

P.E.

As a separate note I would add that numbers on the day of our visit were 86. This was due to the annual intake from Nazeath Lodge, (this year 13 or 14). **BR 17** had been unable to discharge many boys and has no hope of discharging more than five between now and Christmas when some school leavers should go out.

Meanwhile he has 4 eleven boys sleeping in the room which was described in the last report as intended for drying-room, cum recreation room. This is the kind of place which one would accept as holiday-camp standard but hardly for permanent occupation. It has no H.C's



Ministry of Home Affairs,  
Stormont, Belfast.

P.C.

It is not possible to answer your queries adequately without further enquiry and possibly discussion between Ministry representatives and Rubane management and architect.

We have no doubt that some improvements to cooking, dining, recreation, toilet and sleeping arrangements are essential even if no extension of numbers beyond 71 were contemplated. The present accommodation is unsuitable and inadequate for 71 in respect of cooking and dining, inadequate in respect of sleeping and sanitation and non-existent in respect of recreation. At present work is going on to provide a recreation room, a viewing room and a reading room in the old coachyard buildings. We would need to have details of the areas of these and of the dormitories in the Steward's house before we could say with any accuracy to what extent further provision would be needed to bring the place up to Home Office standards for 71 boys.

We have been given a copy of a very tentative plan of a cottage. It should be noted that BR 17 is now thinking of cottages for 10 boys, not 20 as suggested previously. The cottage plan shows kitchen and living-rooms as well as bedrooms and the provision of these in each of a number of cottages would affect one's thinking about the main kitchens and dining-rooms and the recreation hall, the more so as one would hope that some use could be made of the assembly/gym to be provided for the intermediate school.

It may be that the management of Rubane has not succeeded in completely switching ideas from the block-type institution to the cottage system and is unconsciously trying to ride two horses at once.

*Kathleen D. Farnsworth*

*John William Smith*

30th August, 1964.



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As a separate note I would add that numbers on the day of our visit were 86. This was due to the annual intake from Nazeath Lodge, (this year 13 or 14). **BR 17** had been unable to discharge many boys and has no hope of discharging more than five between now and Christmas when some school leavers should go out.

Meanwhile he has 4 eleven boys sleeping in the room which was described in the last report as intended for drying-room, cum recreation room. This is the kind of place which one would accept as holiday-camp standard but hardly for permanent occupation. It has no H.C's



T.165

6th September, 1961.

Sir,

I am directed by the Minister of Home Affairs to say that it has been noted with concern that the number of boys now accommodated at Rubane House is 86, and to inform you that no more admissions are to be permitted in any circumstances while numbers are at their present level.

I am to inform you also that any discharges which take place in the next few months should not be regarded as creating vacancies but should be used to run down the numbers to the approved figure of 71 boys.

I am, Sir,  
Your obedient servant,

M. M. MAGRATH

for Secretary

The Director,  
De La Salle Boys' Home,  
Rubane House,  
Kirembia,  
Co. Down.

Spoke to BR 17 to explain  
the blow. Also informed him  
that Miss Forrest & Mr. Williams  
would visit this afternoon

*[Signature]*  
7/9/61.



1962

On Feb. 18th eighty Members of the General Workers' Committee visited the Home. They were entertained to high tea.

On the 15th May the new Sanctuary and chapel extension was officially blessed and opened.

performed the ceremony. About twenty priests were present and a representative congregation of the various benefactors and helpers of the Boys' Home were present at the High Mass and solemn Benediction.

preached an appropriate sermon paying high tribute to the good work the Brothers were doing for the orphans and neglected children.

A four course lunch was provided for those who attended. The Architect was Mr. McHandale and the Contractor was Mr. Henry Gilmore. The choir that sang the special Mass was trained and conducted by

BR 17

He received high praise from all who attended. The painting of the Chapel was done by Mr. Alf Oakes of Loughborough.

The boys' choir went to Sherries for an outing on 3rd June.

On 9th August

BR 17

been

BR 6

On the same date

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BR 4

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Rubane,

K. Robinson,

NETTOWNARDS,

Co. Down.

27th. August 1962.



Dear Sir,

For the past two years, De La Salle Boys' Home has had more boys in residence than accommodation allows and the numbers continue to increase. This overcrowding has been aggravated by the fact that both dining room and kitchen facilities in the main building are totally unsuited. Alteration and renovation of these rooms have long ago proved a waste of money, and the Governing Board are convinced that only a new building attached to the main building will meet all requirements.

To ease the overcrowding, and to keep in pace with modern trends, the Board has decided to build three chalets to house ten boys each, thereby providing accommodation for one hundred boys. It is our ultimate aim to have all the boys housed in ten chalets.

Now the Aftercare Committee has for many years been fighting an uphill battle in providing secure employment for our boys after they leave the Home. To ameliorate their difficulties, we have reached agreement with the Ministry of Education to provide a Secondary Intermediate School. Sanction for the Intermediate will be given by the Ministry of Education when residential accommodation for one hundred boys has been provided by the Home.

But the greatest barrier to all these schemes has been our financial position. We still have a Capital Debt of £15,000. Our annual maintenance is approximately £12,000. Now, a new Dining Hall and Kitchen would cost approximately £25,000, and three chalets, £7,000 each, £21,000. Our share of the Intermediate School would be £15,000.

Taking into consideration the work we have done in the sphere of Child Welfare over the past twelve years and the help and co-operation given to Welfare Authorities, Education Authorities and Special Care, we make a very earnest appeal to the Ministry for grant aid in our undertakings.

Trusting the Ministry will give sympathetic consideration to our plea.

I am,

Yours truly,

BR 17

The Secretary,  
Ministry of Home Affairs,  
Stormont,  
BELFAST, 4.

Dining Hall & Kitchen - 25.10.62  
2 Chalets - 27.10.62  
16.6.1962



Reference..... T.165

BR 39

BR 6

Rubane House, Kircubbin

*W2*  
 Miss Forrest and I visited Rubane on 14th November, 1962, and were shown over the premises by **BR 6**. It is obvious that considerable trouble has been taken to make the dormitories more attractive, several of them having been recently decorated, each in an individual colour scheme.

This, however, is the best that can be said for the dormitories, for the state of overcrowding in them continues to present an acute problem. In the main house five rooms contain 52 beds (12, 11, 10, 10, 9) while in the steward's house there is one room containing 10 beds, and 3 rooms with 7 each, i.e., 31 beds.

Of the total 83 beds, 81 are occupied by the boys in residence and each dormitory presents a picture of a regimentation of beds, placed end to end, and leaving inadequate floor space; the only mitigating factor as far as space is concerned is that the ceilings are high, making the rooms airy, but also cold. Bedclothes appeared to be adequate.

It was not an unusually cold day, but the damp chill of the basement wash-room was penetrating. Early morning ablutions in these conditions must be an endurance test.

The dining-room was in a bad state of repair; it was suggested to **BR 6** that the tables without formica tops might at least have plastic cloths. The kitchen was more cheerful, and the baking of Christmas cakes was in progress.

The recreation rooms were very untidy, the little theatre (T.V. room) being the worst offender in this respect - it looked as if it had several days' accumulation of dust and litter.

All the boys were in good health, but many of them, relaxing after school, looked pinched and cold; their clothing in many instances was in very bad order, threadbare and torn, and affording little protection against the weather.

The general appearance of the boys and of parts of the premises indicate a serious need for more adequate staffing and more womanly care.

It was clear from conversations with **BR 6** on this and previous occasions that he is very fearful of the cottage system - the chief problem mentioned being the difficulty of recruiting enough of the right type of housemothers. It seems to us, however, that whatever system is used they need to recruit more of the right type of housemothers!

As he has now written about the forthcoming Committee Meeting it is recommended that a letter should be sent to them pointing out that whatever decision is reached as to future plans there will need to be a much higher proportion of staff to children.

Their present ratio is seven brothers and a part-time matron to 81 children (3 brothers have full-time teaching duties and one manages the farm). The Child Welfare Council has recommended a ratio of not less than 1:6. Home Office would probably think in terms of 1:5 as minimum although if there were a cottage system a housemother with adequate and suitable domestic help might manage more.

*Miss Ewart was visiting boys in the Home on the same day & Miss Hill subsequently heard from her that she was well pleased with their progress. They appeared natural & cheerful & to be enjoying life. This was mentioned to P.C. 10/12/62*

K. B. Forrest  
 A. J. Hill

26th November, 1962.



