community Homes Design Guide. Each has natural lighting and ventilation through a window on its exterior wall. The bottom half of the window has been double glazed using "macralon" to prevent breakage. There are radiators below the windows and each room has a push button which can be used to call staff. In practice the Inspectors found that a panel which is activated by the push buttons, a buzzer sounds and a light is switched on, was not operating satisfactorily. It was explained that the equipment is old and replacement parts are difficult to find. This is unsatisfactory and it is recommended that the system is either repaired or replaced.
- 6.26 There was a metal framed bed in each room which was fixed to the floor to prevent it from being moved. Some of the rooms also had a wardrobe and a small chest of drawers but others had a bed only. Some of the boys and girls could only pile their clothing on the floor and others kept them in plastic shopping bags. It was explained to the Inspectors that the furniture provided had been unsatisfactory and much of it had been broken and would not be replaced until the planned programme of alterations and refurbishment was completed. However this is unlikely to occur until 1989.
- 6.27 Attention was drawn to the matresses and bedding provided. Staff and children agreed that it was difficult to keep the bedclothes on the mattresses during the night and frequently the boys and girls waken because they are cold. Some damage had been done to the fabric and structure of the bedrooms by the children when they were upset. The Inspectors found this area of House 10 to be quite depressing.

6.28 It is accepted that there are long term plans to bring this accommodation up to an acceptable standard and to make it secure. However in the short term something sould be done to improve the young pople's sleeping accommodation. It is recommended that storage space is provided for their personal clothing, that steps are taken to make the beds more comfortable, that some attention is paid to the other fixtures and fittings and that the bedrooms are decorated.

### The Staffing

- 6.29 House 10 has 9 full-time caring staff ie a senior residential social worker, a warden, 5 residential social workers and 2 housemothers. Two full-time teachers who provide education for the boys and girls also contribute to their care through doing extraneous duties in the evenings and at weekends. The duty roster is planned to allow 2 male and 3 female staff per shift on weekdays with weekend cover provided by 2 men and a women. There is collaboration between the teaching and caring staff and across the 2 shifts.
- Only one staff have CQSW, 2 hold CCRCCYP and 2 ICSC. Only one staff member was without a relevant qualification. There is a good blend of youth and experience and the staff group impressed as a committed well integrated team who work well together and adopt a professional approach to their task.

#### The Children

- 6.31 Referrals can be made to the Close Supervision Unit either directly from the Health and Social Services Board or from the other units on the Care side of Rathgael. The general criteria are as follows:-
  - the boy or girl has a history of absconding and is likely to abscond from any other description of accommodation, thereby placing himself or herself at physical, mental or moral risk;
  - he or she if kept in any other description of accommodation, is likely to cause self injury or injury to other persons.
- 6.32 Admissions can be made on a planned or emergency basis. The following procedures apply:-
  - for planned admissions a case conference is called involving representatives of management and staff from the referring agency, including those who have worked directly with the young person. They meet together with Rathgael staff including an assistant director/deputy assistant director, an intake social

- worker, psychologist, staff from Shamrock and appropriate people from other disciplines;
- admissions may b made in any emergency through the intake social worker but in this instance a case conference as at (1) above must be arranged within 72 hours.
- 6.33 The case of each boy or girl admitted to the Close Supervision Unit is reviewed at least once in each 5 week period to ensure that (a) the criteria for keeping the child in the close supervision unit continues to apply, and (b) the placement continues to be appropriate for the child at that stage.
- 6.34 During the first week of September 1987 the Close Supervision Unit had responsibility for 12 young persons, 8 girls and 4 boys. However 2 girls, who have been committed to the Centre for non-school attendance were at home on extended leave and another had absconded. Therefore only 5 girls and 4 boys were living on the premises.
- One girl who had previously absconded from short term care and was considered to be "at risk" had come to Rathgael on a Place of Safety Order. She was the responsibility of the Eastern Board but all of the others were committed on a Training School Order. Three of this group had spent between 7 and 8 months within the unit. One of them was going out to a YTP scheme during weekdays and spending weekends at home, another was looking for a job and a girl had attended school in Bangor. Staff within Rathgael felt that these young people still needed to remain in the Close Supervision Unit. However the Inspectors felt that because of the secure nature of this facility there may be a need for a more broadly based admission/reviewing panel, preferably with independent representation, and this is recommended.
- 6.36 However there was evidence also that many of the young persons living in the Unit were appropriately placed. Some had a high level of disturbance and a volatile temperament which has lead to unprovoked assaults on staff and on other residents. The following child profiles gives some indication of the type of problems faced by the Shamrock Staff:-

### NANCY

Nancy's referral outlined that she had a long standing problem in the community and this included references to her involvement in theft and assaults. It was felt that her behavioural difficulties were so extensive that she should come straight from the community into Shamrock. She has a loud and vociferous manner of communicating incorporating verbal threats and various idioms of speech.

## **RGL-23674**

Nancy mainly draws attention to herself using speech but this includes over-ruling conversations and thereby becoming domineering and antagonistic. Generally she is uneasy in or to one situations and dislikes eye contact Nancy is also very possessive of her relationships with her peers. She is demanding of staff time and can also be jealous, from time to time she is wary and untrusting. In relation to males, both peers and staff, her friendships take the form of love/hate relationships. Occassionally Nancy's loudness has resulted in generally bad feeling within the group and this can spill over into a temper tantrum. Her physical aggression can take the form of hitting, spitting, throwing objects and headbutting. She will also defy staff to force confrontations. Another concern is that Nancy shows no remorse and even though she may apologise the depth of feeling behind her words is questionable. Nancy is very self-centred, jealous and envious, she has low levels of patience and tolerance as well as being extremely petulant. Obviously many of her problems cross all of these sections and it is difficult to categorise many under one heading alone."

### Appraisal of House Ten

- 6.37 The staff of Shamrock are aware that the young people there can find the environment oppressive and this can exacerbate their problematic behaviour. They have taken steps to relieve this situation in co-operation with the teachers who work within the unit, through skilfully handling situations when they arise and by the introduction of some useful procedures. For example the residential staff try to anticipate difficulties and will intervene early to divert the young people from a possible collision course. Primary workers provide individual counselling sessions for the boys and girls twice weekly and if there is concern about a young person staff will make a check on him or her at 15 minutes intervals during the day and overnight. Another general procedure which has been introduced by the staff team is to hold a full meeting within 48 hours of any major incident involving the residents to examine its antecedents and consequences.
- 6.38 The teachers who are assigned to the unit also play their part. They are considered as team members and contribute to the general care and supervision of the boys and girls. They have devised a structured curriculum which ensures that each pupil attains basic standards in English, Maths etc but which gives them experience of problem solving, social and life skills, role playing, etc. The teachers have set the following objectives for the work in Shamrock:-
  - to provide a safe environment for the children to learn;

## **RGL-23675**

- 2. to guarantee them some progress in learning skills that they have found to be difficult or impossible to attain;
- to develop responsibility in each child so that they may move on to another school or to a YTP Scheme;
- 4. to work closely with the social work team so as to assist each child's development on an ongoing basis.
- 6.39 However the Inspectors found that the most common sanction used for misbehaviour by the young people was to send or to remove them to their bedrooms for a period. For serious incidents eg absconding, this can mean being sent to bed early on a number of consecutive nights. If a boy or girl is sent to their bedroom from the classroom then they may be also sent to bed early the same evening.
- 6.40 Unlike other units within the Centre, the bedrooms in Shamrock are locked when occupied by the young people ie during the day or night. This means that excluding the normal bedtimes some young people could accumulate a considerable number of hours spent under restraint ie locked in a single room. For example in the case of one girl who was returned to the unit after an absconding the following sanctions were agreed at a review:-

First week - 7.15 bedtime Second week - 7.30 bedtime Third week - 7.45 bedtime Fourth week - 8.00 bedtime Fifth week - 8.15 bedtime

It was difficult to calculate the number of hours accumulated by any of the children because all confinements were not recorded together in one place ie some are in the "punishment book" others on the child's file, etc. Therefore it is recommended that the system of recording confinements is reviewed to enable hours spent under restraint to be calculated. It is also recommended that no young person should exceed an aggregate of 72 hours within a 28 day period locked in his/her bedroom excluding the normal period between bedtime and the morning rise.

6.41 Presently the bedtime in House 10 is 9.15 pm. It is recognised that for at least one hour following this the staff on duty spend time settling the boys and girls down for the night and providing informal counselling. However bearing in mind the points made in the preceding paragraphs about time spent locked up it is recommended that the bedtime in Shamrock is brought into line with bedtimes in the other Adolescent Care Units.

## **RGL-23676**

- 6.42 The staff in the Close Supervision Unit make use of the recreational facilities on the Rathgael campus and also take the boys and girls out as frequently as possible. On such occasions one member of staff may be assigned to supervise a potential absconder. Staff and management agree that there is a need to provide an exterior play area in close proximity to the unit but with sufficient security to prevent someone from running away. Plans are in hand for this type of provision but it will be some time before it is available.
- 6.43 The teaching and social work staff of Shamrock have arranged to make use of the Runkerry Centre once in each quarter. During these visits constructive use has been made of the facilities there and on one occasion the boys and girls were involved in helping a party of handicapped children. These week-ends have been therapeutic for the young people from Shamrock and the staff group are commended for their enterprise.

### Daily Life (Adolescent Care/Shamrock)

- 6.44 On weekdays the boys and girls are wakened at approximately 7.30 am. However in each unit a young person helps out with the breakfast preparations and he or she may be called earlier ie at 7.00 am. All of the young people have chores to complete between rising and leaving the unit for morning assembly. Breakfast consists of cereal, tea and toast though the Inspectors were advised that when the central kitchen was operating a cooked meal was provided.
- 6.45 Boys and girls in the Adolescent Care Units who are on regular medication or who feel unwell go to the sick bay for attention at 8.30 am. At 9.00 am the young people from the Adolescent Care Units attend a morning service in the school chapel. They are accompanied by staff from the house units and the service is taken by a member of staff. After assembly the school day begins at 9.30 am.
- 6.46 The residents in the Close Supervision Unit do not go out to the morning service or take part in the sick parade. Instead grace is said before breakfast and one of the nursing staff visits Shamrock later in the morning. Lessons are also given within the Close Supervision Unit by teachers and these commence at the same time as those in the main school block.
- At 10.30 am there is a 15 minute break from school and the lunch period is between 12.45 and 2.00 pm. During these times the boys and girls return to their respective house units where they are supervised by the residential social work staff. The school day ends at 4.00 pm and the evening meal is taken at 4.30 pm approximately. Afterwards the young people can relax for the rest of the evening but staff offer a range of evening activities

# **RGL-23677**

using the recreational facilities available to them within the Centre. A snack supper is provided between 8.00 and and 8.30 pm following which showers/baths etc may be taken with the bedtime preparations following t 9.45 pm. The children are in bed by 10.00 pm though some of the day staff remain on duty until 10.30 pm. The night supervisors take charge from 10.00 pm and they make frequent checks on the young people during the night.

- 6.48 The daily routine as described above also applies to the Close Supervision Unit with some adjustments to accommodate an earlier bedtime (9.15 pm) and also to take account of the potential for many of the young people to abscond. Nevertheless they do have access to the Centres recreational facilities and the Shamrock staff do make use of these when it is thought prudent to do so.
- 6.49 It is the policy of the Care side of Rathgael to assist the young people to maintain regular contact with their homes and families throughout their period of residence. As far as is practicable many of them go home on Friday afternoon for the weekend, returning to the Centre on Sunday evening. Some also go home on trial during the week. For those remaining at Rathgael Saturday and Sunday are relaxed and less structured. Breakfast has to be over by 10.00 am but this does provide the opportunity for an extra couple of hours in bed. There is ample free recreational time but staff will also arrange outings or take the boys and girls out shopping on request and providing that transport is available. On Sundays some of the young people may attend church services together with staff and between 2.00 and 4.00 pm parents and relatives may visit.
- 6.50 Some of the house units take a daily newspaper and the boys and girls buy comics, magazines, etc with their own pocket money. They are free to write and receive letters but these are read by the staff in case they contain anything untoward. Telephone calls can be received in all of the units and within reason staff will allow the young people to speak to their callers. They may also make one 3 minute call out each week without charge though if others are permitted they may be asked to pay for them.

### Care of the Individual

6.51 Following assessment in one of the short-term care units boys and girls are allocated to one of the Adolescent Care Units at a meeting overseen by the director. The young person is advised of the outcome of the meeting and will be invited to the house unit for an evening meal and to meet the residents and staff. He or she will transfer within a few days. Prior to allocation his file and assessment reports are made available to the Adolescent Care Unit and one of the staff team will be appointed as

# **RGL-23678**

primary worker and accept responsibility for settling the young person into the house unit. Some of the Adolescent Care Unit staff told the Inspectors that while the background information collecte' during the assessment was useful a good deal of the observations made in the assessment report were only relevant to the environment in which it was carried out. In other words they had to help the young persons to adjust to life in a different part of the Rathgael Centre and to some extent they duplicated the work carried out in the reception units. This inevitably raises the issue of direct placements in the Adolescent Care Units of young people who arrive at the Centre already committed on a Training School Order. There is a precedent for this already as some young people come directly into Shamrock House. It is recommended that consideration be given to direct placement to the Adolescent Care Units of children committed on care grounds, thus avoiding a lengthy stay in Short Term Care as the options are already limited to one of two houses.

In any event staff of the respective long term units are involved in making a full assessment of the boys and girls living there using the Assessment Treatment Profile. One of them is the subject of a team discussion each Friday afternoon between 3.00 and 4.00 pm. Prior to the meeting the young persons primary worker collates any recent recordings made about the boy or girl on observation sheets, the unit diary and day book, and these are transferred to appropriate sections of the problem profile. The primary worker is responsible also for recording during the meeting which is chaired by a senior member of staff and attended by a psychologist. Positive and negative attributes are noted in the following broad areas:-

Physical, intellectual and educational, home and family, social skills, anti-social behaviour and personal problems. The process involves identifying the young persons presenting problems and targeting areas for remedial work.

### Reviews

6.53 A review is held on each young person at least once in every 3 months. However after one year in the Centre, and every quarter thereafter, a full progress report is made for the Rathgael Licensing Committee (a statutory body which can decide to release the young person from the Centre subject to certain conditions). Reports made to this Committee are presented by the primary workers who also inform the young persons afterwards of the Committee's decisions. The Inspectors felt that the boys and girls should be more actively involved in the reviewing process and it is recommended that management give this every consideration.

### Behaviour/Discipline

6.54 Staff on the Care side of Rathgael seek to control the behaviour of the young people using personal influence and by working through problems with them as they arise. Boys and girls are well supervised though this is more relaxed in the Adolescent Care Units than in Shamrock. The structured daily routine which permeates the Centre also assists in the control of the boys and girls albeit in a benign manner. Sending a young person to bed early is the most frequently used sanction for indiscipline.

### Marks System

- 6.55 On the other hand the general approach is to reward positive attitudes and behaviour through awarding marks to individuals and groups. The twin strategy used serves to focus on the needs and progress made by each boy and girl while at the same time promoting the cohesiveness of the group in the house units. Individual targets are set for the coming week at the unit meetings on Tuesday mornings and marks are allocated for the previous weeks performance using the following scale:-
  - 0 No effort to improve
  - 1 2 A slight improvement but could have been better
  - 3 4 A real effort made
    - 5 Excellent.

Basic pocket money is provided for all but a bonus is paid to those achieving more than 3 marks. There are also weekly targets set for the total group and any unit achieving this is awarded a bonus with the special privilege given to the unit achieving the greatest points score each month. Full details of the marks system and example of individual and group targets are given at Appendix C. The Inspectors wish to commend the operation of this progressive system of individual and group incentives. However they noted that marks are also awarded by the teachers for performance in school using different criteria. Therefore it is recommended that the school based marks are synchronised with those given in the Care units.

#### Grades/Pocket Money

6.56 Three grades are operated in the long-term care units. A boy or girl arriving in the Centre begins in grade 3 and as weekly marks are accumulated may progress to grades 2 or 1. The higher the grade achieved the greater are staffs' expectations of the young person in relation to behaviour and performance. Details of the grading system are set out in Appendix D.