PROVINCIAL MOTHER HOUSE.

Telephone: CASTLETOWN 2.

DE LA SALLE RETREAT,  
CASTLETOWN,  
LAOIS.

14 - II - 19 62

Dear Brother Director,

In reply to your letter in which you ask for my advice on the question of introducing the 'Cottage System' to Kircubbin now that it is found necessary to increase the accommodation there, I give what I consider are some of the points in favour of the 'Cottage System' and also the conditions underwhich I would ask the Brothers recommend the new system.

Some advantages of the 'Cottage System':

1. The grouping together of boys of the same age and interests
2. The formation of a family spirit. This is impossible in a big group.
3. The fostering of a spirit of self-reliance and leadership.
4. The opportunity of self-expression.
5. Better preparation for after life.

Some conditions for the effective running of the 'Cottage System'.

1. That the Diocesan Authorities approve.
2. That the State is in favour.
3. That the required supervision is guaranteed at all times

and the Brothers are not to undertake this supervision work. A Catholic married couple prepared to devote their time to Apostolic Work and for the 24 hours of the day would be best. If such can be found the scheme will be a success. Without a guarantee of getting this type of married couple it would, I think, be less than prudent to undertake the work of developing the 'Cottage System' in Kircubbin.

With all good wishes,

I remain,

Yours v. sincerely in J.C.

BP 1



Telephone: Belfast 63210,  
 Telegrams: "Homaff," Belfast.  
 Any reply to this communication should  
 be addressed to  
 "THE SECRETARY"  
 and the following reference quoted



MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS,  
 STORMONT,  
 BELFAST, 4,  
 Northern Ireland.

T.165

19th February, 1963.

Reverend Sir,

I am directed by the Minister of Home Affairs to refer to previous correspondence and discussions concerning proposals to increase to 100 the number of boys to be accommodated at Rubane, to provide cottage accommodation for them and to modernise and alter the existing premises. It is now understood that the Ministry of Education will be prepared to authorise proposals for an intermediate school at Rubane for a minimum number of 80 instead of 100 boys, and I am to confirm that on receipt of suitable evidence that approved new building and alteration is to be carried out this Ministry will be prepared to recognise Rubane as a voluntary home for 80 boys.

It is understood that you propose to relieve present overcrowding and to provide for the additional nine places by erecting three cottages, each accommodating eleven boys and houseparents, and by suitable modifications and adaptations of the existing premises. It is further understood that your long-term plans are to accommodate all the boys in cottages with houseparents and to use existing premises for administrative offices, staff accommodation, etc.

The Ministry will be prepared to consider an application for grant under the Children and Young Persons Act (Northern Ireland), 1950, in aid of the proposed expenditure except in so far as it concerns the intermediate school accommodation and the additional nine places.

In making application for grant you should submit plans of all proposed buildings, alterations and modifications, together with estimates of costs. The application should also be accompanied by a detailed financial statement for the past three years and an indication of the financial implications of all the current proposals (i.e. including those which will not rank for grant).

I am to stress the importance of co-operation between your architect and the Ministry to ensure that all your proposals, irrespective of the question of grant, will meet the Ministry's approval. I am also to point out the advisability of early consultation with the Northern Ireland Fire Authority.

I am, Reverend Sir,  
 Your obedient Servant,

*J. H. Parkes*

for Secretary

The Director,  
 De La Salle Boys' Home,  
 Rubane,  
 Kircubbin,  
 Newtownards,  
 Co. Down.



Society be approached with a view to an increase of the weekly contribution towards the maintenance of Nazareth Lodge boys at Rubane. The Governors would like to see the weekly contribution raised to £1 and [REDACTED] was instructed to notify the Society of their decision.

BR 6

A long discussion took place on the future development of the Home as envisaged in the architect's submitted plans. The respective merits of the proposed new cottage system as against the present institutional one was lengthily debated. The financial outlay was seen to be excessive and grave doubts were expressed as to whether the new scheme would meet our worries as regards the supervision of the boys and the procuring of suitable housemothers.

It was eventually decided that a sub-committee should be formed to discuss with the Ministry of Home Affairs the future development of the Home. Sir Lordship suggested that the following members of the Board should form the deputation to the Ministry:

9.

BR 39

The sub-committee were asked to report back to the next meeting of the Board. This concluded the business of the meeting.

19th February, 1964

Mr. Roy's Home

Mr. Belfast

Mr. Hillin

The Board

There was

Mr. Red one

Chairman

Mr. Hillin

Mr. Mullaly V.G.

By Mr. Namara.

Mr. Montague, P.P.

Mr. Curran, adms.

Mr. Hillin, adms.

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The Home

Mr. O'Phelan



Meeting in Conference Room, Chichester House, on 26th February, 1963, between representatives of the Trustees of the Voluntary Home for Boys, Rubane, and Ministry of Home Affairs, to discuss the form of proposed developments at the Home.

Representing Trustees

Monsignor Mullally

Brother BR 39

Representing Ministry

Mr. Alexander

Mr. Parkes

Miss Forrest

Mr. Magrath

Monsignor Mullally explained that he had sought this meeting because the Trustees objected to the proposals put before them recently by Brother BR 39 for improvement and extension of sleeping accommodation in the form of chalets staffed by houseparents and incorporating small bedrooms. He understands that the Ministry favours the proposals and, while the Trustees appreciate that chalets would provide a close approach to normal home surroundings, they consider that this form of sleeping accommodation presents a real danger in that boys who have been deprived of normal home life will have opportunity for undesirable practices. In addition the introduction of houseparents would reduce the functions of the De La Salle Brothers and the Order would object to this. In putting forward the idea that any new sleeping accommodation should be in the form of a block dormitory Monsignor Mullally emphasised that financial considerations had no bearing on the Trustees' views.

Miss Forrest observed that the Trustees appeared to be making a negative approach to the question of moral training. Her view is that kindness and consideration for the feelings of others are basic essentials and to get children to develop these they must have a close and continuing personal relationship with adults. She has long been troubled by the fact that boys cared for in Institutions do not get a chance to form such relationships. The Ministry is confident that the introduction of chalet houseparents is the answer.

Monsignor Mullally could not agree that children passing through, say, the several Departments of Nazareth Lodge, do not form satisfactory relationships with the staff Sisters: in fact his feeling is that relationships are established within the groups to which boys are attached. He foresees great difficulty in recruiting the rather special type of person to act as houseparents, particularly because of the geographical situation of Rubane House.

Miss Forrest replied that the Ministry's desire is to have houseparents introduced for the reasons already given by her and she is reasonably confident having regard to Welfare Authority experience in Co. Down that suitable persons can be recruited. She is unable to see that the danger of undesirable practices is any greater in small bedrooms: as she sees it the real risk is from one boy starting this sort of thing and that risk is the same in large or small rooms and is not necessarily confined to bedrooms.

Mr. Alexander asked why was it felt that large dormitories reduced the risk. BR 39 said that the problem was acute at the old Milltown Training School but there has been no such problem at St. Patrick's Training School, which was designed deliberately to remove the privacy under which bad practices could take place.

Mr. Parkes pointed out that the subject of discussion is a Home for boys - not a Training School - and that therefore consideration must be given to more than physical circumstances: for instance, if boys are unhappy and insecure and have no adult to whom to turn for affection it is reasonable to conclude that the danger of malpractices is increased.

Monsignor Mullally admitted that the modern trend in child care is towards small units but he thinks that reaction against large dormitories has gone too far. He feels there is nothing penal in the sharing of a dormitory by say 20 boys: this is in fact the situation in many boarding schools and is not regarded as a throwback to Workhouse days.

/ Miss Forrest



Miss Forrest said, however, that there is a big difference in that boys at boarding school are based on normal families.

Monsignor Mullally replied that Rubane boys are a hazard because they have have no such base: he feels that the Rubane boys replace the lack of family relationships by establishing a relationship with the group of which they are a unit.

Monsignor Mullally and [REDACTED] made it clear that in their view the Superiors of the De La Salle Order will not agree to the use of the Brothers at Rubane simply as teachers and the Diocesan Authorities will object if there is to be any lessening of the influence of the Brothers.

Mr. Parkes expressed surprise at the sudden hardening of opinion against chalets. The Ministry has been under the impression for some eight years that any improvements at Rubane would be on the cottage system: preference for chalets shows no sudden change of heart by the Ministry.

**BR 39** [REDACTED] explained that it was only within the past few weeks that the prospects of final agreement on the proposed development had improved and therefore the proposals were being viewed in a more critical light.

[REDACTED] asked for an explanation of the difference in financial treatment of boys in Training Schools and boys in Voluntary Homes.

In reply Mr. Alexander, Mr. Parkes and Miss Forrest made these points:-

- (a) The Ministry has power to help Voluntary Organisations who have been prepared to go on working after the setting up of the statutory child-care bodies.
- (b) This power to assist is tied to the adherence to certain standards and is limited to the improvement of existing Homes: since child care is the statutory duty of Welfare Authorities no help can be given in the establishment of new Homes or for the extension of existing ones.
- (c) Training Schools must accept all children committed by the Courts; Voluntary Homes can choose whom they admit: a greater degree of financial assistance would remove the power of choice.
- (d) If Voluntary Organisations feel that they are not being paid adequately for Welfare Authority children in their care the remedy is in their own hands. At the passing of the Children and Young Persons Act, 1950, the Voluntary Organisations agreed among themselves to charge less than the full cost of maintenance. Presumably this was in furtherance of their independence and charitable objectives, the decision was not forced on them by the Welfare Authorities and need not be adhered to.

[REDACTED] then asked would the Ministry be prepared to grant-aid a block development as an alternative to chalets at Rubane. Monsignor Mullally added that the Church feels genuine concern in the method of dormitory provision and while he recognises the force of the Ministry's arguments in favour of chalets he cannot agree to them where problem boys are concerned.

Mr. Alexander explained that while the Ministry representatives present have not the last word in the matter it appears to him that because of the present trend towards small house units there could be difficulty in securing approval to pay grant on a development along lines the Ministry considers wrong. Further, he is doubtful if the Ministry would be justified in continuing to include in the Register of Voluntary Homes one which is staffed so inadequately at present. There is also the point that Welfare Authorities might object to bearing their share of the cost of improving a Home which is not being developed on accepted lines: indeed they might refuse to continue to use Rubane.

/Mr. Parkes



Mr. Parkes added that the Ministry has persuaded Ministry of Education to consider concessions in regard to the proposed Intermediate School at Rubane. It is possible that Ministry of Education will think again about this if the developments proposed are not approved by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Monsignor Mullally said that the financial implications of the Trustees' proposals are a surprise but on their behalf he and his colleagues have put forward conscientiously held views on how Rubane should be developed. He expressed the hope that the Ministry, recognising the good work being done for children, will agree to the subvention of the proposed development on the block system. An earnest of the good intentions of the Trustees is the amount of money spent so far on the acquisition and maintenance of Rubane: their current debt on this account is £69,000. In spite of this burden they are prepared to improve the Home and to bear their share of the cost of an Intermediate School. There is no lack of will on the part of the Trustees to make the Home a good place and he is confident that it will be a better place if it is developed as proposed.

\_\_\_\_\_ enquired whether eleven-place dormitories in the chalets would be acceptable to the Ministry.

Mr. Alexander suggested that both sides should take time for reconsideration in an attempt to arrive at a compromise on matters of principle. Then we can look again at the other difficulties, namely finding housemothers and ensuring the continued participation of the De La Salle Brothers.

Mr. Parkes supported the exploration of a compromise and added that the Ministry has no lack of will to help. Indeed help has been forthcoming at every turn - particularly in the acceptance of a degree of overcrowding at Rubane and seeking concessions from Ministry of Education. For the first time we have really heard each other's views and the next useful step appears to be a further but smaller meeting - at a date to be arranged - to discuss the way to go in principle.

This proposal was approved by the meeting and in conclusion Monsignor Mullally thanked Mr. Alexander for giving a hearing to the points made on behalf of the Trustees.



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Mr. Alexander explained that while the Ministry representatives present have not the last word in the matter it appears to him that because of the present trend towards small house units there could be difficulty in securing approval to pay grant on a development along lines the Ministry considers wrong. Further, he is doubtful if the Ministry would be justified in continuing to include in the Register of Voluntary Homes one which is staffed so inadequately at present. There is also the point that Welfare Authorities might object to bearing their share of the cost of improving a Home which is not being developed on accepted lines: indeed they might refuse to continue to use Rubane.

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Mr. Parkes supported the exploration of a compromise and added that the Ministry has no lack of will to help. Indeed help has been forthcoming at every turn - particularly in the acceptance of a degree of overcrowding at Rubane and seeking concessions from Ministry of Education. For the first time we have really heard each other's views and the next useful step appears to be a further but smaller meeting - at a date to be arranged - to discuss the way to go in principle.

This proposal was approved by the meeting and in conclusion Monsignor Mullally thanked Mr. Alexander for giving a hearing to the points made on behalf of the Trustees.

*These notes agreed by  
Bos. [REDACTED] without  
amendment Tracy*  
5/3/63.





Rev. **BR 39**  
St. Patrick's Boys' Training School,  
Glen Road,  
Belfast, 11.

24th November, 1960.

Dear **BR 39**

Proposed Intermediate School, Dining & Recreation  
& Dwelling Accommodation, at Kircubbin, Co. Down.

Please find enclosed herewith drawings referring to above scheme.

The schedule of costs in as follows:-

(1) Recreation Hall.	-	£4,500.
(2) Dining Hall and Kitchen.	-	£12,000.
(3) Each Cottage.	-	£9,000.

I trust these are the particulars you need but shall be glad to furnish you with any further information required.

Yours faithfully,

*Samuel McLaughlin*

Enc.  
DMR/BC



# De La Salle Orphan Boys' Home Voluntary Workers Committee

St. Patrick's Boys' School

Glen Road, Belfast.

25th November, 1960.

I am directed by the Trustees of De La Salle Boys Voluntary Home, the House, Kircubbin, Co. Down, to refer to the recent discussions BR 17 and myself had with the Ministry regarding the provision of additional accommodation for the children at present in the Home and its future development generally.

Rubane House and 250 acres of land were purchased by the Trustees for a sum of £45,000 and after expending a further sum of £10,000 it was opened as a Voluntary Home early in 1951. The Capital of £60,000 was defrayed by a long term loan from the Bank. In order to meet the interest and repayment of the capital debt the De La Salle Workers Committee was formed in 1951 and since then through its charitable activities of that Committee the capital debt has now been reduced to £15,000.

During the nine years the Home is in existence it has catered for the following boys made up as follows:-

Transferred from Nazareth Lodge on attaining the age of 11 plus	99	
Voluntary Cases (including 24 boys boarded out from St. Patrick's Training School, Milltown)	57	33
Ministry of Pension Cases	4	
Belfast Welfare Committee	33	
Down Welfare Committee	20	
Antrim Welfare Committee	9	

605  
100 (2)  
505  
515  
12  
Londonderry/



Welfare Committee	6
s Education Authorities	8
als Authority Special Care	4

at present there are 78 boys in the Home made up as follows:-

Nazareth Lodge Boys	39
at Welfare Authority	13
elfare Authority	4
Welfare Authority	3
Welfare Authority	3
Welfare Authority	1
erry County Welfare Authority	3
ion Authorities	6
l Care Service	2
ary Cases at request of Parent or Guardian	4

ue to lack of accommodation during the past year the Home has refuse admission to one boy from Armagh Welfare, one from t Welfare, one from Belfast Education Committee and three ary Cases. I would mention that one of the boys concerned spend his waiting 12 months in a Mental Hospital, the Welfare ity concerned being unable to house him in conditions suitable needs.

ince 1956 the average intake of boys from Nazareth Lodge has 2 per year and it appears likely that this number will be ined for some years to come. As these boys are all in the 11 ge group they are likely to stay at the Home for at least four

years/



Miss Forrest said, however, that there is a big difference in that boys at boarding school are based on normal families.

Monsignor Mullally replied that Rubane boys are a hazard because they have have no such base: he feels that the Rubane boys replace the lack of family relationships by establishing a relationship with the group of which they are a unit.

Monsignor Mullally and [REDACTED] made it clear that in their view the Superiors of the De La Salle Order will not agree to the use of the Brothers at Rubane simply as teachers and the Diocesan Authorities will object if there is to be any lessening of the influence of the Brothers.

Mr. Parkes expressed surprise at the sudden hardening of opinion against chalets. The Ministry has been under the impression for some eight years that any improvements at Rubane would be on the cottage system: preference for chalets shows no sudden change of heart by the Ministry.