6.57 The rate of pocket money paid is associated with the grade achieved. Currently the rates paid on the Care side of the Centre are as follows:-

Grade 3 - £1.50 Grade 2 - £2.05 Grade 1 - £3.00

In addition £5.00 is allowed for a birthday present and another £5.00 is given for Christmas. Each child resident on Christmas Day receives £20.

6.58 It was noted that the children's pocket money allowance is generally retained by the unit staff in a cash box. Each boy or girl has a card on which credits and debits are made. As part of their preparation for leaving residential care the Inspectors feel that every opportunity should be given to the young persons to have "hands on" experience of managing their own financial affairs and this is recommended.

### Smoking

- but those under 16 years of age may smoke cigarettes but those under 16 years of age can smoke only if parental permission is given. They must obtain their own cigarettes and hand them over to staff for safe keeping. Thereafter staff control smoking in 2 ways, (1) they limit the number of cigarettes smoked each day (on the Care side of the Centre 7 are allowed each day) and (2) smoking is restricted to certain designated areas within each unit. Regarding the above it was noted that there was no restriction on staff smoking ie they could smoke as frequently as they wished and in any part of the unit when they were on duty. The inspectors consider that this practice could be divisive and recommend that the Centre's smoking policy should apply to children and staff alike.
- 6.60 It is recognised that many of the boys and girls come to Rathgael with an already well established smoking habit and also that restricted smoking is better than free smoking. Nevertheless it is recommended that Management should review the present policy and practice with a view to introducing incentives for non smoking.

### Clothing

6.61 School uniforms are worn by the boys and girls on weekdays though after 4.00 pm they change into casual clothing. It is the Centre's policy that uniforms should be worn to the Centre's school and this applies even in Shamrock where education is provided on the premises. General care of their clothing is the responsibility of the young people but laundry, training, etc is organised by the housemother.

**RGL-23681** 

6.62 An initial clothing grant is made of £100 to any boy or girl committed to the Care side of the Centre. Thereafter there is an allowance of £2.00 per week for replacements/new items. At the end of the first year in the Centre a £40 bonus is given though up to £20 must be spent on the school uniform if any part of it has to be replaced. Full details of the scheme are set out at Appendix E. When personal clothing is to be purchased staff take the boys and girls shopping and advise them on size, style, etc.

### 7.0 YOUTH TREATMENT

- 7.1 The Youth Treatment facility on the campus lies to the right hand side of the main entrance. The physical provision consists of 3 main units, 2 double and one single. The single unit, House 4, also known as Fox Lodge is the secure facility, which at the time of the inspection was closed for refurbishing. It is due to become operational again in mid 1988. One double unit consists of House 5 (Reception) and House 6. For practical purposes and day to day operation these two units operate quite separately. The remaining double unit, embracing Houses 7 and 8, share the joint dining room and kitchen facility.
- 7.2 The aim of Youth Treatment, is "To provide a programme of care, control, assessment and treatment for delinquent boys which will ultimately reduce or prevent their further offending". A strategy, embracing referral, control, care, assessment, treatment and discharge is in operation as a means of achieving this primary aim.
- The senior deputy director is responsible to the director 7.3 for the day to day management of Youth Treatment. He is assisted by an assistant director, and a deputy assistant director. The assistant director has special responsibility for the oversight of the Secure Unit, House 4, and the deputy assistant director is responsible for the Reception Unit, House 5. The senior deputy director is responsible for the remaining units in Youth Treatment ie Houses 6, 7 and 8. In addition to the professional management of Youth Treatment each senior manager is responsible for another range of, what could be described as, estate duties. For example, the assistant director is responsible for Term Maintenance Contracts and the deputy assistant director supervises aspects of Health and Safety at Work, a major element of this being fire precautions, drills and procedures. The telephone system in relation to faults, operations etc is also the deputy assistant director's responsibility. Although the estate duties carried out by the assistant director and the deputy assistant director, are very necessary components of any residential establishment, it would seem that a disproportionate amount of their time is spent on these activities. The management team within Youth Treatment must concentrate on the professional social work task and to this end it will be necessary for the Management Board to assess if the estate duties, referred to above can be dealt with in a more effective way. Reference was made to this in Chapter 3 of the Report.

### Staffing

7.4 The staffing at unit level in Youth Treatment is as follows: 4 senior residential social workers; 2 wardens; 22 residential social workers and 4 housemothers. In addition to this group of staff, extranous duty is worked by 8 teachers, usually on one evening per week and at weekends. Night cover, ie 10 pm to 7.30 am is provided by a team of night supervisors and from time to time the establishment of Youth Treatment is supplemented by the employment of part-time temporary staff, who usually perform duty at the weekends.

- 7.5 The staff group represents a wide range of age, skills and qualifications. Of the group, 20 are males and 12 are females. No female holds a senior post. The night supervisors are all males, as are the teachers/instructors performing extrenuous duties.
- At present House 4, is being refurbished and as a result 7.6 the staff have been allocated to other units within Youth Treatment. Houses 4, 6, 7 and 8 are managed, at unit level by a senior residential social worker whilst the person in charge of reception (House 5) is designated as a warden. The anomalies in the grades of warden/senior residential social worker, are referred to in detail in Chapter 3 of this Report. In concert with the views expressed there it is recommended that a senior residential social worker be appointed to fill the unit management post in House 5. Similarly the post of warden and housemother should be phased out, through natural wastage, and thereafter the staffing within the units should be made up of one senior residential social worker and an agreed number of residential social workers. The new proposed role for the senior residential social worker will include responsibility for the provision of professional supervision to staff at unit level. absence of professional supervision was apparent in Youth Treatment and the implementation of a structured approach to supervision should be seen as a matter of urgency.
- 7.7 Each Wednesday a team leader's meeting is held. All senior managers attend and the meeting is conducted in a professional way with agendas and minutes being prepared. In turn the discussion and findings of the meeting are conveyed to staff at unit level where meetings, are also held weekly. The system of meetings ensures clear lines of communication and the process appears to work effectively.
- 7.8 The staff present as a competent, committed group, who have had to adopt to new practices and procedures during the course of the past 2 years. Although there was some evidence of traditional, institutional thinking, in the main the staff appeared to work well together and would see the needs of young people as being of paramount importance.

## The Needs and Problems of the Young People

- 7.9 The present segregated arrangements in Rathgael Centre mean in effect, that all of the young people in Youth Treatment have been committed to the Centre because of some delinquent act. A proportion of the young people have been transferred from the Care side where they had originally been committed on welfare grounds and following involvement in criminal offences had been transferred to Youth Treatment. On the census day there were 70 boys on roll in Youth Treatment. Of this number 38 were in residence, 19 were on extended leave, this number including 2 day attenders, 6 were at Runkerry Centre, 4 were in Lisnevin and there was one absconder.
- 7.10 The age range of the young people was from 14 to 17 years but 5 of the boys were under 14 and 6 of the resident group were over 17 years. In discussion with the staff they felt that none of the young people had been inappropriately placed. Almost all had received a variety of disposals from previous offences, before being made the subject of a Training School Order. The offence characteristics of the group was wide and varied, offences of theft, burglary and dishonesty, taking and driving away featured most commonly whilst a number of the boys had been committed to the Centre on sex-related offences.
- 7.11 In the section of the report dealing with the individual units, vignettes have been included to give an indication of the type of presenting problems confronting the residential staff. In general terms however the group of boys in Youth Treatment present considerable problems of management. Many display varying degrees of disorder, aggressiveness and disturbance. In keeping with the now well established trend in child care the boys coming into Youth Treatment are more difficult to control and staff have had to develop a range of skills in order to enable them to carry out a form of meaningful intervention.

## Appraisal of Individual Units

7.12 The members of the House 4 staff team, although working in other parts of the Centre were anxious to meet as a group with the Inspector. The residential social workers have a strong sense of identity and commitment to providing treatment to young people in security. Although they had only functioned together as a team for a relatively short time, it was evident that they had applied considerable thought to the task. In the time leading up to the opening of Fox Lodge they had prepared together a philosophy and operational strategy and had sought to examine their role closely. It might be of further help to the group if they have the opportunity to visit a comparable unit elsewhere within the United Kingdom before they are reconstituted as a house team. It is recommended that consideration be given to the

**RGL-23685** 

feasibility of such a visit. It is appreciated however that this would be subject to financial and other operational constraints within the Centre.

### House 5

- 7.13 House 5, known as Gibraltar or Reception (YT) is similar in design to the other units on this side of the campus. Although part of a double unit, adjoining House 6, it operates quite autonomously. It has a capacity for 12 boys and at the time of the inspection there were 7 young people in residence, 6 committed and one on remand. In addition one boy, who was also on remand, had been removed to Lisnevin on a 5 week order. The group of residents tend to be short-term and unlike the other units most of the boys are in residence at the weekends. Accommodation on the ground floor comprises of a lounge, office, washing area and quiet room, the latter being used also as a smoking room. The dining room is actually part of the staff accommodation which adjoins the end of the unit. Although a microwave oven is provided to assist with keeping food warm, because from time to time boys on court appearances may not be present at meal times, the kitchen in the unit, a small domestic facility, is most unsuited for preparing even limited meals on site. There are no unit laundry facilities. The senior management of Youth Treatment is aware of these shortcomings and it is noted, that in keeping with the other units within Youth Treatment, House 5 is in the programme for long-term refurbishing.
  - 7.14 House 5 materially is rather sparse. There was little evidence of personal belongings in the boys' bedrooms, this may be due to the transitory nature of the group but some encouragement could be given to boys to have some personal belongings in their rooms. Again the lounge could be improved by the introduction of pictures, murals, plants and with a little thought the environment could be improved. The bedroom accommodation consists of 4 single rooms and 2 4-bedded dorms. Other accommodation upstairs consists of an office, stores and a night toilet.
  - 7.15 Although the material provision is sparse in places the unit team operates in an effective manner. From discussion with staff and an examination of the existing admission procedures, it appears that practices are good. The importance and sensitivity of good admission procedures is an important part of the task and this is recognised by the team. Record keeping is of a good standard. All of the records were up to date, well-organised and follow the pattern of record-keeping which operates throughout the Youth Treatment sector. The young people attend a separate educational unit, which is adjacent to House 5. A teacher is responsible for the oversight of the educational programme and he also contributes towards the assessment process which is a

fundamental requirement of House 5. The following child profile gives some indication of the type of problems faced by the staff in House 5.

#### WINSTON

"Winston's father and mother were legally separated in 1978; a divorce was granted in 1985 and Winston's father was remarried in the same year. Winston is the youngest of 4 full siblings but has one younger half brother (the child of his mother and her cohabitee, born in May 1981) with whom Winston has shared a home. There is now an infant half-sister (the child of his father and his present wife, Yvonne) but she has never been part of Winston's household. Winston's mother has had long term difficulties in establishing and maintaining adequate control over her family's behaviour and particularly so with respect to Winston. All four children were placed in residential care in June 1980 due to short comings in the home. Fit Person Orders were sought and granted a health and social services board in respect of all four children. By June 1984 the four children had been successfully phased home again, Winston being the last of the four to get home. In May 1985 Winston had to be readmitted to residential care and although he had maintained contact with his home and family, Winston has remained in residential care or foster care, apart from a period at home from August to December 1986, until his admission as a subject of a Training School Order in July 1987. Winston had no previous criminal record prior to his committal. He had however been responsible for causing considerable damage in 1985 to property at a children's home and also in 1986 whilst resident in hospital, to the roof and to parked vehicles. He was also recommitted in September for other offences including unnecessary suffering deliberately caused to bantams and rabbits, who were drowned, had their necks wrung or were thrown alive and dead to two guard dogs. With adults Winston was not very communicative but sought attention often through sullen refusal to conform or co-operate. Given attention and/or a new project or prospect he could be quite co-operative and pleasant. With his peer group Winston sought recognition and excitement through disruptive activity but generally only succeeded in becoming the butt of the group as a result of his poor survival skills. His social functioning availability was much more in line with his depressed, academic achievement than with the estimated low average level of intellectual potential."

### House 6

7.16 This unit can provide accommodation for 15 young people and 13 were in residence. The unit provides for the older boys in Youth Treatment where independence training and preparation for discharge are primary objectives. Of the group of 13 in residence, 5 were involved in YTP/work

situations and one was receiving education in one of the local schools. It is worth noting that each of the boys on a YTP Scheme, who receive £28.50 per week are required to contribute £10 towards their board and lodgings. A further £10 is placed in saving and the remaining £8.50 is disposable income. In some instances fines to courts are paid by the school with instalments being deducted from the boys income. Section 154(1) Children and Young Persons Act (NI) 1968 provides that where a young person is in remunerative work the managers of a training school may deduct "such weekly sums towards their expenses as the Ministry may determine". It has been decided by Social Security that YTP schemes cannot be regarded as remunerative work and that the monies received are a training allowance. Consequently it is recommended that the practice of making deductions towards expenses from young people on YTPs be discontinued.

- 7.17 The unit is pleasantly furnished and in-keeping with the other units include facilities such as snooker, table tennis and table games. The regime within House 6 is fairly structured. In the words of the senior residential social worker the boys are treated as young adults where standards of behaviour are clearly spelt out. The group of boys are quite troublesome at times and their behaviour outside of the Centre often results in re-offending. This inevitably leads to considerable interaction between the residential staff, the police and the courts.
- 7.18 During the summer of this year, House 6 planned a holiday with a difference. The boys and some staff spent a week at Castle Archdale in County Fermanagh. Seemingly the project was a great success, not only in terms of the enjoyment experienced by the boys but of the useful and beneficial relationships that developed between boys and staff.
- 7.19 The records kept in the unit are comprehensive and up to date. Some of the record keeping is peculiar to House 6 and reflects a structured approach to administration. It was noted that in the office in the unit a covered wall display has been erected. This display lists all the boys in the unit and the agreed treatment aims for each. This ensures that all staff can see at a glance the plans for each boy. This is a useful tool, used as an aide memoire and shows the senior residential social worker and the team have a reflective approach to their work.
- 7.20 The staff group in House 6 comprises of 7 persons; 5 males and 2 females, which includes the housemother. Female staff are under-represented and, although working with physically mature 17 year olds can be difficult, and despite the reservations of some of the male staff in the unit, Management should ensure that as far as possible, a reasonable balance of male/female residential social

workers is maintained and this is recommended. The following is a pen picture of one resident in House 6.

#### JAMES

"James was brought into care at birth and placed with a family who were short term pre-adoption foster parents. James, at the age of 4 years he was adopted by the family and according to them was made fully aware of his adoptive status at an early stage. James has two older brothers who are at University and consequently spend most of their time away from home. Over the past 5 years there has been conflict and confrontation caused by James' act of stealing from the home and also from the homes of neighbours. This behaviour lead to admission to a number of residential establishments and finally to Rathgael Centre. James was transferred from House 7 to the Secure Unit in Youth Treatment earlier this year due to suicidal tendencies. It should be noted that this problem has not manifested itself during his stay in House 6. Apart from 3 abscondings during his stay in Rathgael James has really tried to modify his behaviour to such a degree that he has been granted day leave on several occasions to his home, which according to his parents, has gone quite well. James' progress has resulted in recommending him to be returned to House 7. Due to complaints from the boys in House 7 regarding bullying, it was decided that James should be transferred to House 6 where he would be with boys of his own age. James is a very confused and disturbed young man who has been referred to the Adolescent Psychological and Research Unit (APRU). He suffered a head injury when he was 4 years of age and the possibility of minimal brain damage is being investigated."

#### House 7

7.21 This Unit is staffed by a senior residential social worker, 4 residential social workers, a housemother and 2 extraneous duty staff. 16 boys were enrolled and there were 13 in residence. House 7, known also as Musgrave and adjoining House 8, Balmoral, provides accommodation for a younger group of boys whose ages range from 13 to 15 years. Just prior to the inspection 3 boys had been transferred "to a more mature environment", presumably House 6. This had been brought about by prolonged incidents of bullying. The accommodation unit is similar to the other units in Youth Treatment. Sleeping accommodation consists of one 5-bedded dorm, two 4-bedded dorms and two single rooms. The bedroom furniture includes wardrobes, chest of drawers, but few bedroom chairs. The floors are covered with carpet tiles and the decor is a mixture of wallpaper and a matching matt finish paint. There was evidence of personal possessions around the unit.

- 7.22 The environment downstairs is pleasant and warm. The dining room is shared with the staff and boys of House 8. The well equipped kitchen or servery consists of sterilising sinks, heated serving counters, washing machine, fridge and storage space. It was noted that there is a sign in this kitchen prohibiting boys from operating the washing machine/tumbler drier. This points to the whole area of independence training, access to washing machines, cooking, ironing and life skills in general. This subject will be referred to later in this section of the report.
- 7.23 The condition of the ablution area, as in all of the units is quite unsatisfactory in terms of design. The toilet and showering area is kept clean but sadly it reflects the rather institutional design and thinking of the approved schools of the 1960s.
- 7.24 The records, both administrative and case files were examined and all were found to be kept up to date and the standard of recording was satisfactory. The Inspector had the opportunity to attend the weekly Assessment Treatment Profile meeting in the unit which is held on a Friday afternoon. In addition to the house staff the meeting was attended by members of senior management team and the senior psychologist from the APRU. The following pen picture describes one of the results in House 7.

#### LEE

"In August 1984 the Cooper family were first referred to Social Services when Lee's parents were experiencing problems in exercising control over the 3 elder boys. This situation of family tensions did not improve despite intensive work undertaken by Social Services and in February 1985 the two elder boys had to be placed in a children's home for 8 weeks for the family situation to be reassessed. In May 1985 after committing a number of offences and further breakdown in relations in the home, Lee was admitted to Rathgael on a Place of Safety Order. He was admitted on 3 further occasions on Place of Safetys and subsequently on the last admission in April 1986 was made the subject of a Training School Order. In April 1986 Lee was placed (as were all the children in the Cooper household) on the Non-Accidental Injury Registrar following an isolated incident when Mr Cooper struck Lee and perforated an eardrum. In April 1987 Lee was transferred to a long-term unit in Youth Treatment where his brother had already been placed in July 1986. Lee presents as a likeable boy but is easily bored, who will occasionally test boundaries, showing, when not given his own way both severe physical and verbal aggressive behaviour. However, firm and consistent handling has shown a positive improvement in Lee's behaviour. It was felt in June 1987, Lee's progress had been sufficient to consider him for extended leave from the Centre. However, in July Lee committed 7 further offences of theft and the seriousness of this and the deterioration of his relationship with his mother and father over the holiday period was such that the possibility of extended leave in September was temporarily suspended. Lee remains in the long-term unit where further intensive work is being carried out with the family relationships and Lee's offending behaviour."

#### House 8

- 7.25 At the time of the inspection there were 13 beds occupied in this 15 place unit. Amongst the population of 13 there was one absconder and 3 of the boys were off on a Ocean Yacht Club Master Builders Course for the best part of the first week. Prior to the inspection the boys had been informed of the visit and the role of the Inspector. The age range of the boys in this unit is 14-16 years and few are transferred unless their behaviour, in terms of bullying, is beyond control. It is understand that the group are fairly manageable and co-operative. In terms of an absconder the boys will assist in looking for him and if sighted will chase him within the campus. At the time of the inspection the staff group were coping with a particularly difficult boy who is partially sighted.
- 7.26 There is a pleasant, relaxed feel to House 8. Thoughtful use has been made of colours, plants and fabrics. It is the only unit on the Youth Treatment side, where the boys have access to their own record player. All of the units have music centres but these are located in the office, staff operate them and control the volume. There is also a music centre in House 8 but the provision of a fairly basic, robust record player gives the boys the opportunity of choice and the availability to operate it themselves when (within reason) they wish. The lounge is adequately furnished with a selection of easy chairs, coffee table, room divider, unit book case and snooker table. It must be said that most of the units have the same range of furnishings but the personality of the staff and the tasteful use of the furnishings does much to enhance a homely atmosphere. Upstairs there are two four-bedded rooms, one five-bedded and two single rooms. Personal possessions are much in evidence. The matching pillow cases, duvet covers and curtains give a pleasant, colourful atmosphere to the sleeping accommodation.
  - 7.27 The staff team consists of one senior residential social worker, 4 residential social workers, a housemother and extraneous duty staff. The team presents as being well integrated and committed. An examination of the administrative records and case files show these to be kept up to date and the recording in the case files is of a satisfactory standard. The following pen picture describes one of the boys in House 8.

#### JOHN

"John is a fairly passive boy and very much a loner. From an early age he has been the target of serious bullying by his peers. This would appear to be the result of John's extremely low standard of personal hygiene, his inability to control flatulence and undoubtedly his submissive nature and small light stature. John has appeared before the court on three separate occasions. The first was in September 1984 when he was charged with making hoax bomb calls. He received a Training School Order which was varied on appeal to a 2 year Probation Order. In May 1985 John again came before the court charged with making a false fire call and was dealt with by way of a fine. In November 1986 he appeared for the third time before the court for fire-raising activity and criminal damage around and inside the school he attended. The court ordered that John be remanded to Rathgael Centre for psychiatric and psychological assessment. In January 1987 John was made the subject of a training school order. Whilst in Rathgael he continues to be bullied by members of any group in which he is placed. His individual programme of care incorporated training in social and personal habits in self-assertiveness. Never at any time did John present a management problem and like the Probation Service, the staff of Rathgael found John a helpful, pleasant boy whose offending was due more to his being subject to a chronic persistent pattern of harrassment and the serious emotional pressures resulting from this, rather than any want in criminality. John is currently attending a Youth Training Programme in his local area having been given extended leave status from the Centre in September 1987. If the extended leave continues to operate smoothly it is intentioned to licence him in January 1988."

## Daily Life

In examining the daily life in Youth Treatment it should be borne in mind that although there are 4 separate units currently in operation, each with their own ethos and approach to the residential task, by and large the same pattern of daily life is followed almost uniformly. The day begins for the boys when they are called at 7.30 am. There are some exceptions to this, for example, boys in each unit, who assist with breakfast, collect milk at the central kitchen and those who may be going out to a variety of work schemes are called at 7.00 am. The duties performed at breakfast are carried out for 2 weeks at a time and the boy carrying out this function receives extra pocket money. Following breakfast at 7.55 am a range of tasks are carried out by the boys and these include washing the breakfast dishes, dusting, bed making etc. These tasks are rotated on a fornightly basis. At present most breakfasts consist of tea, toast and cereals but when the central kitchen is fully operational hot meals are often served. After the morning tasks have been completed those who wish may have a cigarette, usually taken in the quiet room or in the wash area. A "sick parade" is called at 8.45 am. This is an opportunity for any boy, who may be feeling unwell, to visit the sick bay. This process is repeated at 1.30 pm and 4.00 pm daily. The issue of sick parades is dealt with in detail in paragraph 11.10.

- Assembly is held at 9.00 am when all staff available are encouraged to attend with the children. School follows until 10.30 am when the boys return to their units for a 15 minute break. They are accompanied back to school by staff and return for lunch at 12.45 pm. After lunch the boys return to school at 2.00 pm and the school day finally finishes at 4.00 pm. From that time onwards boys are free to relax, read, play games or watch TV. After 6.00 pm a wide range of recreational activities are available both on and off the campus. These include swimming, padder tennis, snooker, indoor bowling, model making and, when transport is available, groups may visit local leisure centres or other places of interest. Most recreational activities finish by 9.00 pm.
- 7.30 Supper is served between 8.00 and 9.00 pm and usually consists of fruit, crisps, milk or tea and usually taken in the common room or at times in the dining room. Between supper and bed time boys can take showers and the pace of the group is gradually wound down. Bedtime is between 9.45 and 10.00 pm and late bedtimes are rare. The night supervisors come on duty at 10.00 pm and the last of the day staff finishes at 10.30 pm. The boys are locked in their rooms by the night supervisor and they are visited by him at half-hourly intervals until midnight and hourly thereafter. All of these visits are recorded.
- 7.31 Saturday and Sunday are fairly relaxed and unstructured. A considerable number of the boys will be on week-end leave and those who are not or who are on school-based leave, may lie in until 9.00 9.30 am. Sometimes trips are organised to places of interest, forest parks, the folk museum, sporting events etc. Boys are free to have family visiting and those on centre based leave may go out to Bangor by themselves. Occasionally boys are permitted to stay up if there is a late programme on TV but it is understood that this is regarded as a privilege and it is not a standard practice. It is recommended that this practice be reviewed.
- 7.32 With the exception of House 5 (Reception) where letters and telephone calls are intercepted, boys are encouraged to write letters and make or receive telephone calls. In general a good rapport exists between staff and boys in the units. There are many instances of good practice and the boys appear to be content and well cared for. The question of the quality and quantity of the food came up in all of the units and was the subject of ongoing debate.

# **RGL-23693**

- throughout the inspection. This issue will be referred to in another part of this report.
- 7.33 In Youth Treatment the staff, although they eat the same food, sit at separate tables. It is understood that in House 4 staff and boys eat together and this has proved to be a very worthwhile experience in terms of informal discussion, where often mealtimes become a time of social exchange, discussion takes place and frequently goes on well beyond the allotted meal time. The staff table arrangement tends to give an elitist impression and it is recommended that this practice be discontinued. It is also recommended that the old training school phrases, which refer to practices, long since discontinued at the Centre should slip from common usage.
- 7.34 Bedtimes are much too rigid. At weekends a more flexible approach should be taken. The boys should be allowed to stay up to watch late night TV, within reason, if they wish. Similarly if they want to lie in a little longer this should be facilitated. The logic behind the ritualistic locking up is unclear. The practice varies from unit to unit. Although the doors are locked from the outside, the boys are free to open them from the inside, with the exception of House 5. The Inspectors were told that locking up was to enable the boys to settle down, to prevent too much horseplay and "invasions" from the boys in other dorms. If a boy wishes to lock his door he may do so. The night supervisor can still get access by using his master key. In some cases there is a symbolism to the locking up that is considered unnecessary and it is recommended that this practice should stop. It should be borne in mind that when the Secure Accommodation Regulations come into force, within the next few years, the locking up function will no longer be available. The early bedtime is centred round the belief that the boys should be in bed and settled before the last of the day staff goes off duty at 10.30 pm. Proposals regarding residential social workers sleeping in and a reorganised night cover are referred to in Chapter 3. It is accepted that these proposals will have implications for staff. However, it must be stressed that residential social work should be child-centred and their needs are paramount.

### Care of the Individual

7.35 All of the boys arriving in Youth Treatment are placed in House 5. Essentially the group of boys there fall into two main categories ie, those on remand and who have further court appearances pending and those who have been made the subject of a Training School Order. The latter category remains there during an initial period of assessment of approximately 6 weeks. House 5 plays an important role in the process. The attitude and behaviour of many boys is moulded by a sympathetic and sensitive approach to reception. Of course there are administrative

# RGL-23694

- procedures to be gone through, records to be complete, medical examinations to be carried out but these appear to be handled in a sensitive and professional way.
- 7.36 The keeping of the boys formal record commences at this point. Records are kept in a ring folder and are divided into four main categories viz:- Personal History, Development Report, Assessment Treatment Profile, the Post and Pre-admission Documents. During the assessment a detailed Assessment Treatment Profile, is completed and forms the basis of the allocation report. The completion of the report is the responsibility of the primary worker. An allocation meeting is held to decide which unit the boy should be assigned to. All allocations are overseen by the director.

#### Visiting

7.37 Every effort is made to maintain links between the boys and their families. Visiting varies slightly from unit to unit. In House 5 committed boys may be visited between the hours of 2.00 pm and 4.00 pm each Sunday and in addition remand boys may be seen by parents on Wednesdays during the same hours. Parents may also visit at other times usually in the evenings by arrangement with house staff. Visiting usually takes place in the dining room in House 5 but in the other units more freedom of movement is permitted and if the weather is fine visiting can take place outside the units where the boys and their visitors are free to make use of the extensive grounds in the Centre, although in practice this is usually adjacent to the units. Staff make visitors feel welcome but visiting is quite limited because in practice most boys tend to go home at weekends, depending upon their gradings.

### Reviews

A comprehensive system of reviews of children is in operation in Youth Treatment. Reviews are multi-disciplinary, with residential social workers, psychologists, teachers and where appropriate nursing staff taking part. The Assessment Treatment Profile is probably the most comprehensive method of identifying problem areas, allocating tasks and delineating follow-up action to be taken. Each boy's file gives clear details of the dates of the review. After the initial review, which takes place within one month of the arrival at the Centre, the boys are then reviewed "internally" every 3 months. The internal review, chaired by the senior residential social worker at Unit level is usually held on a Friday afternoon, the review concentrates on the main problem areas in the boy's life and includes physical problems, intellectual and educational, home and family, the social skills, anti-social problems and personal problems. Each of these sections are sub-divided into a

**RGL-23695** 

- checklist of detailed problem areas. This checklist is followed in detail throughout the conduct of the review.
- At the Ind of one year in residence a synopsis of the boy's progress/situation is presented to the External Review. In statutory terms the External Review is in fact the Licensing Committee, although as presently constituted their remit extends beyond the formal logistics of Licence. For example, if a boy is granted extended leave this is brought to the attention of the External Review Committee for their attention and approval. After the one year review the boys are reviewed again at 3 monthly intervals. The Inspectors would wish to draw attention to the now well established practice of children attending and contributing, both verbally and increasingly in writing, to their own reviews. Frequently primary workers let young people see the reports that are being presented to reviews and the subject is invited to comment upon them. In Rathgael Youth Treatment, no boy attends either of the review meetings mentioned earlier. They are given some feedback about the outcome of the meeting but in the Inspector's view this falls short of the desired practice of fuller involvement. It is recommended that young people should be given the opportunity to participate in their review. The speed of implementation of this policy and the degree of involvement is a matter of professional judgement but the decision implicit in the implementation of this policy is well within the skill and competence of the staff involved.
- 7.40 The degree of skill involved in the chairing of the unit reviews varies greatly. Because of the time element involved and the extensive nature of the reviews (some reviews extend over 2 Friday afternoon meetings) it is recommended that the chairing of the reviews become a function of senior management. It is recommended that the format of the quarterly review should be examined in connection with the APRU as the present practice of adhering rigidly to the checklist is not always the most effective use of time.

## Behaviour/Discipline

7.41 Many of the boys come to Youth Treatment from situations where behaviour was regarded as uncontrollable and discipline was non-existent or inconsistent. Discipline and order is maintained by close supervision and where boundaries of acceptable behaviour are clearly defined. Each week marks are allocated towards behaviour and attitude and these are major components of the system. A variety of sanctions are imposed for indiscipline. These include extra work, both in class and in the units, cancellation of outings, deprivation of television, early bed and in exceptional circumstances deprivation of leave, but this is only possible with the approval of the deputy director. It is the role of senior staff to ensure that

staff do not impose excessive sanctions. In some cases of vandalism or damage to school property fines are imposed and the money is deducted from the boy's pocket money. Senior staff ensure that fines are of such order that they are not made impossible for the boys to repay.

#### Marks System

- 7.42 The marks system referred to above is the Centre's way of monitoring, on a weekly basis, the performance of a unit and in particular the individual boys who live together in the group. It points up areas where there has been an improvement or a deterioration in behaviour. Each boy in Youth Treatment can earn up to a maximum of 10 points per week. Five marks are allocated by the school and the remainder by the residential staff in the boys' unit. Guidelines for the allocation of marks are issued to staff. Boys are placed in grades 1 to 3, depending upon the number of marks they have accrued. The range in the grades is as follows: grade 1: over 200, grade 2: over 120 and grade 3: 0 to 119. The marks guidance indicate that: 1 to 2 marks shows little or no effort, 3 is average with reasonable behaviour, 4 is outstanding effort and 5 not often reached! The grade a boy achieves determines the rate of his pocket money and the frequency of his week-end leave. In grade 3 leave is granted one week-end in 3, grade 2 two week-ends in three and grade 1 every week-end. In addition boys in grade 1 are permitted to go out one evening per week between Monday and Thursday. Week-end leave extends from 1 pm on Friday to 8.30 pm on Sunday for all boys in Grade 1. Boys in grades 2 and 3 who live in Belfast are collected at 4.30 pm. However, a boy in Grade 2 or 3 living outside of Belfast is also collected at the later time of 8.30 pm.
- 7.43 The present arrangements mean that transport has to be provided to Belfast twice on a Sunday, picking up boys at York Road Station, Central Station and the Albert Clock. This seems to be a cumbersome arrangement and it is recommended that all weekend leave should finish with the one pick-up time at 8.30 pm. It has been argued that earlier pick-up encourages boys to work towards achieving grade 1. There may be some substance in this argument apart from the boys living outside Belfast, to whom grading becomes irrelevant. In terms of cost and staff time a standardised approach to picking up seems a more reasonable arrangement.
- 7.44 Seemingly a different approach to marks is in operation on the Care Side of the Centre. The deputy director (education) is in the process of reviewing the method of allocating the "education" marks. Consequently it now seems the time is right to review the entire marks system throughout the Centre and this is recommended.