**BR 39** [REDACTED] explained that it was only within the past few weeks that the prospects of final agreement on the proposed development had improved and therefore the proposals were being viewed in a more critical light.

[REDACTED] asked for an explanation of the difference in financial treatment of boys in Training Schools and boys in Voluntary Homes.

In reply Mr. Alexander, Mr. Parkes and Miss Forrest made these points:-

- (a) The Ministry has power to help Voluntary Organisations who have been prepared to go on working after the setting up of the statutory child-care bodies.
- (b) This power to assist is tied to the adherence to certain standards and is limited to the improvement of existing Homes: since child care is the statutory duty of Welfare Authorities no help can be given in the establishment of new Homes or for the extension of existing ones.
- (c) Training Schools must accept all children committed by the Courts; Voluntary Homes can choose whom they admit: a greater degree of financial assistance would remove the power of choice.
- (d) If Voluntary Organisations feel that they are not being paid adequately for Welfare Authority children in their care the remedy is in their own hands. At the passing of the Children and Young Persons Act, 1950, the Voluntary Organisations agreed among themselves to charge less than the full cost of maintenance. Presumably this was in furtherance of their independence and charitable objectives, the decision was not forced on them by the Welfare Authorities and need not be adhered to.

[REDACTED] then asked would the Ministry be prepared to grant-aid a block development as an alternative to chalets at Rubane. Monsignor Mullally added that the Church feels genuine concern in the method of dormitory provision and while he recognises the force of the Ministry's arguments in favour of chalets he cannot agree to them where problem boys are concerned.

Mr. Alexander explained that while the Ministry representatives present have not the last word in the matter it appears to him that because of the present trend towards small house units there could be difficulty in securing approval to pay grant on a development along lines the Ministry considers wrong. Further, he is doubtful if the Ministry would be justified in continuing to include in the Register of Voluntary Homes one which is staffed so inadequately at present. There is also the point that Welfare Authorities might object to bearing their share of the cost of improving a Home which is not being developed on accepted lines: indeed they might refuse to continue to use Rubane.

/Mr. Parkes



Notes of Meeting at Stormont on 4th September, 1963PresentRubane House

BR 39

BR 6

Mr. Kelly  
Quantity SurveyorMinistryMiss Forrest  
D.P.C.  
P.C.

The meeting was called at BR 39 request to introduce a new set of plans for new buildings and adaptations of existing buildings at Rubane House. The plans are for two cottages, each housing 20 boys in two dormitories, with recreation and staff accommodation. The adaptations to the existing main building include provision of additional staff quarters, a new kitchen and dining-room, sleeping accommodation for 22 boys and a sick bay.

There was a general discussion of the proposals from which it emerged that the Managers are expecting the numbers at Rubane to be reduced when the proposed new special residential school in Belfast is opened. They also expect that when BR 12 retires the steward's house, which now houses more than 20 boys (very inadequately), will have to revert to its original function, hence the plans before us are apparently for a total accommodation of 62 boys, 40 in cottages and 22 in the main house. Eventually the whole of the main house will be turned into staff and administrative quarters and another cottage built.

JHP

6th September, 1963.

x At present Rubane has 38 ESN boys of whom 18 are in a special class and 20 scattered over other classes : BR 39 estimates that roughly half would be material for the new residential special school.

There are now 43 Welfare Authority boys in Rubane



*H/9/9/63.*  
*D.F.C.*

Attached below is a note of Wednesday's meeting about Rubane. We should now proceed to examine in detail the enclosed plans. We must assume that the Managers will be looking for grant and our examination should, therefore, be based on the need to avoid extravagant or unnecessary provisions, as well as the need to meet minimum Home Office standards and to avoid unsuitable or undesirable developments. Miss Forrest, Mr. Wilkinson and Dr. Simpson will all have to contribute.

The following points, however, can be made without any detailed examination:-

- (1) The cottages as now planned are pretty well purely institutional and bear little resemblance to a children's home. Bearing in mind that many of these boys at Rubane will have had no experience since birth of a normal home life it is sad to see a new development contemplated in 1963 on these workhouse lines.
- (2) It was clear during our discussion that they have not worked out how the new buildings are to be used in some respects, e.g., will the boys from the cottages take only their main meal in the proposed new large dining-room or will they take all meals there? If the latter, what purpose will be served by the kitchen and dining-room in the cottages? If the former, why is the main kitchen and dining-room so large?
- (3) Why in any case do they plan a kitchen and dining-room which is apparently large enough for 80 boys if numbers are expected to fall to 60?
- (4) In general, is there any sense in spending up to (very roughly) £60,000 on a project, the net result of which will be to produce an establishment more like an out-of-date training school than a modern children's home, including -
  - (a) an old house, large parts of which will be virtually unused and the remainder inconvenient and probably uneconomical to maintain, and
  - (b) two brand new cottages which even if they are acceptable now to the Managers will surely be universally regarded as out-of-date, uncivilised and generally unsuitable long before the end of their useful life.

Subject to the observations of our colleagues we shall have to say something like the above (though a good deal more diplomatically) to the Managers. The implications of these views on the question of our attitude to any application for grant should be clear enough to **BR 39** by the time we have made all these points.

*J.H.P.*

6th September, 1963.



Telephone: Belfast 63210,  
Telegrams: "Hornaff," Belfast.  
Any reply to this communication should  
be addressed to  
"THE SECRETARY"  
and the following reference quoted



MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS,  
STORMONT,  
BELFAST, 4.  
Northern Ireland.

T.C.165

10th October, 1963.

Dear

**BR 6**

We have now completed our examination of the plans you left with us on 4th September. I am sorry it has taken us so long to deal with them, but you will realise from what follows that the plans presented a number of problems which have caused us some difficulty.

We appreciate that these plans represent an attempt at compromise between the block dormitory system and a cottage home arrangement with the boys in small groups, but we are afraid that in many respects the attempted compromise seems to have produced the worst of both worlds. The duplication of services involved is likely to lead to a cost which will not compare very favourably with that of a true cottage system, while the degree of continuous individual attention possible for the boys will represent only a limited improvement on present arrangements.

To be more specific, the following points strike us as being of particular importance:-

(1) Although each cottage has a dining-room and small kitchen, communal kitchen and dining facilities are provided in the main building sufficient for well over 100 boys. If the communal dining facilities are to be fully used as such, (i.e. used for more than school dinners) the advantages of placing the boys in small groups will be virtually lost.

(2) We can only reiterate that a cottage for 20 with 2 dormitories for 10 does not represent homely living arrangements.

Moreover, the cottage dormitories are considerably oversized for 10 boys, and the dining-room is about twice as large as it would need to be for 20 boys. Recreation and sitting-rooms together are also larger than necessary when indoor recreation space elsewhere at Rubane is taken into account. Quite apart from the extra cost, would all this not involve a temptation to house more than 20 boys in each cottage, thus reducing still further the homeliness of the cottages - especially since it is not accompanied by adequate staffing.

(3) We notice that you are preparing to provide in the main building 3 bedrooms each housing less than 10 boys, not one of which is directly overlooked. This seems odd when coupled with the proposal to provide cottages on a plan suffering from serious disadvantages in so many ways simply because it is designed to avoid precisely this arrangement.

(4) It is not at all clear to us what staffing arrangements are proposed under the new plans. We had hoped for a greatly-increased proportion of staff to children but, from the number of rooms shown as allocated to staff, this would not appear to be provided for. It is assumed that the rooms overlooking the dormitories are intended for brothers. With two of these in each cottage, two in the main home and (for the time being) one in the Steward's house, you will have a total of seven brothers. Is it intended that a housemother should occupy the ground-floor bedroom and sitting-room in the cottages?

/(5)



(5) We understand that it is intended that eventually all the boys will be accommodated in cottages. In this event we cannot see what use would be made of a large part of the existing main house. Even under present plans there is a good deal of surplus space in the basement and some on the ground floor. When boys cease to live in the home there will be even more surplus space on the first floor. In these circumstances we find it difficult to see the logic of attaching to this building a very large kitchen and dining-room and two elaborate covered passages.

(6) There are a number of relatively minor details, e.g. absence of accommodation for domestic staff, insufficient toilet accommodation for boys in the main house, etc., but there does not seem to be much point in elaborating on these in view of the major difficulties outlined above.

In general we are quite unable to envisage from these documents what long-term policies and what methods of care have been worked out for Rubane, and we wonder whether you yourselves have given sufficient thought to these fundamental questions.