### Pocket Money

7.45 In Youth Treatment pocket money is allocated according to the grades, that the boy has attained. The rates are as follows:— grade 1: £3; grade 2: £2.05; grade 3: £1.50. An allocation of £5.00 is made for a birthday present and a similar amount is made for Christmas presents.

### Smoking

- 7.46 Many of the boys arriving in the Centre, have well established patterns of smoking. Boys are allowed to smoke 5 cigarettes daily, usually spread out over the waking day. Those under 14 years of age are only permitted to smoke with parental approval. Smoking is restricted to downstairs in the interests of safety and here the boys must smoke in either the quiet room or in the ablution area. In relation to smoking there are 2 issues to be considered:
  - Management should review the current policy and give consideration to introducing incentives for non-smoking.
  - ii. Staff smoke freely whilst on duty including those times when boys are present. The attitude towards smoking appears to be more relaxed in the evenings and at weekends. Whilst not wishing to restrict staff smoking, as this is a personal matter, residential staff should be aware of the habit of smoking when the boys are not permitted to. This practice sets up double standards which can result in difficulties in residential care. To this end it is recommended that management review the whole policy of smoking and this should apply uniformly throughout the Centre.

## Clothing

- 7.47 The boys in Youth Treatment, who attend school, wear a school uniform. This consists of dark slacks, grey shirts and blue sweaters. The boys who are in vocational training in workshops or assigned to tradesmen throughout the Centre ie joinery, gardening etc wear green sweaters and jeans. After the school/vocational day the boys change into casual clothes. All of the clothing, personal and school uniforms is laundered, either in the units or centrally. The housemothers are responsible for the supervision and organisation of laundry and the allocation of clothing.
- 7.48 An initial clothing grant of £60 is made in respect of each boy and this is topped up at a rate of £10 per month. This allowance is for personal clothing and does not involve school uniforms. When clothing is being purchased by boys, staff take them shopping and give advice on

**RGL-23698** 

suitability and size. It is understood that there is some imbalance in the rates of money allocated for clothing between Care and Youth Treatment. It is recommended that management examine this policy and determine if there is a need to implement an equitable arrangement between both sectors on the campus.

7.49 Since reorganisation and the segregation of the school two years ago, a new dynamic has been encouraged throughout Youth Treatment. Much change has taken place and staff have accepted many of the changes with varying degree of enthusiasm. Sadly some of the old institutional practices are still in evidence. The training school terminology is still used, albeit automatically at times. Sick parades, severy boy, stand easy are all left over phrases from the past.

#### 8.0 COMMUNITY CARE TEAM

#### Staffing

8.1 There are six members of staff; three men and three women. The head of community care was appointed 6 months ago having been senior social worker for 5 years. The staffing structure consists of:-

Head of Community Care

- 1 Intake Social Worker
- 3 Field Social Workers (After Care)
- 1 Social Worker East Side Project (Employed by the Eastern Health and Social Services Board).

One member of the team retired during the inspection. The head of community care hopes to fill the vacancy as soon as possible.

- 8.2 The age range of the staff varies from 29 up to 64, the average age of a team member being 48. The length of time in their current post varies from 6 months to 12 years, the average being 5 years. The length of time in the training school service varies from 4 years to 24 years, the average being 15 years. The length of time in residential child care work varies from 6 years to 25 years, the average being 15 years. Thus there is a high level of experience and expertise in the staff.
- 8.3 The staff are all professionally qualified holding the CQSW or equivalent. One member of staff holds the Child Care Certificate obtained before CQSW was introduced. In addition one member of staff has a degree and another the Certificate in Social Welfare Studies.
- 8.4 Some of the staff have attended a variety of courses. One member attended one conference and another member 4 courses. Whilst the Inspectors appreciate the difficulty in making time available to attend courses, nevertheless they feel it is important for staff to attend courses, firstly relating to specialist work in the training school arena and secondly, also to keep abreast of new developments and techniques generally in the field of social work. It is recommended that all members of staff be encouraged to attend training courses as a regular part of their professional development.
- 8.5 The intake social worker acts as a study superviser for the CSS scheme which she finds interesting although time-consuming. Some students from CQSW courses spend a placement at the Centre.

# **RGL-23700**

- 8.6 Every week an informal staff meeting is held which normally lasts about 1 hour. It is used to exchange information, receive instructions, to discuss individual children, to discuss the operation of the group and as a tool for staff development. These meetings are not recorded. Agendas are not prepared in advance. Some years ago in 1976 a monthly liaison meeting was set up for all Social Work staff based in training schools, called the Training School Social Work Group. These meetings ceased this year.
- 8.7 Each member of staff has a job description and therefore each has a clear idea of the role. The head of community care team feels that his staff operate well as a group. They share their problems and he tries to be consistent in his approach to each member. He appears to have a satisfactory and open relationship with the staff who seem to feel involved in the training school and its philosophy. He is a member of the professional association, the British Association of Social Workers and encourages staff to take advantage of opportunities for professional training and development. He also attends the Board and Review meetings and writes up the minutes of the review meetings.
- 8.8 However, personal professional development of each member of the team could be enhanced if formal supervision were to take place. Although staff are professionally qualified and experienced, nevertheless all would benefit from professional support and a formalised system of supervision. The Inspectors were disappointed to find that such a system had not been established and recommend that this be introduced.
- 8.9 The community care team work normal office hours 9am-5pm and are available during this time to cope with referrals and queries. However the social worker on the East Side project and head of community care work 2 evenings a week on the project. To compensate for this time, Wednesday morning is taken as leave. After 5pm individual members can be contacted at home. The head of the community care team carries a bleep and can be contacted at any time as can the social worker on the East Side Project.
- 8.10 The community care team are based in different offices throughout the Centre. The head of community care's office is on the ground floor of the administrative block, near to other senior managers of the Centre which has advantages for easy communication. The intake social worker is based in Short-Term Care, the field social worker for Youth Treatment has an office in part of the Centre. The two field workers (After Care) are based in an office at the opposite end of the administrative block. This office was in turmoil when the Inspectors visited. An additional telephone and carpet needs to be installed and rubbish moved out.

- 8.11 Although there appears to be no difficulty with getting reports typed up etc, there is no team clerk to undertake routine administrative tasks, such as filing, taking messages, do photocopying etc. It is recommended that management should review the administrative arrangements for the community care team.
- 8.12 All of the staff were seen during the course of the Inspection. The staff group appears to be well settled and committed to the aims and objectives. They were satisfied with the level of support but commented on the lack of formal supervision and of time available to attend training courses. No member of staff had any complaints.
- 8.13 The social worker attached to the East Side Project is outposted from the community care team. The project is based in accommodation above shops near to the Holywood Arches. The office accommodation here consists of a large room with two desks, telephones, filing cabinets and chairs. Routine administration such as photocopying and typing is undertaken at Rathgael Centre and there seem to be no problem over this arrangement. As the social worker is invariably alone no difficulties are experienced in providing interview facilities.
- 8.14 Each member of the team has a job description and is aware of their role. Conditions of service are similar to those experienced by social work staff in the Boards.

#### Functions

- 8.15 One of the most important aims of the Centre is to return the young people to the community as soon as possible, although it has to be said that an increasing number of residents have no home base to return to. An important emphasis is placed on the young people returning to the community recognising that intensive support will have to be given if the young person is to survive at home or in some other community setting.
- 8.16 Each member of the team has a specific resposibility for different units within the Centre:-

Youth Treatment Intake Adolescent Care Units

- 8.17 The intake social worker works closely with the primary worker in the unit and with fieldworkers collates all information for the initial cash conference. She acts also as a gatekeeper for referrals to the psychiatrist.
- 8.18 One field social worker's role is mainly related to the Youth Treatment side particularly with work on the problem profiling of the children. There is also a great deal of

liaison with teaching staff and liaison with courts, and magistrates.

- 8.19 The role of the other two field social workers is social work support to the Adolescent Care Units. One member retired in the middle of the inspection. It is hoped to appoint a replacement as soon as possible. The work was split according to the area of origin of the young person, with one worker taking the 'North' part of West Belfast and Antrim, the other, East, South and part of West Belfast, and the remainder of the Province. From now until a replacement is appointed, this worker will be trying to cover the work according to need.
- 8.20 Referrals are made to the team for a wide variety of reasons:-

## a. Monitoring Home Leave

House units request visits to be carried out during week-end and other holiday periods. A member of the team calls to monitor home leave and assist the family or young person with any problems.

### b. Locating Accommodation

The shortage of suitable accommodation for adolescents makes this task increasingly difficult. Team members have built up strong working links with hostels, housing associations, the Housing Executive, and many local landlords and landladies. A simple bed and breakfast may be suitable for some but others may require a specialised hostel placement.

### c. Fostering

For some years now Rathgael, together with the other training schools, has been contracted into Barnardo's Home Finding Project. A referral is made by the house unit and the project staff then follow up the referral and supervise the eventual placement. The community care team retains a link with the young person and the project team.

## d. Employment

Prior to release on extended leave or discharge on licence, a referral is received from the house unit for the young person to be placed in employment. This for the majority of young people will mean a place on a Youth Training Programme or in one of the community workshops. Support is then given to the young person and the employer for as long as it is required.

#### e. After Care

The after care of the young people which includes those on licence, extended loan and supervision is the biggest task carried out by the team. Each member, except for the intake social worker, has responsibility for the everyday management of a case load. The level of supervision depends greatly on the individual needs of a case. There may be a need for intensive support in the case of a young mother and her baby, or a young person returning home after a long period in residential care. Supervision at some level may be given for up to 3 years from the date of discharge.

- 8.21 Team members co-operate very closely with all agencies working with the young person or their family. Support is given to schools, employers, hostels and visits are carried out on a regular basis for all living outside the centre.
- 8.22 Community care is a shared responsibility and needs the expert input of all statutory and voluntary organisations. Liaison takes place between Extern, Barnardo's, Save the Children Fund, YMCA, all the Social Services Boards and the Probation Board. These links enable the community care team to offer a comprehensive service and appear to be satisfactory.
- 8.23 The community care team seeks to complement the work of Rathgael. It works in conjunction with all other disciplines with a particular focus on the family and support given outside the centre. A member of the team is involved from the time of admission to the eventual discharge and supervision in the community. Social work cover is available 24 hours a day thus giving an appropriate realistic response to both crisis, and ongoing personal and family problems.

#### Extended Leave

8.24 A formula has already been worked out for the supervision of extended leave. The plan to grant extended leave is discussed with the deputy director and head of community care. A referral is then made using form CCI and a flow chart followed until discharge on licence.

### Pre-Licence

- 8.25 An up to date report is compiled before discharge on licence. A final case conference is held including unit, teaching and community care staff.
- 8.26 Inevitably the method of work appears to the Inspectors to combine both a task-centred and "crisis" orientation.

  However, comments from residential staff and other Centre

- staff indicate that the community care team gives a valued service to the Centre.
- 8.27 In August 1986, the Management Board decided to change the name of the social work department to that of community care team as it was felt to reflect more realistically and formalise the role of the team to include all young people living and working outside the Centre. Consequently, a pack containing: referral forms, details about the East Side Project, stand-by duty, extended leave, possible reasons for referral, details about professional fostering, was distributed to all units and staff throughout the Centre.
- 8.28 Case files are held on every resident. The files of the residents who are licensed and in After Care are held by that social worker involved with the case. Files are kept for five years and are indexed. Files are currently available from 1982. Files open before this date have been moved to the strong room and are kept for a further five years. The files run A-Z according to the year of committal. An index card is kept as well. These are held according to category eg After Care. It is understood that prior to 1973 a ledger system was used.

#### East Side Project

- 8.29 In 1979, when the Black Report was published it recommended that a greater emphasis be placed in providing community support systems for the young person. It was such thinking that led to the conception and development of the East Side Project which presently offers a unique, caring and professional service to young people within the community. The project originally catered for and supported those young people in the Centre, who were returned home or to independent living, earlier than their assigned release date. However since 1985, referrals have been received from many agencies in the community, both voluntary and statutory and a number of very deliquent, disturbed and/or disordered young persons are now being cared for in this setting.
- 8.30 The project workers have accepted that the community is not always tolerant of such young people and much energy and time have been devoted to building links with employers, unemployment offices, housing agencies, hospitals etc. They have found the Courts and Police to be co-operative and accepting of their work and the young person is encouraged to deal more effectively with the above agencies, as realistically they will spend most of their lives in the shadow of such agencies.
- 8.31 The successful inter-agency approach ie joint management and finance between the Rathgael and Whiteabbey Management Board and the Eastern Health and Social Services Board has had benefits for workers and young people alike. Such

- co-operation allows for a large pool of resources both at the practice and management level and the material and financial level, for everyone to draw upon.
- 8.32 The criteria for selection are based on: geographical area; motivation of both young people and family; strict age group 14-17 years and recommendation from Centre and project staff that individual young people would derive more benefits from being involved in the project. From its inception the project was very much a joint venture. A planning group which is comprised of senior management from both Boards, and the project staff meet to agree policy, measure progress and plan for the future. The everyday running of the project is catered for at two unit levels a Working Group which meets more regularly than the Planning Group and regular team meetings.
- 8.33 The selection of the 10 members of the group begins by the project workers drawing together all relevant information. The Working Group then meet to discuss each referral and the selection is completed. Up until June 1987 there were 2 intakes a year in May and November, now groups are open-ended and deal with referrals as they come.
- 8.34 Following the selection of the young people visits are made to each family and time is spent explaining the background to and the aims and objectives of the project and the role of the project worker. The concept of "family nights" being an integral part of the group programme is also carefully explained. The parents are then invited to become working partners with the team and a contract is drawn up to reflect this relationship.
- 8.35 The group programme held on Thursday evenings has developed and uses information packs, role play, group games, discussions, social skills training, newspaper cuttings, posters, songs, life-charts, and videos in an attempt to make each session as lively and relevant as possible. Topics such as alcoholism, (the item covered the evening the Inspector visited) living on your own, money management, relationships, the Samaritans, how to put social workers down are also covered. Several weekends every year the group goes up to Runkerry Centre and some evenings are spent at Minnowburn Youth Farm and are used to develop trust, co-operation and responsibility within the group. On Tuesday evenings, the project workers undertake home visits and organise group activities.
- 8.36 In September 1985, the project moved into its present premises. These were cleaned and decorated by offenders on Community Service Orders. These premises are on the first and second floors over shops near the Holywood Arches on the Upper Newtownards Road. They comprise an office containing two desks, chairs, telephones, locked

filing cabinet, kitchen and toilet. The room upstairs is furnished as a lounge with chairs, table and television.

- 8.37 The office is usually used by the project social worker, The typing, photocopying and clerical work are usually done from the Centre or from Holywood Road Office. She maintains contact with her colleagues in the community care team. She also retains her links with the Holywood Road Office of the social services who pay her salary. Sometimes there can be difficulties in contacting her although she carries a bleep when she is out of the office. It is recommended that an answerphone be provided to help alleviate this problem. Sometimes the lack of immediate clerical support can be a disadvantage and the Inspectors recommend that consideration be given to some part-time assistance here which would also assist with the former difficulty.
- 8.38 To assist with the problem of isolation, formal supervision would obviously be a great help. At the moment mutual informal support is used by all members of the community care team. A more structured programme of training would assist the project worker to meet other workers with similar specialist interests. This has already been referred to in an earlier section.
- 8.39 An evaluation of the East Side Project was undertaken in 1985 by the Programme, Planning and Research Unit (PPRU) of the DFP which examined the first 3 phases. The project highlights the lack of appropriate community-based facilities for young people in Northern Ireland, but clearly illustrates in general terms that it is attempting to fill that gap in the East Belfast area. It shows too that inter-agency work continues to be a focus of the project. The evaluation also highlighted the fact that traditional social work skills do not always work with "difficult" adolescents. It also illustrates that a programme or contract of work does not require a recreational or entertainment bias to be effective or relevant or to gain the co-operation of the adolescent
- 8.40 Intermediate treatment has not been developed to any significant extent in Northern Ireland but there are a few well-established centres which permit some comparison to be made. Without a doubt the East Side Project deals with a difficult client group and operates with substantially less staff than some other projects. The project has been successfully sold to the courts as an adequate means of control in the community for those who have offended while
- 8.41 Overall, the project does appear to be achieving its stated objective of "placing young people aged 14-17 from training schools back to their community with maximum individual and family support from the statutory and

# **RGL-23707**

voluntary agencies". Unfortunately, it is not possible to measure some of the more intangible effects of involvement in the project such as improvement in social skills. However, PPRU found that the confidence, articulation and level of insight presented by the respondents in the interview situation would suggest that its impact is not negligible.

- 8.42 The East Side Project would thus appear to be one of the most promising developments in the juvenile justice system at the present time. Service delivery in this field can only be improved by such provision. A more substantial evaluation of the project's contribution within the overall context of juvenile justice can only be validly undertaken with higher numbers. It is hoped that the development of the project will be accompanied by an on-going evaluation particularly with a view to assessing its longer term impact and the significance of family involvement.
- 8.43 There was much excitement about the project when the Inspectors were at the Centre as it had been awarded second prize in the "Social Work Today" Competition. Staff are to be commended on this achievement.
- 8.44 One difficulty has been how to record firstly the individual young person's response to the project and secondly the functioning of the group. It is understood by the Inspectors that initially traditional group work charts were utilised but were found to be too cumbersome. At present, evaluation and recording is done by means of a monthly report covering name, address, date of birth, contacts, attendance at project, home and school or employment. There are sections for individual sessions, family visits, feedback for other agencies, plus comments and aims for coming months. A day book also keeps an ongoing record of all events, visits, meetings, telephone calls and liaison contacts etc.
- 8.45 Group work recording is more difficult than recording one-to-one interviews because of the complex nature of a small group and the need to communicate both content and process. Some recording, however brief, of every group session facilitates assessment of individual and group progress. One of the main purposes is to have a record of changes over a period of time. This is often a surprise and encouragement to both the worker and group members themselves, who can easily underestimate the extent of progress over a period of months. Systematic and planned recording is an essential part of any group work. Although the individual's progress is recorded monthly, it is not possible to relate this increment to that of the group.
- 8.46 A group record or diary should be kept, with different members taking responsibility for writing it up. The

**RGL-23708** 

contents of the diary may be referred to and used as part of the programme. Alternatively, individual members could keep their own personal record. Leaders could give written feedback on both group and individual records, using that medium as another way of communicating with members. The agency requirement also has to be met with the relevant sections of the group included. One suggestion is to write up a precised summary of each group session for the individual file. Although keeping more detailed records of both individual and group sessions might be construed as time wasting, nevertheless these additional records could be utilised for annual evaluation purposes. The Inspectors recommend that additional recording is done.

8.47 At present the head of community care is heavily involved in the project as well as the project worker for two evenings a week. One morning per week (usually Wednesday morning) is taken as time off in lieu thus leaving  $4\frac{1}{2}$ working days per week. Few heads of department in social work undertake so much direct work with clients. It is suggested therefore that the head of community care withdraws from direct work and concentrates on management and establishing a system of formal supervision for the team as well as the various administrative duties he undertakes at Rathgael. There would thus be a need for an additional worker to work on the project to take up the work the Head undertakes at present. Depending on whether the post were to be full or part-time, it should be possible to expand the group work sessions the project is currently offering. It is recommended that consideration be given to this proposal.

# 9.0 EDUCATION/VOCATIONAL TRAINING

- 9.1 The education component at the Centre provides for up to 140 places for both boys and girls and school attendance is compulsory for all young people under 16 years of age. The education programme is managed by a deputy director who had just taken up post prior to the inspection, an assistant director and a deputy assistant director. There are 21 full-time teachers and one female part time physical education teacher. The deputy director is accountable to the director for the overall management of the school. It is the deputy directors intention to carry out a review of the general approach to the teaching methods with emphasis is being placed on inter-personal skills, more use of group work and the adapatation of existing programmes so as to make them more meaningful and appropriate to the needs of the children.
- 9.2 The main aim of the school, as defined in the recent Centre Guide for Agencies is "To provide a specialist education programme designed to suit the individual needs of each boy or girl". It is hoped to achieve this
  - 1. Assessment.
  - 2. Basic Education.
  - 3. Remedial Education.
  - 4. Vocational Education.
  - 5. Examinations.
- 9.3 Basically the school programme covers English and Maths and a varied support curriculum that includes Art/Craft, Home Economics, Music, Woodwork, Metalwork, History, Geography, Physical Education, Science, Computer Studies, Outdoor Pursuits, Remedial Education, Rural Science and Religious Education.
- 9.4 The main education task is undertaken in a well equipped school block, which includes a gymnasium, games hall and swimming pool. However 7 teachers are out-posted in the more specialist units within the campus:-
  - 2 in Youth Treatment (1 in Reception and 1 in the closed unit, House 4 which is presently being refurbished); the teacher in the closed unit has been redeployed in the interim to short term care reception;
  - 2 in Shamrock House, the close supervision unit on the care side; and

# **RGL-23710**

- 3 in Short-Term Care Reception (Houses 9 and 9A). One to provide woodwork to the 16+ children, separately for youth treatment and short term care reception.
- 9.5 Presently there are 5 young people attending on a day basis, 3 boys and 2 girls. Four of the young people are from Newtownards and one from the Shankill area of Belfast. Under the present arrangements the day attenders are within the category of extended leave and attend Rathgael for a variety of reasons. Every effort is made by the assistant director, together with the responsible residential social worker to plan for the reintegration of all the children into their own schools. For some, this school, truancy and school refusal have often been contributory factors in admission to the Centre in the
- 9.6 Each day pupil returns to his "house" upon arrival at the Centre. He is supervised from that base and administrative procedures such as bus fares and food remain the responsibility of the house. Statistically he/she remains on the roll of that house as a child on extended leave. The Inspectors recommend that, as the primary reason for day attendance is, in the main, educational, the young persons should be supervised from the school base and their names removed from the house roll as being on extended leave. Similarly the supervision of the boy or girl at home should pass to the community care team.
- 9.7 Teachers, by and large, work a 9am-4pm day, with the senior staff working the extra hour until 5pm. The senior staff take their turn in providing cover on the campus and some teaching staff perform extraneous duties in the residential units. This usually amounts to one evening during the week and occasional weekends. The teaching day begins with assembly at 9am with classes commencing at 9.15am approximately. A 15 minute break takes places at 10.30am. Lunch is from 12.45 to 2pm when children are escorted back from their house units to the school by care staff and school finally ends at 4pm. The children return to their units unescorted.
- 9.8 On Friday morning of each week form teachers allocate up to a maximum of 5 marks for each young person. In the case of those age 16+ who attend the workshops, this is undertaken by the appropriate workshop teacher. In total, the school allocates a maximum of 5 marks and the house units, on the Youth Treatment side allocate a similar figure. The deputy director (Education) is aware that a different method of allocating marks is presently in use on the Care side of the campus. Currently the method of marks allocation in the school is probably more in line with the Youth Treatment system. However, the Inspectors feel that the mark system in general should be reviewed

# **RGL-23711**

and recommend that an effort be made to rationalise the process. This view is shared by the deputy director and a fuller reference to the allocation of marks is made elsewhere in this report.

At present residential social workers do not take part in 9.9 any "teaching" aspect of the school. There is a feeling amongst senior education staff that there is room for improvement in communication between teachers and care staff. This may be due to a number of reasons, fewer teachers now taking part in extraneous duties, so much emphasises being placed on the social work reorganisation of the school with the focus now being on care with education on the premises, a major departure in traditional terms. These are issues that the new deputy director is aware of and given time the Inspectors feel he will bring about an improvement in this situation. Already thought is being given to "buying in" different skills for children where such areas of need are not already covered. This proposal is to be commended. Additionally the deputy director sees the potential expanded use of the Runkerry Centre as an environmental experience in addition to the existing programme of outdoor pursuits. The Inspectors were impressed with the proposal and feel, that the specialist resource at Runkerry Centre, has much to offer and recommend that every effort should be made to maximise its use.

### 10.0 DIET AND KITCHEN

- 10.1 Before the Inspection took place, the Inspectors were told that the kitchen prepared food for all the meals which were then distributed to the units. However, the kitchen was due for refurbishment. These plans were discussed at length with Northern Ireland Office and finally work started on the kitchen just before the Inspecton took place. Workmen had removed appliances and piping prior to the undertaking of the main work, leaving the kitchen in a state of complete mess with piles of rubble. The latest date the Inspectors were given for its completion was December 1987. Plans had been made for the interim provision of meals on a temporary basis throughout initially, the summer holiday period. With the kitchen work being put back, the arrangements that were satisfactory were becoming less so as time went on.
- 10.2 There are 2 main issues. Firstly, the interim arrangements. Secondly, arrangements for the future when the new kitchen is functioning. The interim arrangements are that basically the kitchen provides the meals for lunch and tea. Food for breakfast and supper is sent over to each unit in cartons. Trolleys are used to transport the food over for lunch and tea to each house unit which has its own system for keeping the food hot and for serving.

However, there are several points:

- i. The temperature of the food is unsatisfactory. As the food is not transported in heated cabinets the food loses heat and some meals are not hot enough. It is the view of the Inspectors that attention needs to be paid to this as a matter of urgency. What may have been satisfactory in the summer is unsatisfactory in the winter. It is therefore recomended that this be examined urgently.
- ii. The quantity of food for the boys needs to be examined. Amounts for the girls appeared satisfactory and adequate but the Inspectors doubt that this is so for the boys. It is therefore recommended that this be examined.
- iii. The food in the kitchen appeared to be wholesome and good but by the time it is cooked, kept warm in the kitchen, transported to the units, served and then eaten, the food had deteriorated and some meals the Inspectors shared were less than satisfactory. It is recommended that attention be given to these points.
- 10.3 It is understood that some recent steps have been taken to improve quality which are to be commended. These have included examination of the food for harmful additives.

# **RGL-23713**

Food containing these have been eliminated from the order. Also there has been some attempt to introduce 'healthier' foods. For example Flora margarine is now available as well as butter. It is not practice now to to plate meals in the kitchen. Meals are served in the units and so individual tastes can be more easily catered for.

- 10.4 Examination of these show that there is a great deal of repetition of some items for example eggs every day for breakfast. When the menus, before the interim arrangements, were examined, these showed that a high level of fatty and fried foods were served.
- 10.5 The Inspectors felt that there was some wastage of food.
  Often sizeable amounts of food were thrown out after
  meals. It is possible that the wastage was due, not as
  the result of poor cooking, but that the food was often
  unappetising because of poor presentation and the fact
  that it was cold following its journey from the central
  kitchen.
- 10.6 The present food preparation and cooking arrangements are central in the main kitchen, with only breakfast, usually uncooked, and suppers being provided in the units. The modernisation of the central kitchen is already under way and it is hoped that with the completion of the work, the standard of food will improve. Whereas the central kitchen should continue to provide the main meals as at present, the Inspectors feel management should be moving towards a policy of providing all breakfasts, teas and suppers in the units. With careful planning it ought to be possible for all meals to be planned and cooked in the units at week-ends. In effect the central kitchen shall function as a "school" kitchen and resouce point for the provision of raw materials for cooking in the units. The Inspectors accept that with the exception of the refurbished Houses 1, 2 and 3 where there are modern kitchens, it might be difficult to change the existing arrangements. The provision of food in the units, in terms of involving the children in the planning, preparation and presentation is an important consideration. There is much to be gained in terms of independence training and possibly in cost effectiveness. The Inspectors recommend that management examines the feasibility of changing the present catering arrangements. Although it may be many years before the refurbishing programme has been completed this shall not act as an impediment to the introduction of the concept in Houses 1, 2 and 3 or indeed in any of the units where the kitchen equipment would permit.
- 10.7 It is the Inspectors' view that certain changes should be made with regard to food. There has been some recent research which indicates that food containing additives and processed food affects behaviour adversely. Some excellent research articles published in the USA, detailed

in "Diet, Crime and Delinquency: a critique" by Dr Gregory E Gray in Nutrition Reviews, May 1986 relating to diet and criminal behaviour have been researched by the Inspectors. It is suggested that management examine the research referred to and determine if it has an application to Rathgael. The Inspectors will be available to assist, in this matter if the Management Board so desire.

10.8 Management, in conjunction with expert dietary advice from the Central Services Agency, should examine the range of food provided at the Centre, bearing in mind, the range of information available from the Health Education Officers in the Area Boards.

#### Kitchen

- 10.9 In June the central kitchen was closed for refurbishment and the operation moved to a small building. At the entrance is a table with chairs for the staff where they have their tea and lunch breaks. There are 3 storage racks for tinned food and supplies of bread etc are left near the door to enable ease of access. Also at this end are the heated trolleys. When the food is cooked, it is placed in these to await transportation. Before the summer, the meals were plated individually but this process has now ceased. Normally food would be kept hot at a temperature of  $70^{\circ}$ . However, it would lose heat on the journey and perhaps only be  $60^{\circ}$  on arrival. At the other end of the kitchen is some of the new equipment which will be moved over to the new kitchen. These include a double oven with 3 plates; a shallow fat pan; a combined convection oven/steamer plus 2 deep-fat friers. In the temporary kitchen, there is no drainage system or tiling on the floors. There is also no cloakroom for the staff. The kitchen seemed very cramped and staff, who cater for around 200 people daily, are to be commended on coping in difficult circumstances.
- 10.10 Arrangements for delivery of meat and other frozen supplies are complex. This comes frozen from Altnagelvin Hospital, Londonderry. The head cook plans the menu for the food one week in advance, in fact this is done more frequently now to facilitate ordering.
- 10.11 The staff consists of one head cook, 2 cooks, 3 domestic assistants who all work full time. There is a part-time member of staff in the servery who makes coffee for meetings, serves lunches in the dining room and washes up afterwards. Normal hours are 7.00 am to 3.00 pm, 10.00 am to 5.00 pm plus alternate weekends. If these are worked, they have Friday off. Cooks wear a white overall and domestics wear blue.
- 10.12 The budget for the food is £100,000 approximately per year. Tenders are put out for basic provisions. It is

# **RGL-23715**

understood that when the refurbished kitchen is in operation new tenders will be required. In the kitchen it will be possible to reduce the cooking time. There will be equipment such as a steamer/convector. A dishwashing area, food preparation system, and areas for blast-chilling and freezing will be provided. Meat will be delivered once a week.

10.13 Although the kitchen staff do not get to know the children, attempts are made to liaise with the units and from time to time questionnaires are circulated to the units to enable comments to be made about the food and suggestions to be made. From these, it transpires that boys are more traditional in their food tastes than girls. Boys eat more and sometimes drink  $1\frac{1}{2}$  pints of milk per day.

#### 11.0 HEALTH CARE ARRANGEMENTS

#### 11.1 Medical

Two local general practitioners have been appointed to Rathgael by the Management Board who carry out the duties prescribed by Section 50 of the Training Schools Rules which include making:

- a thorough examination of each child on admission and before leaving the school;
- ii. a quarterly inspection on each child;
- iii. a quarterly general inspection of the school from the hygiene point of view and advice as to dietary and general hygiene;
- iv. the examination of all sick and ailing children;
  - v. the keeping of medical records;
- vi. the making of reports/certificates as required by the Board.
- 11.2 In pursuance of the duties set out above, Dr Smith from Bangor Health Centre attends to the boys every Tuesday morning and Dr McCarthy from Newtownards Health Centre attends the girls every Wednesday morning. They hold their surgery in the medical room which is described in paragraph 11.13. The medical officers compile a quarterly report for the Department of Health and Social Services where it is seen by the Chief Medical Officer and by a Social Services Inspector.
- 11.3 The medical officers are general practitioners and the children in Rathgael are normally transferred to their lists following their admission to the Centre. When they are the subject of short term orders temporary transfers are arranged but full registration is completed for all children on Training School Orders.