You will appreciate from the above that the Ministry would be unable to give approval to these plans as such, still less as the subject of an application for grant.

Yours sincerely,

*J. H. Parkes*

P.S. I have sent a copy of this letter to

**BR 39**

**BR 6**

De La Salle Boys' Home,  
Rubane,  
Kircubbin,  
Co. Down.



1963

81

BR 3

of this community made the Fifty Days' Retreat held at Ballymorney this summer.

On 22nd April a new gardener, [redacted], was employed. His wife was employed as cook.

This summer, the reconstructed piggery was completed. It is capable of accommodating about seven hundred pigs when full to capacity. A grant from the Ministry of Agriculture towards cost of reconstruction will be forthcoming.

[redacted] from the [redacted] spent three weeks here during the Autumn, studying

BR 12

Agricultural methods.

In October a fine new stained-glass window was erected in the chapel sanctuary. It depicts our Founder, St. John Baptist de La Salle, <sup>presenting</sup> school children to Our Lady, who, in turn, presents them to Our Lord. Mr. L. Bramiff was the artist.

[redacted] gave £100 towards cost of the window.

During the year, the dormitories were papered and the boys' dining room painted. The outside of the "Old School" was also painted.

During the summer holidays, [redacted] from [redacted] and [redacted] from [redacted] came to give a helping hand at supervision of the boys.

This year, a number of Saturday outings to Belfast for the boys was successfully organised.

A number of meetings with officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs took place during the year with a view to obtaining grant towards providing new building accommodation, but so far, nothing definite has emerged.

21.10.62



18th November, 1964.

Dear BR 6

Thank you for your letter of 14th November, from which I note that you wish to proceed with the development of intermediate education facilities at Rubane. In order to do this you will wish to provide for 80 boys and I am now writing to confirm that the Ministry will be prepared to recognise Rubane as a Home for 80 boys, subject to the following conditions:-

(1) We shall not be able to give this recognition formally until suitable accommodation exists for 80 boys. However, I think it would be reasonable to assume that we shall reach agreement in due course on the form of the provision to be made for additional places and that these places will in fact be provided.

(2) We shall require an assurance from you that the Home will be adequately staffed. In this connection I cannot stress too strongly the importance, whatever future developments may be and whenever they may take place, of providing at the earliest possible date an increase in the staff at Rubane. Eight years ago the Child Welfare Council suggested that for children over five an appropriate staff ratio was one full-time member of staff for every six children. This excludes domestic staff, cooks, etc., and we would argue that strictly it should also exclude full-time teachers. I need hardly point out how unfavourably the staff:children ratio at Rubane compares with this recommendation. Recent events have given added point to our feeling that where such a small staff has so much to do for so many children the development of a satisfactory relationship of trust and confidence between individual children and members of staff is virtually impossible.

To sum up, we are prepared to say that we will recognise Rubane as a Home for 80 boys, subject to the provision of additional accommodation on agreed plans and to a considerable increase in staff. I am sure we shall be able to reach some sort of agreement on the former point; we would be glad of an assurance from you on the latter.

Yours sincerely,

J. H. PARKES

The Director,  
De La Salle Boys' Home,  
Rubane,  
Kircubbin,  
Newtownards,  
Co. Down.



C O P Y

## MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Dundonald House, Upper Newtownards Road,  
Belfast, 4.

Our ref: G.1949/262/A

16th November, 1964.

Rubane House, Kircubbin.  
School Provision and Accommodation.

Sir,

I am directed by the Minister of Education to refer to the discussion which you had with officials of the Ministry on 12th November and previous correspondence regarding the status of the Rubane House School and to state that subject to the Ministry of Home Affairs certifying Rubane House as a residential home for 80 boys the Ministry will be prepared to agree to the following schedule of accommodation being provided, with grant-aid, in order that a secondary (intermediate) school may be organised and operated:-

Schedule

- 3 ordinary classrooms. The three classroom block built in 1953 will be suitable for retention.
- 1 classroom of 720 square feet.
- 1 Woodwork/Metalwork Room of 1,000 square feet approx.
- 1 Hall for Assembly/Physical Education purposes of approximately 1,400 square feet including a stage area of 200 square feet.

As soon as certification by the Ministry of Home Affairs as mentioned above is obtained the Ministry will be glad to receive proposals for the building of the additional accommodation needed and will be prepared to permit building work to proceed.

I am, Sir,  
Your obedient Servant,

J. K. MacDonald

BR 6

De La Salle Boys' Home,  
Rubane,  
Kircubbin,  
County Down.

JKMacD/PK



influences of 'criminal' boys and the stigma attached to a training school.

14. The Bishop Of Down & Connor was also the 'administering authority' [See Hughes Report] of the Home and was chairman of the Board of Governors similar to the one in St. Patrick's Industrial School in Belfast. However, the day to day administration of the Home was delegated to the De La Salle Brothers.
15. In 1964, there were seventy five boys in care in the Home, ranging from approximately twelve to sixteen years in age. Of this number, thirty six had transferred from Nazareth Lodge, Belfast, thirty one were committed by various Welfare authorities, six were sponsored by Education Committees and two were under Special Care. I refer to **Exhibit 2** – the 1965 Annual General Report.
16. Outwardly Rubane House itself gave an impression of stately grandeur but in reality it was rather primitive. Pre 1968 most of the boys were accommodated in the main House. The sleeping facilities consisted of four bedrooms upstairs containing ten beds in each. The five Brothers had a small single room each and one toilet and bathroom was shared by both boys and Brothers. On the ground floor there was another large bedroom used with one toilet for use of the boys and one Brother whose bedroom was close to the boys' room. There was no central heating in the house and heat was provided by a few electric heaters hung on the bedroom walls. The remainder of the boys slept in three rooms in the former farm manager's house at the bottom of the farmyard and were supervised by two Brothers whose bedrooms were located there. The kitchen and boys' dining room was located in the basement of the house as well as a common shower room. The conditions were sub-standard and Dickensian is the only word I can describe them. During meal times, the condensation was so bad that the walls were streaming with water. The laundry and clothing rooms were in an outhouse across the yard from the main house and on Friday/Saturday nights after showers, the boys had to run across the yard in their swim trunks and towels to get fresh clothing for the week. It seemed harsh at the time. The Home had, as far as I am aware been inspected and approved by the Ministry of Home Affairs and they would have been aware of the extent and limitations of our facilities.



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Government of Northern Ireland  
MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

STORMONT, BELFAST 4

Telegrams: Homaff, Belfast

Telephone: Belfast 63210

Any reply should be addressed  
to: THE SECRETARY

Our reference: T.C.165

Your reference:

22<sup>nd</sup> May, 1967.

Dear **BR 6**

I refer to your formal application dated 7th July, 1966, seeking a grant under Section 118(1) of the Children and Young Persons Act (N.I.) 1950 in respect of certain major improvements to the De La Salle Boys' Home at Rubane House, Kircubbin.

The proposed improvements include:-

- (a) two new semi-detached cottage units, each to accommodate 28 boys;
- (b) adaptation of the existing building for 23 boys; and
- (c) provision of a new dining hall.

In view of the estimated cost of these improvements, the Ministry will be prepared to pay a maximum grant of £50,000, provided that this amount does not exceed 50% of the total approved expenditure eligible for grant.

You will appreciate that the Ministry's grant applies to all the above improvements and that it will accordingly be necessary for the amount of grant to be distributed in proportion to the actual cost of each project. The payments of grant will be spread over the three financial years ending 31st March, 1968, 1969 and 1970.

In this connection, the Ministry notes that the contract for the construction of the cottage units has been separately advertised and that tenders are due on 31st May, 1967. In due course, the Ministry would be glad to receive the following further information when it becomes available:-

- (a) Details of the tenders received for the cottage units and the amount of the tender which the Board proposes to accept.
- (b) The date upon which it is intended to proceed with the remaining works and any revised estimates or, when tenders for these works are received, the actual costs.

The Ministry's grant will be payable subject to an undertaking by the

/Trustees



Trustees that an appropriate part of the grant will be repaid in the event of the premises ceasing to be used as a voluntary home within the next 40 years.

Yours sincerely,

*E. Blackburn*

BR 6

De La Salle Boys' Home,  
Rubane House,  
Kircubbin,  
Co. Down.