#### Dental

- 11.4 Rathgael Training School has a fully equipped dental surgery on the first floor of the administration block. It is a small room but fully equipped with all the necessary equipment.
- 11.5 The dentist is Mrs McCullough who was away on maternity leave at the time of the inspection. Usually she is available on Tuesday and Thursday mornings to give the full range of treatment. The children are taken to see her by appointment following their admission to the school and have a further examination and check-up every 6 months. One of the nurses assists at dental treatment as

- no hygienist or dental assistant is employed. Local anaesthetics can be given but if a general anaesthetic is required, this has to be done outside. Where necessary the dentists refer the children to an orthodontist for specialist rectification of abnormalities of the teeth.
- 11.6 A dental record is kept of all treatments carried out and is kept in the dental surgery. Once a resident is discharged, it is attached to the main record. Whilst the dentist had been away arrangements were made for emergency treatment to be dealt with at Bangor Health Centre.

#### Nursing

- 11.7 The day to day oversight of the children's health is provided for by the employment of qualified nursing staff. They are on duty from 8.00 am to 6.00 pm on weekdays to attend to sick residents, to treat minor ailments, to render first aid and to administer patient medicines. They also work every other weekend: 9-12 am on a Saturday and 7-10 pm on a Sunday evening.
- 11.8 All the staff hold the SRN and SCM and consists of the matron, assistant matron, and the relief who works 15 hours per week. The staff wear uniform which consists of a navy dress with white collar. Their badge from their hospital together with their qualification badges are also worn.
- 11.9 Surgeries are held with appointments at 8.20 am, 8.40 am, 9.00 am, 9.30 am, lunchtime, 1.15 pm, 1.30 pm, evening 4.00 pm, 4.30 pm, 5.00 pm. The children are normally accompanied by a member of staff. There is some resentment amongst residential staff that during the day they are not allowed to give out any medicines other than a paracetamol tablet and this has to be recorded; yet at evenings, nights and week-ends they are allowed to undertake the full range of care. It is recommended that these practices be reviewed.
- 11.10 Apparently, girls, who are on the contraceptive pill, are required to attend the daily sick parades on week days to get the medication, although it is understood that the practice differs at the weekend when the residential staff supervise the process. It cannot be emphasised too strongly the need for girls, who are practising any method of contraception, to become proficient in its use. Girls should be encouraged to act independently in taking the pill, initially under the supervision of care staff. The present practice of allocating the pill, at the sick parade, is a stigmatising and humiliating ritual and does little to encourage the girl to accept responsibility for her personal method of contraception. It is recommended that this practice be reviewed as a matter of urgency. There is also the question of stigmatisation

arising. For example, the Inspectors were told that some of the boys were able to identify which of the girls were on the contraceptive pill, through their attendance at the surgery. It is therefore recommended that these sick parades be reviewed.

- 11.11 On admission, all children attend Bangor Health Centre for a Deaf test, for TB and chest X-rays. If a BCG injection is required this is done by the health visitor. Normally other vaccinations will have been completed at school so these are not done.
- 11.12 Sometimes, reports are required for case conferences from medical and nursing staff. The nursing staff attend case conferences in the unit when required. They also attend problem profile meetings and liaison with staff in the units and school is good. As is usual when staff are not working with their professional colleagues, the nurses sometimes feel a sense of professional isolation. They try to keep up to date with new techniques in nursing generally but regular attendance at training courses is difficult because of the demands of the job. Staff from the Centre occasionally attend the surgery for treatment. This is recorded in the Accident Book and they are always advised to see their GP.

#### Sick Bay

- 11.13 The surgery is a small room containing an examination couch; desk and chairs; telephone; filing cabinet; instrument cupboard; drugs cupboard and supply cupboard. There is a small room off the surgery for checking urine samples, eyes, weight, height and blood pressure.
- 11.14 On the opposite side of the corridor is the rest room which contains only one bed at the moment. There is also a wash basin in the room. Another larger room holds 3 beds but is full of kitchen stores at the moment and so is not being used. If a child is ill and needs to stay in bed during the day, he would stay in his own bed in his unit.

#### Medical Records

11.15 If a child admitted to Rathgael has previously been in the care of a health and social services board then in some cases the child's social worker will bring a Certificate of Health/Free from Infection Certificate to the school. Social services may also have obtained "parental consent to medical treatment and/or vaccination/immunisation". Following admission the child is seen by the nurse who asks about the medical history, takes the height and weight measurements and notes this information on Medical Record Form RHM. This pro-forma is also used by the

medical officer to record his observations when making a general medical inspection and to make clinical notes at the onsat of an illness and its treatment etc. A completed Form RHM is held for each child residing in the training school and is kept in the locked filing cabinet.

- 11.16 On the chart is noted complaints and medication, date of onset, treatment, medication given, time of administration and staff initials.
- 11.17 A report book is also kept by matron. This is detailed and notes the date, name of patient, records of events about a case. This is always kept up to date so that staff coming on duty would thus be appraised of the day's events (much in the same way as in a hospital).
- 11.18 If an accident has occurred, then the accident book has to be completed in addition. If an accident takes place in the units, an incident report form is completed with copies sent to the senior deputy director, deputy director (care), matron and a copy for the house file so that the information is available.
- 11.19 An annual form is also completed for Northern Ireland Office. This is a large form detailing every known ailment. Matron now keeps similar figures on a monthly basis to enable her to complete this form more easily. It is interesting to see that whereas scabies was common 13 years ago present day trends, demonstrated by the figures show that self-inflicted wounds and attendance at special clinics are on the increase.
- 11.20 Every unit has a first aid cabinet which is kept locked. All staff on duty have access to the cabinet. The cabinet contains bandages, savlon, elastoplast, PR spray for muscle problems, burns and bites cream, codeine linctus for coughs, mist: kaolin and morphine, paracetamol, aspirin and slings. If staff on the unit use the First Aid cabinet, all the details have to be fully recorded for matron including the dosages, eg only one teaspoon of cough mixture or one paracetamol tablet is allowed. The Inspectors noted that there was antagonism from some residential staff about not being allowed to give out tablets during working hours but being expected to, out of hours. Residential staff accept that part of their function is to convey children to hospital, clinical appointments and to arrange their duties to facilitate this. However, it was said that often they receive little prior notice of such visits and this can cause organisational problems. It is recommended that this problem area be examined.
- 11.21 In addition to her nursing responsibilities the matron looks after staffing in the sewing room and laundry and advises when the staff are on leave.

#### 12.0 RELIGION

12.1 The residential staff in the Centre are aware of the religious affiliation of the children's families and whether a child had previously been a regular church attender. At present the children, resident in the Centre at weekends, may attend church if they so desire. Whilst it is accepted that many teenagers no longer attend church the Inspectors feel that this is an issue that could be discussed with the Chaplains. There seems to be an element of inconsistency when children attend assembly every school day in accordance with the Training School Rules but there is no similar requirement regarding church attendance at weekends. The Inspectors are not advocating that church attendance be imposed, as often this can be counter-productive, but make these comments to open up the debate and to encourage management to examine the situation with the Chaplains.

#### Chaplains and Assembly

- 12.2 There are 3 Chaplains who visit Rathgael. They are Canon Hamilton Leckie Dean of Down, from Bangor Abbey, the Reverend John Wilkinson from Queens Parade Methodist Church and the Reverend Colin Megaw from Helen's Bay Presbyterian Church.
- 12.3 The Chaplains take assembly on Tuesday mornings. These services last about 20 minutes. First of all is a hymn from the book "Mission Praise", then a few prayers are said, followed by a bible reading. After this, the chaplain says a few words on a Christian theme. On the morning the Inspectors attended there was a guitar accompaniment to the hymns. However, the Inspectors suggest that the children are more directly involved, perhaps leading a prayer or reading.
- 12.4 After the service, the Chaplains see individual boys and girls for about 20 minutes' counselling. Background information is given but sometimes the Chaplains feel that sight of files would be helpful. They keep individual notes of these meetings. All the Chaplains view their task at Rathgael as an extended ministry and see the children as victims of circumstance. One Chaplain said that he would prefer more informal contact with the children and would like to include the children in football, youth clubs, scouts and guides as possibly some children may be able to benefit from these normal church activities.
- 12.5 All the Chaplains stressed their independence. They also regretted that children did not go out to churches as regularly as in the past.

#### 13.0 UFFICIAL VISITORS

13.1 Senior personnel from the Northern Ireland Office Training Schools Branch visit the Centre to discuss policy and administrative matters. Support and advice on matter of professional practice pertaining to the Centre and on problems arising in difficult cases is given by an Inspector from the Social Services Inspectorate. When capital projects or major maintenance work is undertaken at the Centre technical staff from the Estate Services Division of the Department of Health and Social Services supervise the contracts.

#### Visits by Board Members

- 13.2 Rule 10(3) requires that the school be visited, at least once a month by at least one member of the Board of Management, who shall satisfy himself regarding the care of the boys and girls and the state of the school and shall enter his conclusions in the log book or other convenient record kept at the school. The Inspectors are satisfied that this duty is fulfilled. A report of the visit(s) by Board members is maintained. The contents of the reports vary greatly and in some cases concentrate on the physical conditions of the buildings rather than on more specific aspects of child care. There have been some changes in the content of the reports in recent months.
- 13.3 In October 1983 the Department of Health and Social Services issued a circular on the monitoring of residential homes for children provided by Health and Social Services Boards and Voluntary Organisations.

  Management within each agency was requested to introduce procedures for the regular and ongoing scrutiny of the range and quality of the service which it provided. Thereafter Boards and Voluntary Organisations were expected "to introduce annual monitoring statements outlining the elements monitored, the methods used, the trends observed, the areas of concern identified and the action taken to remedy deficiencies".
- 13.4 The persons involved in monitoring includes members of Management Boards as well as senior members of staff. Within the training schools there is already a system of reporting to Board members and a scrutiny by them of statutory records. However the Inspectors perceive a need for a formal system of monitoring to be adopted akin to that which is used within the Health and Social Services Boards in respect of their residential child care services and this is recommended. A copy of Circular HSS(CC)6/83 is attached at Appendix F.
- 13.5 In order to assist Board members with their regular visits and the structure of monitoring reports, the Social Services Inspectorate would be prepared to make guidelines available to the Management Board and if requested would

**RGL-23722** 

be available to meet with the Board to discuss the recommendation(s) in the preceding paragraph(s) in more detail.

#### 14.0 OFFICIAL RECORDS

14.1 Rule 53 of the Training Schools Rules (SRO) 1952 No:132 states that "The Management Board shall arrang, for the keeping of all registers and records required by the Ministry and shall cause to be sent to the Ministry such returns, statements and other information as may be required from time to time".

#### Admissions and Discharges Register

14.2 An admissions and discharge register, covering all of the school, is not kept. Each house unit maintains records of all admissions and discharges and these include details of all interim entries and exits where the young person is absent overnight. Further reference to the keeping of these records will be made in the detailed reporting on each division in the Centre. However as the keeping of an Admission and Discharge Register is required under the Training School Rules it is recommended that this record be introduced.

#### Major Incident Book

14.3 Major incident files are maintained by the director.

These refer to untoward or major incidents and include such matters as suicide attempts, assaults on staff and serious misbehaviour. These records are presented to the Management Board for inspection regularly.

#### Punishment Book

14.4 As corporal punishment is not carried out at Rathgael Centre no punishment record is kept.

#### Record of Fire Drills

- 14.5 Each house unit, throughout the centre keeps individual records of fire alerts and exercises. Fire drills, which include full evacuation procedures are held at varying times of the day. Details of the staff and children present and the time taken to evacuate the unit is recorded. In addition fire fighting equipment in all of the house units is tested regularly.
- 14.6 Rule 14 outlines the functions of the Management Board in relation to fire precautions. These functions are as follows:-
  - a. obtain the advice of the Fire Service before opening a new training school or making any structural alterations to an existing school;
  - arrange for the periodic inspection of the school by the Fire Service;

- c. ensure that fire drills are carried out at regular intervals so that the staff and the pupils are well versed in the procedure for saving life in case of fire;
- d. arrange for a report to be sent to the Ministry forthwith in the event of an outbreak of fire in the school.

The director has appointed the deputy assistant director (Youth Treatment) to be responsible to him for all aspects of fire precautions. Seemingly this duty takes up a substantial part of his time. The Inspectors requested the production of a report or a certificate in respect of a satisfactory inspection of the Centre in relation to fire precautions. They were told, that although the Fire Brigade gives demonstrations and supervises fire drills from time to time, it was not possible for them to produce any form of certificate. The situation regarding the fire inspection at Rathgael Centre raises a number of issues. It is not within the remit of the Social Services Inspectorate to comment upon the technical aspects of fire precautions and inspections, but in the absence of a current report, it is necessary to highlight some of the issues and administrative difficulties surrounding this important and basic safety requirement.

- Seemingly during 1983/84, following a request from the deputy assistant director (Youth Treatment), a visit was paid to the Centre by an official from the Department of Economic Development's Health and Safety Inspectorate. A report of the visit was requested on 6 November 1984, which seemingly met with a negative response. On 5 June 1987 a letter was received from the Northern Ireland Office which stated that, following refurbishing, the Department were satisfied with the fire precautions in Houses 1, 2 and 3. The deputy assistant director (Youth Treatment) was still not satisfied with the fire escape procedures in other parts of the Centre. He advised the director that he refused to accept responsibility for the remainder of the Houses, ie 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 9a and 10. The director is equally concerned about fire escape procedures and this is currently under review. On several occasions the director made formal requests to the Northern Ireland Office, for a full fire inspection. All the fire fighting equipment is tested biannually and a certificate of inspection dated 24 August 1987 was produced.
- 14.8 The main reasons for the delay in having this matter resolved is unclear. Because of the serious nature of the issue the Inspectorate drew the problem to the attention of the NIO, ahead of the publication of the report. It is understood that currently a capital programme stretching ahead to the financal year 89/90 is in train to update the fire precautions in the school. The Northern Ireland

- Office have undertaken to arrange a meeting between the principal agencies/departments concerned in an effort to reach a satisfactory conclusion.
- 14.9 For the present the Inspectorate must point to, what is a breach of the Training School Rules and the responsibilities of the Management Board and the Northern Ireland Office. Every step is taken to ensure that the need for safety and vigilance is uppermost in the minds of staff and young people alike. However, at the present moment, there is a need to have the outstanding administrative issues clarified. It is recommended that the Northern Ireland Office take continuing steps to have the matter resolved.

## Licensing Certificate Book

14.10 Each young person leaving the Centre on licence is given a formal certificate of licence, giving details of the conditions as to residence and date of release. The keeping of this record is satisfactory.

## Statistical Returns

- 14.11 The Centre is required to submit to the Northern Ireland Office a series of returns and statistics both daily and weekly. It seemed to the Inspectors that there may be some areas of duplication in the returns required by the Northern Ireland Office. It was apparent that some of the forms and the terminology used are out of date. For example, there were references to Local Authority responsibility for maintenance and references to the young people as "Inmates". The latter term is out of date, institutional and stigmatising and quite inappropriate in describing the young people currently resident in the Centre.
- 14.12 During the inspection a variety of statistics were produced regarding the numbers of young people present on the campus. There were instances of great variation in the figures presented. Since August 1987 the Northern Ireland Office have introduced a new method of collecting information daily and weekly summaries. It seems that this is possibly a reasonably accurate way of collecting information regarding occupancy rates etc. The method of gathering accurate information is a problem and the issue has been addressed in Chapter 3 of the Report.

## 15.0 PSYCHOLOGICAL/PSYCHIATRIC

### Psychological Service

- 15.1 A service is provided by 3 psychologists from the Adolescent Psychological and Research Unit on a total of  $5\frac{1}{2}$  days each week. The psychologists provide a diverse range of forensic, educational and clinical skills in the assessment of the child and his/her family as to (1) assessment of optimal placement; and (2) treatment or intervention. The psychologists also perform roles of research, training, management consultancy and staff support/development. As well as involvement with children and young persons, the psychologists contribute professional advice and support to each of the Care and Youth Treatment Units and have a direct role in evaluating potential admissions to the secure units in the Centre. Their professional independence makes a valuable contribution to the various models of inter-disciplinary assessment in the Centre as well as providing an independent sounding board for staff and management. The APRU psychologists provide inter-agency contact with the various networks of Probation, Social Services, Health and Education and specific specialist resources within these agencies, for example, special education and adolescent psychiatry.
- 15.2 The skills of the psychologists are perceived as particularly valuable in that they have made a major impact on the development of a professional ethic within the Centre, ie client profiling. It is understood that the appointment of an additional psychologist shortly will create an extra day's psychological time in the Centre. It is felt that the psychologists have an important contribution to make to some of the training initiatives that have been recommended.