1968

- 2nd Jan. The boys returned from Christmas holidays.  
 3rd Jan. School re-opens for 2nd term.  
 7th Jan. Fire Drill.  
 17th March. Fire Day. Feast for boys.  
 3rd Aug. 50 Boys to Glenariffe for holiday  
 17. Aug. Boys return from Glenariffe.  
 20 Aug. Feast 28 boys enter chalets.  
 28 Nov. Mr. Blackburn, Mr. Parks & Miss Forrest  
 visit chalets.  
 14 Dec. 45 boys to Mackie's Party.  
 23 Dec. 40 boys out for Christmas holidays.

1969

- 12 Jan 69 13 boys attend St. Patrick's Old Age Pensioners  
 Dinner, Newtownards & contributed  
 concert items.  
 18 Jan. 30 boys attend Babes In The Wood Pantomime  
 in Belfast.  
 1 March. 28 boys move into 2nd group of chalets.  
 28 May Lord Mayor of Belfast & Mayor of Newtownards  
 visit Kesh and addressed the boys.  
 3rd Aug. Boys to Glenariffe (48)  
 25th Aug. Boys return from holidays  
 10 Oct Mrs. Audrey Gallagher, wife of British  
 Home Secretary, Mr. Parks & Mr.  
 Blackburn visit the Home.  
 31 Oct. 25 boys out for Halloween.  
 13 Dec. 35 boys at Mackie's Party  
 21 Dec. Broadway Cinema present Xmas gifts to boys.  
 27 Dec 36 boys travel to Dublin to attend  
 the Guinness Personnel Children's Party.



Children and Young Persons Act (N.I.), 1968Voluntary HomesReturn at 31st March, 1970

Form to be used for the return of particulars  
of children and young persons in the care of  
voluntary organisations

Please read the following notes before completing the form:-

- (1) One copy of this form duly completed by the person in charge of the voluntary home should be returned to the Ministry of Home Affairs, Child Welfare Branch, Stormont, not later than  
27 JUL 1970.
- (2) Throughout this form the term "children" includes all persons under the age of eighteen who are in the care of the voluntary home.
- (3) The Ministry realises that the information required in item 10 can be no more than an estimate, but hopes that the person in charge of the home will try to give as close an estimate as possible.
- (4) If, because of holidays, or for any other reason, there are no children in the home on 31st March, 1970, the information furnished should be in respect of the last preceding date on which the home was functioning normally.
- (5) In calculating the number of children boarded out (item 13) only those who are in the charge of the voluntary organisation should be included, and not those remaining in charge of parents although boarded out by the parents with assistance from the voluntary organisation.
- (6) In completing this form temporary absences, e.g. on holiday or in hospital should be ignored.

1. Name and full postal address of the Voluntary Home De La Salle Boys' Voluntary Home,  
Rubane, Kircubbin, Co. Down.
2. Full name of the person in charge of the home BR 6
3. Full name and address of the person or organisation carrying on the home The Governing Board,  
Rubane House, Kircubbin, Co. Down.
4. Full name and address of the Chairman of the organisation Most Rev. Dr. Philbin,  
Lisbreen,  
Somerton Road, Belfast.
5. Full name and address of the BR 6  
De La Salle Boys' Home,  
Kircubbin, Co. Down.



87

the "Four and Two Committee" for a trial period under the recent new Education Act.

When the school extensions are completed, the school will be recognised by the Ministry as an Intermediate school.

This year too, the Ministry approved the appointment of two extra teachers while the Principal of the school was recognised as "A Working Principal." The building of the Boys' Central Kitchen, costing £20,191-4-1 is also in progress, and work has begun on renovating the main house building - installing central heating etc.

The two new extra teachers, [redacted] DL 1, a [redacted] SR 33, a [redacted] who

began their official appointments on 2nd Sept. [redacted] BR 11, formerly of [redacted]

[redacted] also joined the teaching staff. He replaces [redacted] BR 73 who was transferred to [redacted] of studies.

On 7th Sept. [redacted] came from [redacted] to help at supervision work. He replaces [redacted] BR 33 who was charged [redacted]

On 20th. Sept. the first two groups of the boys each moved into the first two new chalets. [redacted] SR 32

[redacted] and Bros. [redacted] BR 22 formerly of [redacted]

[redacted] DL 134 & his wife [redacted] DL 133 are House Parents in La Salle Chalet & [redacted] BR 13 is House Master. [redacted]



1           However, in respect of the particular question that  
2           you ask, it strikes me, having looked at that debate  
3           between the State and the church about the change of the  
4           type of care, it does strike me that the church was  
5           claiming a competence that it didn't necessarily have.  
6           I don't know on what basis the church could have claimed  
7           to be an expert on the residential care of children  
8           other than from its experience of running boarding  
9           schools, for example, but that was not the particular  
10          environment that we were dealing with here. This was  
11          a very specialised care -- full-time care setting, and  
12          I~am surprised that the church took such a -- both the  
13          diocese and the Brothers together -- such a strong  
14          stance on that. I don't know what the ultimate reason  
15          was.

16          It has been suggested in the documentation that  
17          there was a genuine concern about the danger of peer  
18          abuse and that the dormitory style actually helped to  
19          limit that. I am sure that was a genuine part of the  
20          concern. However, in terms of childcare in a full-time  
21          residential setting I can't explain why the church took  
22          such a strong stance on that, but it would strike me by  
23          way of acknowledgment that it was beyond our competence.  
24          I mean, we had no history of running that kind of  
25          environment.



the same conclusions in respect of their capacity to provide a genuine insight into the standard of care in the home might well apply to those carried out from 1950 to the period under consideration by the Hughes Inquiry.

21. A fundamental purpose of any inspection should be to ensure that statutory requirements are being met. The Department accepts that despite annual inspections and frequent visiting by MoHA and DHSS inspectors/advisors, evidence was not sought to demonstrate that the Board of Governors was fulfilling its statutory responsibility regarding the monthly visitation of the home. A person should have been appointed by the Board of Governors to satisfy himself/herself whether the home was being conducted in the interests of the wellbeing of the children and report to the administering authority on the visit.
22. Apart from some early references to communications with the Bishop, the Department also accepts that its predecessors did not appear to engage or communicate with the Board of Governors for Rubane, which was the administering authority for the home. With particular reference to the 1964 incident, the De La Salle Order was permitted to deal with the issue and carry out its own investigation without reference to the Board, which held statutory responsibility for the welfare of children in Rubane and to whom the Order was accountable for the running of the home. The potential for important information to be shared with the MoHA and the police was therefore diminished.
23. The Department acknowledges that these shortcomings are likely to have contributed to a system that failed a significant number of children. Children in Rubane should have experienced care, security and stability. Instead, many were subjected to physical, sexual and emotional abuse which went unrecognised and untold for many years with devastating consequences for the children's future lives. The Department believes that the shortcomings outlined above, had they not occurred, would not of themselves have prevented the abuse of children. Nevertheless, rigour of inspection, proper monitoring by responsible authorities and clearly defined management responsibility and accountability are essential to the wellbeing of children in care. These form part of a comprehensive safeguarding process that should help to create an open environment in which opportunities for abuse are minimised and children feel sufficiently safe to alert staff and others to any concerns they might have and know that they will be heard.



1963

81

BR 3

of this community made the Fifty Days' Retreat held at Ballymorney this summer.

On 22nd April a new gardener, [redacted], was employed. His wife was employed as cook.

This summer, the reconstructed piggery was completed. It is capable of accommodating about seven hundred pigs when full to capacity. A grant from the Ministry of Agriculture towards cost of reconstruction will be forthcoming.

[redacted] from the [redacted] spent three weeks here during the Autumn, studying

BR 12

Agricultural methods.

In October a fine new stained glass window was erected in the chapel sanctuary. It depicts our Founder, St. John Baptist de La Salle, <sup>presenting</sup> school children to Our Lady, who in turn, presents them to Our Lord. Mr. L. Bramiff was the artist.

[redacted] gave £100 towards cost of the window.

During the year, the dormitories were papered and the boys' dining room painted. The outside of the "Old School" was also painted.

During the summer holidays, [redacted] from [redacted] and [redacted] from [redacted] came to give a helping hand at supervision of the boys.

This year, a number of Saturday outings to Belfast for the boys was successfully organised.

A number of meetings with officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs took place during the year with a view to obtaining grant towards providing new building accommodation, but so far, nothing definite has emerged.

21.10.62



1960

Early in the year the two new bungalows on grounds near Butane bazaar were completed. [REDACTED] and family took up residence in one of them as gardeners on 12th April and [REDACTED] DL 6 occupied the other, as Woodcock teacher on 31st May.

During the summer, the front avenue  
was ~~the~~ macadamized and a new  
entrance gate was erected.

Plans for the new Intermediate School and for the proposed extension of the chapel and dining-room were drawn by the Architect Mr. McBride and are at present being considered.

and are at present being  
in the farmyard, [REDACTED] had  
a new grain silo erected.  
[REDACTED] BR 3 [REDACTED]

On 15th Aug 1971, [redacted] arrived to join the teaching staff, and [redacted]

██████████ paid a brief visit to  
the Communist ██████████ and ██████████

*paid a country visit in October.*



79

1961

Bungalows  
er were  
mily took  
Gardner  
wean  
ork teacher

nt avenue  
a new

ate school

n of  
on were

McRandle  
considered.

th had  
ted.

us Patrick  
staff, and

visit to

at

Sanuary  
on October.

The big event of the year was the visit of the  
Superior General, Most Honourable Brothers  
Joseph, on 21<sup>st</sup> Sept. He was  
accompanied by

One of the pupils  
read him an address of welcome and  
presented him a small donation for  
the Missions. His visit was rather brief  
as he had other engagements on the  
same afternoon.

This summer the extensions of the  
chapel were begun. A new sanctuary, choir  
wing and sacristy are being added and the  
whole chapel is being re-roofed. Extensive  
reconstruction of the out-houses or old  
stables is also in progress. These premises  
are being converted into store rooms and  
recreation rooms for the boys.

In the farmyard, BR 12 had  
the large cattle shed re-roofed with a  
view to converting it into a large piggy.

This year also, a boys' pipe band  
is being formed. Uniforms and instruments  
have been purchased and a band instructor  
engaged.

Reference..... T.165

BR 39

BR 6

Rubane House, Kircubbin

*Dr. J. J. Forster  
Ltr. not sent. Discussion with  
BR 6 12/12/62  
4/12/62*

We  
Miss Forrest and I visited Rubane on 14th November, 1962, and were shown over the premises by BR 6. It is obvious that considerable trouble has been taken to make the dormitories more attractive, several of them having been recently decorated, each in an individual colour scheme.

This, however, is the best that can be said for the dormitories, for the state of overcrowding in them continues to present an acute problem. In the main house five rooms contain 52 beds (12, 11, 10, 10, 9) while in the steward's house there is one room containing 10 beds, and 3 rooms with 7 each, i.e., 31 beds.

Of the total 83 beds, 81 are occupied by the boys in residence and each dormitory presents a picture of a regimentation of beds, placed end to end, and leaving inadequate floor space; the only mitigating factor as far as space is concerned is that the ceilings are high, making the rooms airy, but also cold. Bedclothes appeared to be adequate.

It was not an unusually cold day, but the damp chill of the basement wash-room was penetrating. Early morning ablutions in these conditions must be an endurance test.

The dining-room was in a bad state of repair; it was suggested to BR 6 that the tables without formica tops might at least have plastic cloths. The kitchen was more cheerful, and the baking of Christmas cakes was in progress.

The recreation rooms were very untidy, the little theatre (T.V. room) being the worst offender in this respect - it looked as if it had several days' accumulation of dust and litter.

All the boys were in good health, but many of them, relaxing after school, looked pinched and cold; their clothing in many instances was in very bad order, threadbare and torn, and affording little protection against the weather.

The general appearance of the boys and of parts of the premises indicate a serious need for more adequate staffing and more womanly care.

It was clear from conversations with BR 6 on this and previous occasions that he is very fearful of the cottage system - the chief problem mentioned being the difficulty of recruiting enough of the right type of housemothers. It seems to us, however, that whatever system is used they need to recruit more of the right type of housemothers!

As he has now written about the forthcoming Committee Meeting it is recommended that a letter should be sent to them pointing out that whatever decision is reached as to future plans there will need to be a much higher proportion of staff to children.

Their present ratio is seven brothers and a part-time matron to 81 children (3 brothers have full-time teaching duties and one manages the farm). The Child Welfare Council has recommended a ratio of not less than 1:6. Home Office would probably think in terms of 1:5 as minimum although if there were a cottage system a housemother with adequate and suitable domestic help might manage more.

*Miss Grant was visiting boys in the Home on the same day & Miss Hill subsequently heard from her that she was well pleased with their progress. They appeared natural & cheerful & to be enjoying life. This was mentioned to P.C. 18/12/62*

K. B. Forrest  
A. J. Hill

26th November, 1962.



TC.790

TC 165768

Ministry of Home Affairs,  
Stormont, Belfast, 4.

B.P.C.

Rubane House, Kircubbin

I inspected this Home on 21st April, 1965, when, in the absence on retreat of BR 6, I was received by BR 3 who showed me over the premises.

There were seventy-two boys on the register of the Home, but only thirty-six in residence, as the others were spending Easter in their own homes or in holiday foster-homes. I was concerned to learn that many of the boys who graduate to Rubane from Nazareth Lodge lose contact with the foster-parents with whom they had formed relationships during their Nazareth Lodge days. The reason I was given is that many foster-parents prefer to receive younger children into their homes. The Brothers at Rubane, however, seem to have been active and successful in finding families who welcome older boys and maintain an interest throughout the year. BR 3 spoke appreciatively of the contacts with ordinary family life thus afforded to the boys and noted the contribution made to their development. He also expressed his warm desire to see the end of the present system in Rubane, where the ratio of staff to boys (there are 10 members of staff with the boys - a number which includes 3 Christian Brothers, who are teachers, and 2 women employed in domestic duties) and the premises militate against a warm and homely life for the boys in residence.

BR 3 produced a plan of a single-storey chalet with accommodation for 14 boys in single rooms. I did not enter much into discussion of this plan but he told me that he understood it was proposed initially to build three chalets of this type in the grounds, each with its own kitchen and living and separate dining accommodation. Catering would be on an individual basis. The main house would be used as an administrative block and would provide much needed additional staffing accommodation. At the moment, the three Brothers, who are teachers, have to undertake a fair amount of work in addition to their professional duties, an undesirable but inevitable state of affairs, as no accommodation is available for members of staff.

About 50% of the boys on the register were the responsibility of Welfare Authorities. There are 2 special classes for B.S.N. pupils (18 boys in each) and BR 3 was of opinion that ideally there should be 3 classes.

A considerable amount of re-decoration has been carried out in the dormitories, including those in the Steward's house. The rooms looked fresh and were clean and airy. A welcome addition to each dormitory has been the installation of electric heaters suspended from the ceilings. I was told that they proved effective and that their installation had had the blessing of the Fire Authority, whose officers, I gathered, were now satisfied with fire precautions taken. Fire-fighting appliances, which are checked regularly, were in evidence, and fire drill is carried out.

The dining-room has been improved by re-decoration, and the formica-topped tables were both practical and attractive.

The boys in residence looked healthy and seemed to be enjoying an open-air holiday. Some were returning from an expedition to the farm and others were at play outdoors under the supervision of BR 2. The health record of the Home, I was told, had been very good.

I later saw the boys at their mid-day meal, which appeared appetizing and adequate.

The Home has its own minibus and outings are arranged for the boys



Address

Rubans House, Kircubbin, Co. Down

Telephone No.

Kircubbin 236

auspices of

De La Salle Brothers, Hilltown, Belfast.

ndent

qualifications)

BR 12

qualifications)

BR 17

ldren's)

qualifications)

5 De La Salle Brothers.

stic)

1 cook, 2 maids

er of beds available

56 (44 in main house + 12 in steward's house)

(at date of visit)

Under 2	2 & Under 5	5 & Under 16		16 & Under 18	18 and over
		At school	Not at school		
48	-	46	2		
.....					
.....					

Dr Simpson  
St. Wright

W.N. or N.N.

Date

Without Notice

17/5/55

Conditions of Admission

- ① Boys over 12 years of age who have been in Noyah House, Belfast
- ② Boys of school age in care of Welfare Authorities.
- ③ Any deserving case.

Fees charged (if any)

£ 3-0-0 per week.

Treatment on Admission

A medical certificate is required from the boy's own doctor before admission. All children are medically examined by Dr Graham, Kircubbin, shortly after arrival.

ing

A stock of clothing is maintained & when necessary articles are bought for individual children.