#### Psychiatric Service

- Dr McEwen, Consultant in Adolescent Psychiatry spends a half-day fortnightly in Rathgael. The focus of his work is essentially working with staff regarding the management of difficult young people throughout the Centre. He participates in assessment, planning meetings and case conferences when appropriate. He accepts referrals from the intake social worker as she is the referral point for senior staff. Dr McEwen feels few of the children actually suffer from mental illness but considerable numbers experience varying degrees of disturbance.
- Dr McEwen provides an "on-call" service when young people are referred by either the senior staff or one of the psychologists but because of the sizeable demands made upon his time this is a limited service. Dr McEwen's contribution to the Centre is much valued by staff where

**RGL-23727** 

his support and guidance is a crucial element in dealing with disordered adolescents.

#### 16.0 INTEGRATION WITH THE COMMUNITY

- 16.1 Generally the Rathgael Centre is well established in Bangor and recognised for its contribution to young people by the community. Many of the boys and girls make use of local resources and have joined Bangor based clubs and organisations eg Project Bangor, Rathgael Trampolining and Gymnastics Club.
- 16.2 Keeping the young persons in contact with their families while living in the Centre is a priority for the Rathgael staff. However not all of them return home when they finally leave the training school. Some boys and girls find accommodation for themselves and live independently. The Inspectors were advised that an increasing number choose to settle in Bangor even when this is not the area where they have lived prior to coming to the Rathgael Centre. The director has apprehensions about this development in relation to its long term effects on the relationship between Rathgael and the local community. He has shared these in discussion with the Assistant Director of Social Services (North Down and Ards Unit of Management) who is aware of a similar trend developing amongst young people leaving children's homes in the area.

**RGL-23729** 

#### 17.0 VOLUNTEERS/COMMUNITY SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

- 17.1 Volunteers from the Community Service Volunteers Scheme (CSV) were first used at Rathgael 14 years ago with the aim of providing practical experience for a volunteer. At any one time there are 2 volunteers who are usually students. The Centre advises CSV that they could take 2 students and the CSV looks through its files for suitable candidates. Rathgael provides their keep and room (for up to one year maximum) and pays the fare from their home. They pay pocket money of £14 per week in addition. Out of all the 30 or so students who have been taken there have only been 3 or 4 failures. The volunteers are asked to involve suitable children from the Centre in community work in Bangor or Newtownards. Suitable projects have included playgroups, horse-riding for the disabled, Phab Clubs, work with the adult mentally handicapped, swimming with the handicapped, conservation work, or Age Concern lunch clubs. There is a limit of 2 children per worker. Supervision and support to the volunteers has been provided once a week by a member of the teaching staff who is also available in between times for advice and consultation.
- 17.2 At the end of the placement, a report is completed on the student's progress which is sent to CSV. In general, it is felt that there is a mutual benefit both for Rathgael and also for CSV and the volunteer concerned. Most volunteers use the experience constructively to enable them to get a place on a professional social work training course. Last year it is understood that the supervisor was overcommitted and was unable to provide the time for supervision. It is understood that it is the intention to hand over the supervision to 2 other members of staff. The Inspectors stress that it is important to build in adequate time or the ongoing supervision of the volunteer which can be time consuming. This scheme appears to be excellent, although it was disappointing that no volunteers were undertaking the work at the time of the Inspection.

## 18.0 BARNARDO'S HOME FINDING PROJECT

- 18.1 For some years Rathgael, together with the other training schools, has been contracted into the Barnardo's Home Finding Project. A referral is made by the house unit to the head of community are and the project staff then follow up the referral and supervise the eventual placement. The community care team retains a link with the young persons and the project team.
- 18.2 The aims of the Project are as follows:
  - i. To offer an alternative placement to residential and custodial care for young people in the 10-19 age range.
  - ii. To provide a supportive environment in the community where young people in care can attempt to resolve their difficulties, develop their individual potential and progress towards independence.
  - iii. To provide young people with practical ability, security, confidence and a sense of responsibility in facing their own independence or rehabilitation.
- 18.3 Project staff recruit, train and assess potential placement families. Young people are placed with appropriate families depending on their individual plan and needs. Placement families and social work staff then work together on the intellectual, social and emotional development of each young person, for a fusion of basic care and social work intervention are not always discernible from the other.
- 18.4 There has been concern in the project for some time about the low numbers or referrals and inappropriate nature of referrals from the training schools. The project's experience has been a marked contrast to the stated commitment of the Northern Ireland Office for finance for ten placements per year from the total training school population.
- The philosophical basis of the Northern Ireland Office's commitment to foster care found root in the probability that there were some young people in training schools who could return to the community if foster care was provided. In other words, that some young people were trapped in the training school system, or inappropriately placed because of lack of community based resources. This may well be true for a very limited number of youngsters but experience in the Rathgael context has been that even when the project has provided the resource, the resource is not always appropriate or supportable.
- 18.6 The young people who are being referred to the Project for placement have many moves behind them and have been failed

by many other care or living situations. They are sometimes reluctant to risk another move or commit themselves again. For tome the prospect of living in a family can be a frightening experience.

- 18.7 Agreement was given by the Northern Ireland Office to funding for 10 children in October 1983. In the period 1984-1987. Rathgael, made a total of 18 referrals and of these only three resulted placements. This is of serious financial concern as the project do not receive payment until the child is technically in placement.
- There has been some feeling that referral difficulties has perhaps arisen from teething problems and miscommunication between the project and Rathgael. It must be borne in mind that Rathgael and Whiteabbey were heavily engaged in the upheaval of amalgamation and reorganisation during this period Early difficulties however appear to have been resolved. Project staff now visit the Centre every second Tuesday morning to receive referrals, discuss issues with staff, etc.
- 18.9 Rathgael staff feel very clearly that there is a need for "half way" or "semi" or respite fostering which is not being met and which they do not anticipate being able to meet with their own professional resources. Some young people can not proceed from the training school to full fostering yet need the support and normalisation of a "family on the outside" who could share in their care. This would have the potential to develop into full time care or after care support.
- 18.10 The concept of semi-fostering is perhaps novel but would adapt to the philosophy of meeting children's needs and fulfilling their potential through a family based service. From a different perspective the project does come into contact with potential fosterparents who might be best used in sessional intervention.
- 18.11 It would seem appropriate to consider extending the range of the fostercare package to include not only full time placement, and post placement aftercare support but some form of "shared care package" between residential care and fostercare. In this way young people's individualised needs could be met through a family based service. A more flexible use of the present funding would seem to be practically feasible and would reflect a more accurate assessment of need. Difficulties have been experienced with no families coming forward and so advertisements had to be placed in the Press. Whilst appreciating the difficulties, the Inspectors recommend that senior management should review this project.

#### 19.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 19.1 Residential child care staff are in a powerful position vis-a-vis the children in their care and unfortunately on occasions this has been misused. The Department of Health and Social Services promulgated discussion on how to prevent this arising and concluded that children coming into residential care and their parents were entitled to have explained to them what type of environment the children were being brought into and the purpose and role of the staff caring for them. They were also to be made aware of the types of treatment, which under any circumstances, would not be acceptable and which would give grounds for making a complaint. Channels for making complaints and procedures for recording and investigating them were set out in a Circular on 30 April 1985. The provision of a complaints procedure has been universally accepted in principle and with some adaptation could be extended to the training schools including the Rathgael Centre.
- 19.2 During the past four years Rathgael Centre has gone through an unprecedented period of change. In the first instance it was necessary to absorb and totally integrate the girls, formally accommodated at Whiteabbey Training School. Staff at Rathgael had previously no experience of dealing with disordered and difficult girls. Similarly the former Whiteabbey staff were faced with moving to a new campus, absorbing new management arrangements and having to work with boys, for some a threatening and anxiety provoking experience.
- 19.3 Following the decision of the Secretary of State, that a split campus, providing for Care and Youth Treatment, would come into being, it became necessary for staff to act in new roles, to draw up new systems of management, to implement new policies and practices, whilst at the same time providing a continuing residential care service for some of the most difficult boys and girls in the Province.
- 19.4 Such massive structural changes have not been without their own difficulties. Senior management, to their credit, have sought to bring about a new dynamic, encourage new thinking and attempted to change many of the institutional practices that were a feature of life in the old training school system.
- 19.5 The Inspectors have made a number of recommendations that is hoped will bring about a change in emphasis in the residential task and lead to an enhancement of the quality of care provided at the Centre. Some of the recommendations can be implemented with little difficulty, whilst some will require more time. The Inspectors were impressed by many features in the Centre. There is a substantial programme of diversion located in Short-Term

**RGL-23733** 

Care, with some 85% of admissions being placed in alternative settings. Of the three Adolescent Care Units, one has been totally integrated with considerable success, after much effort in bringing together boys and girls in a setting that, ten years ago would have been totally unheard of in the training school system. Youth Treatment are absorbing many elements of good practice and it is hoped that under the present leadership will continue to improve. The Eastside Project, under the supervision of the community care team has attracted national recognition as an innovative and effective method of supporting young people upon their return to the community.

19.6 The Inspectors are satisfied with the standards of care being provided at the centre but would caution against the dangers that an element of complacency might creep in. Instead the period between now and the introduction of the new child care legislation should become a time of change and improvement, where management strive to raise the standards of good social work practice to meet the ever changing needs of the young people in their care.

#### 20.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 20.1 Each house unit should be lead by a senior residential social worker. (Para 3.4).
- 20.2 It is recommended that there shall only be 2 grades of staff in each Unit ie: senior residential social worker and residential social worker. (Para 3.4).
- 20.3 The present information system within the school should be reviewed and regularly monitored (para 3.5).
- 20.4 Staffing levels should be calculated using the criteria set out in Para 3.6.
- 20.5 For 130 beds there should be 96 whole time staff or equivalents at senior residential social worker and residential social worker grades (para 3.10).
- 20.6 Staffing arrangements at the Centre should be so revised as to provide a single corps of staff at unit level to cover days, evenings and week-ends (para 3.12).
- 20.7 Duty rosters should be revised so as to provide better staff cover in the evenings and to facilitate later bed times for boys and girls (para 3.13).
- 20.8 The role, function and structure of the senior management team should be reviewed by the Management Board. (Para 3.22).
- 20.9 Individual professional supervision should be introduced throughout the Centre. (Paras 3.23, 5.57, 8.8).
- 20.10 At least one residential social worker should sleep in each house unit at night. (Para 3.30).
- 20.11 Staff effectiveness and attitudes should be monitored by management. (Para 3.32).
- 20.12 An attempt should be made to make the boys unit in Short Term Care less institutional by the use of more plants, pictures and cushions. (Para 5.4).
- 20.13 The dining room in Short Term Care should be made more homely. (Para 5.5).
- 20.14 It is recommended that new bed linen, curtains and lampshades be provided in Houses 9 and 9A. (Para 5.10).
- 20.15 The current policy of censoring all mail and telephone calls should be reviewed. (Para 5.25).
- 20.16 The practice of locking children in their bedrooms in House 9 and 9(A) should be discontinued. (Para 5.27).

- 20.17 Consideration should be given to mixing boys and girls in Houses 9 and 9(a). (Para 5.31).
- 20.18 It is recommended that an information booklet be produced for the benefit of children and their parents. (Para 5.33).
- 20.19 Each child's file should contain their photograph. (Para 5.40).
- 20.20 A form shall be used to set out more clearly the care plans for each child in Short Term Care. (Para 5.43).
- 20.21 It is recommended that fire drills shall take place more frequently in accordance with stately instructions. (Para 5.47).
- 20.22 It is recommended that a list of residents' names be attached to the Fire Drill Book and the time taken to evacuate the building be recorded. (Para 5.47).
- 20.23 Staff should have the opportunity to attend appropriate training courses and a Training Needs' Assessment should be introduced. (Paras 5.53, 8.4).
- 20.24 The means of fire escape, through the staff accommodation at the ends of Houses 2 and 3, shall be reviewed when the next fire inspection, requested by the director, takes place. (Para 6.4).
- 20.25 All three Adolescent Care Units should be integrated gradually. (Para 6.7).
- 20.26 The responsibility for young persons on extended leave should be transferred to the community care team after one month. (Para 6.9).
- 20.27 Teaching staff should take full responsibility for day attenders. (Para 6.10, 9.6).
- 20.28 A more flexible approach should be taken in the transfer of boys from Care to Youth Treatment. (Para 6.11).
- 20.29 The bathroom area in House 10 should be improved ahead of the scheduled refurbishing (para 6.22).
- 20.30 The call system in Shamrock House should either be repaired or replaced. (Para 6.25).
- 20.31 It is recommended that storage space is provided for the young people's personal clothing, that steps be taken to make their beds more comfortable, that attention is paid to the other fixtures and fittings and that the bedrooms are decorated. (Para 6.28).

- 20.32 A more representative admission/review panel should be established for the Close Supervision Unit. (Para 6.35)
- 20.33 The system of recording confinements in the Close Supervision Unit should be reviewed (para 6.40).
- 20.34 No young person shall exceed an aggregate of 72 hours within a 28 day period locked in their bedroom, excluding the normal period between bedtime and the morning rise (para 6.40).
- 20.35 Bedtimes in Shamrock House should be brought into line with the other Adolescent Care Units. (Para 6.41).
- 20.36 Consideration should be given to direct placement to the Adolescent Care Units (para 6.51).
- 20.37 Boys and girls should be more actively involved in their reviews. (Para 6.53, 7.39).
- 20.38 The school-based marks system should be synchronised with those in the Care units. (Para 6.55, 9.8).
- 20.39 Young people should be given the opportunity to manage their own financial affairs. (Para 6.58).
- 20.40 The Centre's policy on smoking should apply to staff and children alike. (Para 6.59, 7.46).
- 20.41 The present policy on smoking should be reviewed with a view to encouraging non-smoking. (Para 6.60).
- 20.42 A senior residential social worker should be appointed to fill the unit management post in House 5. (Para 7.6).
- 20.43 The staff team in House 4 should have the opportunity to visit similar secure units in Great Britain. (Para 7.12).
- 20.44 Deductions for board and lodgings should not be made from YTP "wages". (Para 7.16).
- 20.45 A reasonable balance of male/female residential social workers should be maintained in House 6 (para 7.20).
- 20.46 Boys should be allowed to stay up to watch late night TV at weekends if they wish (para 7.31).
- 20.47 Staff should sit with boys at meal times (para 7.33).
- 20.48 Old training school phrases should slip from common usage. (Para 7.33).
- 20.49 The symbolic locking up of boys in Youth Treatment is unnecessary and shall be discontinued (para 7.34).

- 20.50 Young people shall be given the opportunity to participate in their reviews. (Para 7.39).
- 20.51 The chairing of children's reviews in Youth Treatment should become a function of senior staff. (Para 7.40).
- 20.52 The format of the quarterly review should be examined (para 7.40).
- 20.53 All weekend leave should terminate at the same time. (Para 7.43).
- 20.54 The marks system operating throughout the Centre should be reviewed. (Para 7.44, 9.8).
- 20.55 It is recommended that management review the whole policy of smoking and this should apply uniformly throughout the Centre. (Para 7.46).
- 20.56 The levels of clothing money operating in Care and Youth Treatment should be reviewed. (Para 7.48).
- 20.57 All members of the community care team should be encouraged to attend training courses. (Para 8.4).
- 20.58 The administrative arrangements for the community care team should be reviewed. (Para 8.11).
- 20.59 An answerphone shall be provided at the Eastside Project and consideration shall be given to the provision of part time assistance. (Para 8.37).
- 20.60 Recording systems in the Eastside Project should be reviewed. (Para 8.46).
- 20.61 Consideration should be given to the appointment of an additional social worker to the Eastside Project. (Para 8.47).
- 20.62 Young pesons, who are day attenders shall be supervised from the school and their names removed from the house roll as being on extended leave. (Para 9.6)
- 20.63 The allocation of meals in general shall be reviewed and an effort made to rationalise the process. (Para 9.8).
- 20.64 Every effort should be made to maximise the use of Runkerry Centre. (Para 9.9).
- 20.65 The issues regarding the quantity, quality and temperature of food should be examined. (Para 10.2).
- 20.66 Management should examine the feasibility of changing the present catering arrangements. The refurbishing programme shall not act as an impediment to the introduction of cooking in units when practicable. (Para 10.6)

**RGL-23738** 

- 20.67 The present practice of dispensing medication should be reviewed. (Para 11.9).
- 10.68 The supervision of the contraception pill should be reviewed immediately. (Para 11.10).
- 20.69 The practice of "sick parades" should be reviewed. (Paras 11.10 and 7.28)
- 20.70 The practice of residential social workers taking children to hospital and other clinics at short notice should be reviewed. (Para 11.20).
- 20.71 A system of monitoring, akin to that used within the Health and Social Services Boards should be implemented. (Para 13.4).
- 20.72 An Admissions and Discharges Register should be maintained (para 14.2).
- 20.73 Steps should be taken, as soon as possible, to resolve the several issues regarding fire inspections and practices set out in paragraph 14.10. (Para 14.9).
- 20.74 Senior management shall review the present operation of the Barnardo's Home Project in as far as it relates to the Rathgael Centre. (Para 18.11).

APPENDIX A

# JOB SPECIFICATION FOR SENIOR RESIDENTIAL SOCIAL WORKER

- 1. Senior Residential Social Workers must have a recognised Social Work qualification and already hold the position of Housewarden.
- 2. He will be a member of the senior staff team and must be able to take full responsibility for the school, from time to time.
- 3. Hours of duty will normally be as for the post of Housewarden, but considerable flexibility will be required to meet the exigencies that may arise, e.g., holidays.
- 4. The Senior Residential Social Worker may also be required to accept responsibility for areas of work of special interest.

# JOB SPECIFICATION FOR HOUSEWARDENS

# AT RATIIGAEL CENTRE

- 1. Housewardens must have a recognised Child Care qualification of be in the process of training for such qualification (subject to satisfactory
- The Housewarden will be responsible to the relevant Deputy Director and will be expected to work in co-operation with senior staff in implementing policies of the Centre.
- 3. Hours of Duty (Monday Friday) will be on alternative shift basis, with weekend work (4 in 12), and should not normally average more than 39 hours per week over a twelve week period (as at present).
- 4. The Housewarden will be responsible for working with and leading the House team in providing proper standards of care and treatment, with particular emphasis on initiating and maintaining an ongoing assessment and treatment programme which will be aimed at catering for the needs of each individual child. This will entail liaison with teachers, instructors psychologists, psychiatrists and possibly outside agencies (Social Services, Probation, etc.), thus providing a total approach to each boy/right
- 5. Each Housewarden will be responsible for the day-to-day management and general administration of the Unit.

## This will entail:

- (a) Liaising with senior staff to ensure clear communication.
- (b) Maintaining pocket money and tuckshop accounts which may be subject to an audit.
- (c) Ensuring that all House business is up to date and accurate, e.g., files, licensing reports, case conferences, etc.
- (d) He/she will be responsible for organising such meetings as may be necessary for the implementing and review of treatment programmes.
- (e) Organising fire drills on a regular basis (at least one per month) and keeping a record of same.
- (f) The delegation of particular duties and responsibilities to other members of the residential Care team.
- (g) Responsibility for fittings and fixtures. Regular stocktaking will be part of this exercise.
- 6. Because of changes in the role of the Training Schools, Housewardens will be expected to be imaginative and innovative in their approach and as members of the middle management team will be seen as key figures in developing fresh techniques to meet future developments. The success of Rathgael as a facility which will play an effective role in present and future developments is dependent upon cohesive teamwork and good professional relationships within the context of the House Unit, the Centre and outside agencies. The Housewarden will be seen as a key figure in developing the 'esprit de corps' and cohesiveness within his/her team which will enable it to play a positive role in the field of

#### JOB SPECIFICATION FOR RESIDENTIAL SOCIAL WORKERS

- 1. Residential Social Workers should have a recognised Child Care qualification. Unqualified staff will be expected to successfully complete a course of training leading to such qualification as soon as circumstances permit.
- 2. The Residential Social Worker will be responsible to the Housewarden and will also be expected to work in co-operation with senior staff in implementing school policies.
- 3. Hours of duty (Monday Friday) will be on an alternate shift basis, with week-end work (4 in 12) and should not normally average more than hours per week over a twelve week period (as at present).
- 4. The Residential Social Worker will be expected to work with other members of the house team in providing proper standards of care and treatment, and will be expected to co-operate with the housewarden in initiating and maintaining an ongoing assessment and treatment programme which will be aimed at catering for the needs of each individual bey: This may entail liaison with teachers, instructors, psycholgists, psychiatrists and possibly outside agencies (Social Services, Probation, etc.), thus providing a total approach to each bey and his problems.
- 5. The Residential Social Worker will be expected to play a major role in the day-to-day management and general administration of the unit and will be required to carry out such duties as may be delegated by the housewarden.
- 6. In view of possible changes in the role of the Training School Residential Social Workers will be expected to work in co-operation with the housewarden in developing fresh techniques to meet future developments.

The success of Rathgael as a facility which will play an effective role in present and future developments is dependent upon cohesive teamwork and good professional relationships within the context of the house unit, the school and outside agencies. The Residential Social Worker will be expected to work in co-operation with the housewarden in trying to achieve the cohesiveness within the team which will enable it to play a positive role in the field of residential care.

**RGL-23742** 

APPENDIX A

## JOB SPECIFICATION

# HOUSEMOTHER - RATHGAEL CENTRE

## RESPONSIBLE TO:

The appropriate Deputy Director.

## REPORTS TO:

The Housewarden of her Unit.

## RESPONSIBLE FOR:

The day-to-day domestic routines within the hou unit.

Stocks of clothing and bedding and arranging for the laundering and repairing thereof.

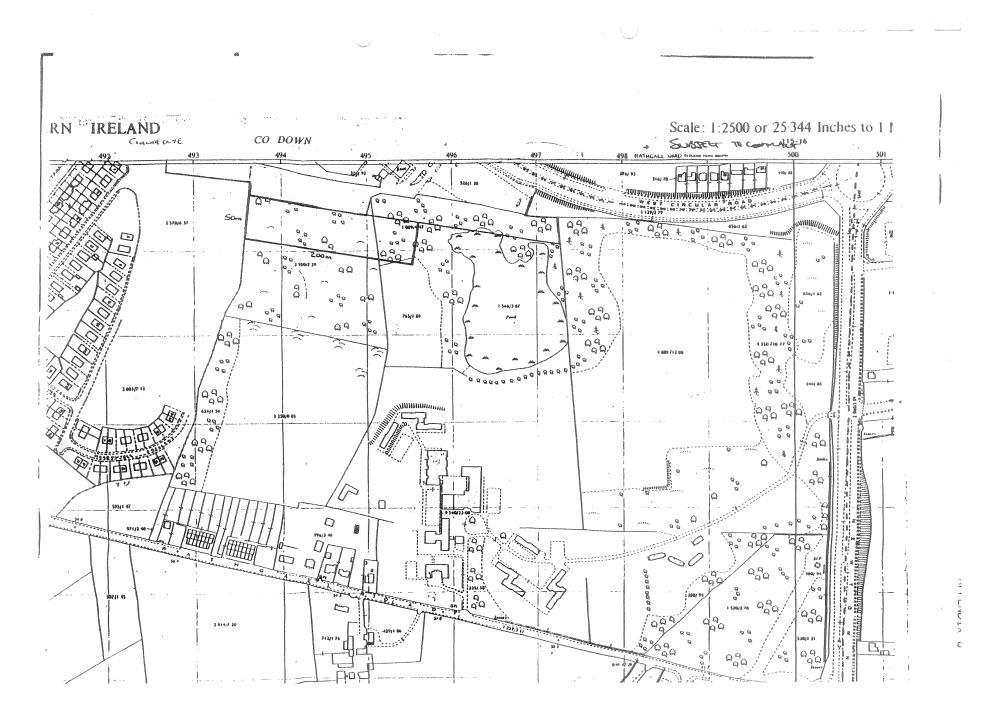
General responsibility for the dining-room, the serving of meals, washing-up of dishes and the supervision of trolleys to and from the central kitchen.

The maintenance of general standards of hygiene in the unit and the personal appearance and hygiene of the boys under her care.

Simple routine tasks with individuals or groups of boys, e.g., sick bay parties, shopping expeditions, etc.

Housemothers may become involved in the social and recreational activities of the unit. This may lead, as it has in the past, to their seeking and getting promotion within the residentia social work framework.

Hours of duty will be arranged by the appropriat Deputy Director and will include four week-ends in each twelve week period. They will be restricted to an average of 39 hours per week over the period.



APPENDIX C

#### Marks System

As it stands at the moment the marks system is ineffective as the macomponent in the past has been its reward punishment element effecti

- (a) Pocket Money
- (b) Grades
- (c) Privileges
- (d) Leave

As leave was the major factor in control it is not now effective as does not depend on marks and at least 60% of our children do not have Leave. Another major drawback was that the most difficult disturbed children got consistently low marks and therefore rather than gaining incentive were being perpetually discouraged and given negative reinforcement whereas the quieter, more amenable child could slide through unnoticed, whilst the brighter children could 'play the system and remain untouched'.

The marks system ,however, could be used positively if a system could be devised to -

- (a) Focus on the individual childs needs and progress,
- and(b) Be used as a means of encouraging the cohesiveness of the group.

This is possible but will make more demands on staff to carry through I would foresee however that the benefits to be gained would more the compensate for the effort involved.

## New Marks System

- The marks will remain the same in total for the individual ie. 5 maximum from school 5 maximum from unit per week.
- 2. The school marks will continue as before.
- 3. The Marks from the unit will be awarded for an individually tailor weekly target. This will be decided at a weekly meeting of staff and children on a Tuesday morning 9.30 10.30. The staff imput to this would come from the focus of the weekly review of individual children at the Friday Team Meeting. The children would also be able to put their own suggestions at the meeting. The individual target should have a single or at most a dual focus. cg. for --
  - $\Lambda$  It could be to keep her room tidy all week.
  - $\underline{\underline{\mathsf{B}}}$  To keep his temper and not be heard using bad language.
  - $\underline{\mathbb{C}}$  . To buy own groceries and cook a meal at the weekend.
  - $\underline{\underline{\mathsf{D}}}$  To take part in group activities.
- d. The marks would be judged as follows:-
  - \_ 0 No effort to improve
  - 1-2 Slight improvement but could have been better
    - 3-4 Real effort made
    - 5 Excellent

**RGL-23745** 

Marks would be awarded by children and staff at the Tuesday meetir

5. Individual marks would effect to pocket money.

Basic allowance for 0-2 marks Bonus for 3-5 marks

6. Group incentive out of 100. The total marks would be averaged as follows:-

N - number of children

M - total marks

8 children

total 70 marks

H1  $M/N \times 10 = 70/8 \times 10 = 87$ 

H2 or 13 children total 98 98/13 x 100 = 75%

In addition there would be a group mark for 3 specified targets who could be maintained for several weeks and then changed. -

There would be a Basic Total for the units. Any unit achieving thi total would get a bonus and the best unit, on a monthly total, a special privilege. eg. Outing to the ice rink or the pictures paid for by school or a cash prize for units funds. Individual and grous scores to be kept on record chart as indicated. Basic total 90 Maximum marks 130.

To begin with senior staff will attend the Tuesday morning meeting rotation to help iron out difficulties and help establish a uniform approach.

A child joining the unit or returning from absconding will begin a personal target programme at the following Tuesday group meeting. They will however form part of the group target team on entry to the house. Day pupils will participate in the marks system.

## Target Suggestions

Individual Targets.

- 1. Dress tidily
- 2. Do job well
- 3. No absconding
- 4. No use of bad language
- 5. Offering to help others
- 6. Keeping room tidy
- 7. Participating in group activities
- 8. Ring and speak to parent personal targets may only be suggested by either girls or staff if it has been previously discussed and agreed with the individual concerned to use it.

**RGL-23746** 

# General Group Targets

- 1. No litter or cigarette butts outside unit.
- 2. All bedrooms tidy clothes hung up.
- 3. All graffiti removed from unit.
- 4. No absconding.
- 5. In prayers before 9 O'clock each morning and all behaving.
- 6. One day no one on unit smokes including staff on duty.
- 7. Tidy school uniform.

# Individual Group Targets

Everyone participates in group activity during week.

RGL-23747

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# GRADES - ADOLESCEDNT CARE UNITS

There are 3 grades in operation in the Care section of the Centre. Children commence in grade 3 and progress to grade 1.

#### Grade 3

- 1. Grade 3 starts at the lowest rate of pocket money as outlined in marks system.
- During grade 3 children do not leave the Centre unaccompanied exc to go on home leave.
- The minimum time in grade 3 is 4 weeks.

#### Grade 2

Conditions for transfer to grade 2.

- Ho absconding for 4 consecutive weeks.
- 2. A total of 24 marks in 4 consecutive weeks (average of 6 per week

# Privileges of Grade 2

- 1. Allowed to go to shops on own, at the discretion of staff, provided that there has been no absconding for at least 14 days and behaviour has been reasonable.
- Grade 2 pocket money.
- School based leave on the same conditions as Grade 1 provided it is to a particular place for a specified time. - 1 day only.

# Expectations of Grade 2

- To help newcomers settle in to the Unit.
- To explain to the newcomers in the group meeting how marks and grades work.

#### Grade L

Conditions for transfer to Grade 1

- 1. Re in Grade 2
- Have a further 8 weeks without abscording.
- Gain a total of 56 in 8 consecutive weeks (average of 7 per week).

# Privileges of Grade 1

- 1. All privileges of Grade 2.
- 2. Grade 1 pocket money
- З. One night per week school based leave for a specific purpose. 4.
- 2 days school based leave at the weekend.

The privilege of leaving the Centre unaccompanied is not given automatic. but is also dependant on reliability.

# Expectations of Grade 1

- To take responsibility for recording group meetings. 2.
- To take responsibility for House Fund Accounts and discuss ways of spending this. З.
- To help plan house activities taking everyones interests into acce 4.
- To show round visitors to the house.
- 5. To take responsibility of discussing ways of improving their house

If, once a Grade is achieved, a person consistently falls below the standar of that Grade the group will consider whether or not they should remain in

**RGL-23751** 

On committal a boy or girl will be allocated £100 initial clothing grant, followed by an allowance of £2 per week.

At the end of the first year a £40 bonus is given. If replacements are required at this stage for school uniform, up to £20 of the bonus may be used for this, the remainder to be paid out of school fund.

Out of this children buy all their basic personal clothing. The school will also provide them with their school uniform, and additional items, in special circumstances, to be approved by Senior Staff.

## <u>Operation</u>

Each child will have their own record card showing allocation, amount spent and items purchased. The Key Worker should monitor the child's spending and discuss needs as a way of developing a realistic attitude to budgeting. Care should be taken that children budget for non fashion articles, e.g. underwear, nightclothes, slippers, etc., and have adequate outdoor clothing. The warden will monitor spending and deal with the office regarding accounts records. A receipt must be obtained for all purchases.

The following clothing lists are included for your guidance.

# BASIC CLOTHING LISTS - BOYS

Underwear
Socks
Shirts
Jeans or trousers
Shoes
Trainers
Sweater
Outdoor jacket
Slippers
Pyjamas
Dressing gown ?
Trousers and ; (Church)

# SCHOOL UNIFORM - BOYS

- 2 Pairs trousers (charcoal grey)
- 2 Shirts (grey)
- 2 Pair socks (grey)
- 1 Pair navy shoes
- l Royal blue tie
- 2 Navy jumpers

**RGL-23752** 

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The following clothing lists are included for your guidance.

# BASIC CLOTHING LISTS - GIRLS

Winter coat
Jacket or
Shoes
Slippers
Briefs
Bras
Tights
Nightdresses
Dressing gown
Jeans
Skirt and blouse or ) For Sunday wear
Top - Lightweight
Jumper or cardigan

# SCHOOL UNIFORM - GIRLS

2 Skirts 2 Jumpers

2 Blouses

2 Pairs Socks

I Pair outdoor shoes

2 Pair P.E. pants

l P.E. Blouse l P.E. Skirt

l Pair gym shoes

Track Suit