Normal meals and times)

Breakfast 8 a.m.

Lunch 12.30 p.m.

Tea 4.0 p.m.

Supper 6.0 p.m.

A diet book is maintained.

We did not see the diet book when inspecting the kitchen, as owing to the ~~holiday~~ the brother responsible was off duty.



Statutory Records

✓ Admission Register

✓ Log book.

Diet book. (not seen)

Fire Record.

✓ Medical Record Cards.

All statutory records seen were satisfactorily maintained.

General Remarks (including information carried over from above)

Rubane is a beautiful Home situated in 250 acres of land. It is also made of the sturges house to accommodate the boys & a new school has recently been built for them adjacent to the main house. There are extensive farm buildings. The holding is well stocked & those boys interested in this type of work can receive an excellent training in all branches of farming. There were several ancient automobiles in evidence & we gathered that boys interested in motor mechanics have great fun with these & have recently compiled a motor car from the various wrecks. We were impressed by the lively activity open to the boys. They have plenty of freedom in the grounds and were enjoying life to the full on the day of our visit. This Wright personally knows a number of the boys who have been placed in employment from this Home, all were interested in their work & anxious to do well. It is evident that their training has been a good preparation for life. Many old boys return for week-ends. There is a cheerful atmosphere at Rubane & the House is well kept.

Date 19/5/55.

St. Wright  
Norman J. Sumner.



Annual Report - De La Salle Boys' Home, Rubane House,  
Kircubbin, Co. Down.

On the 28th March, 1956, I visited Rubane House, Kircubbin, Co. Down, and was shown over the premises by [redacted] BR 17. There were 49 boys in residence; 46 attend the Primary School in the grounds, 2 attend classes in the local Technical School and one is receiving training in farm work. Two boys are the responsibility of the Special Care Authority.

Health and Activities

It was a bright spring day when I visited and I saw the boys enjoying a game of football on the large field in front of the house. Others were practising hurley or sowing seeds in their garden plots. They all appeared to be healthy and well cared for. They enjoy a good variety of indoor and outdoor activity. A T.V. set has been provided and films are shown at least once a week. One of the rooms in the school building is available for billiards and there are facilities for table tennis and other games in the recreation hall in the grounds.

Staff

Several brothers have been transferred during the year, including [redacted] BR 17, [redacted]

[redacted] I was also disappointed to find that Brother [redacted] BR 56 had been replaced [redacted]

[redacted] BR 12

On an earlier visit this Home experienced difficulty in obtaining domestics but two suitable persons have now been found to assist [redacted], the cook/housekeeper, and [redacted] BR 17 now appears to be satisfied with this side of the work.

Premises

The premises appeared to be in good order throughout. The Steward's house is still in use and ten boys sleep there at present. The school yard has recently been completed and provides a useful space for play when the grass playing fields are too damp for use. Here basket-ball courts are being provided.

Records

I inspected the statutory books, which are maintained up to date. Several cases of corporal punishment, mainly for absconding, have been recorded since my visit last year. Particulars of fire drill are at present noted in the general log book. The fire authority inspected the premises on the 3rd June, 1955. The main difficulty from their point of view is still the lack of an adequate water supply. A diet book is not maintained, but I saw the weekly diet sheet in the kitchen. A new information form (copy attached) has been drawn up for each boy and is attached to individual files.

General

There is a very happy atmosphere in this Home and the boys have an opportunity for a wide variety of activities in the spacious grounds. They enjoy rambles, swimming in the lake, and are keen footballers and hurley players, and matches are frequently arranged with outside clubs. They are responsible, friendly boys



De La Salle Boys' Home, Rubane.

On the 3rd October Dr. Simpson and I visited Rubane House, Kircubbin, Co. Down.

There were 65 boys in residence. Twenty-four are the financial responsibility of Welfare Authorities and two the financial responsibility of the Special Care Authority. The school was on holiday for potato digging and the boys were helping to gather potatoes in the fields. We saw them later coming in for lunch. They all appeared happy and in good health.

The present staff at the Home is [REDACTED] BR 17

[REDACTED] BR 12 [REDACTED] one Prefect, one Housemaster, a Secretary and two Primary Schoolteachers. [REDACTED] BR 17 told me that he is now better satisfied with the housekeeping and domestic arrangements at the Home. There is a full-time daily cook and two non-resident domestics.

[REDACTED] BR 17 has had a considerable amount of improvements carried out during his term of office. The kitchen had been redecorated and a new Aga cooker provided. It is hoped to have the dining-room redecorated as soon as possible. It has also been necessary to replace the roof in the Chapel owing to dry rot. A new office has been erected adjacent to the school building as the former office was required as sleeping accommodation for one of the Brothers.

There are now four dormitories (three with six beds and one with nine beds) in the Steward's House, which has been in use since 1953. Two W.C.s are available for night use, but all boys wash and bath in the cloakroom of the main building. The Chaplain also has his quarters in the Steward's House and two Brothers reside there at night. This leaves a total of 27 beds in the Steward's House, plus 44 beds already approved of in the main building - a total of 71 beds at Rubane Children's Home.

Outdoor play activity at this Home has greatly improved with the provision of a concrete yard between the school and the main building where tennis, basket-ball and rounders are played. There is also a good variety of indoor activity (T.V., radiogram tape-recorder, billiards, table-tennis). Films are shown weekly and next winter [REDACTED] BR 17 hopes to introduce "boat making" which he feels should prove attractive to boys of this age. One of the main difficulties at this Home is the lack of indoor play space and the Management Committee are at present considering the possibility of extension or the provision of two cottage homes in the grounds.

A teacher has now been appointed for the Special Class at the Primary School. [REDACTED] BR 17, however, would like to have Rubane registered as an Intermediate School, as he feels that this would give the boys a more practical education and leave them better equipped for jobs on discharge. The Director informed us that he had now reached a satisfactory arrangement with the County Council regarding the water supply to Rubane. The Fire Authority have agreed that a 3" pipe will be sufficient for their needs and the Education Authority are to make a grant of 65% to bring the water supply as far as the school building.

/As



On the 18th of June we visited De La Salle Boys' Home, Kircubbin, Co. Down.

There were 70 boys in residence. 67 attend the Primary School in the grounds, one attends Downpatrick Technical School, while two others act as apprentices to the gardener and handyman respectively. 24 are the financial responsibility of Welfare Authorities, one the responsibility of Belfast Education Authority and two are Special Care. 40 boys are being supervised by the [REDACTED] DL 367

BR 17 explained that the increase in numbers had been due largely to the raising of the school-leaving age. In addition to applications from Welfare Authorities he expects approximately 12 boys from Nazareth Lodge in August. About six of the boys, who are now in residence and are the responsibility of Welfare or Special-Care Authorities, are over 16 years of age, but the responsible bodies have promised to make alternative arrangements for them in the summer. Any further increase in numbers would result in overcrowding.

It had been hoped to open an Intermediate School at Rubane, but, on application to the Ministry of Education, it was discovered that the necessary minimum number of pupils was 120 and not 80 as was originally understood. This has been a great disappointment because of the difficulty of placing in employment completely unskilled E.S.N. boys in competition with pupils from Intermediate Schools.

At present it has been possible to include a half-day of woodwork and horticulture in the Primary School programme.

We saw the boys playing basket ball at the side of the house and they all appeared to be in good health. They continue to enjoy a good variety of outdoor play activity. For the summer holidays a number will return home or be placed with families and arrangements have been made for the remainder to go to Glengariffe Holiday Home during the first two weeks of August.

There are now seven members of staff at this Home, three primary schoolteachers, one secretary, two prefects and the farm manager. We were sorry to learn that BR 12 is at present in hospital following an [REDACTED] It is expected that he will be fit for discharge in four weeks' time.

BR 17 showed us over the building. The main entrance hall and the dormitory on the ground floor of the main house have recently been redecorated. Lack of adequate indoor play space continues to present difficulties and the boys are still using their classrooms for this purpose. At meals the dining-room is filled to capacity, and is also used for television and film shows. BR 17 is of the opinion that a recreation hall, which could be used as a gymnasium, would be of great benefit to the boys. Eight additional wash-hand basins have been installed in the boys' wash-room in the main house and additional W.C.s are also to be fitted. A washing machine and spin dryer have been provided so that it is no longer necessary to send laundry out. A clothing locker has been provided for every boy.

We inspected the statutory records. Corporal punishment was recently inflicted on two boys who absconded. Fire drill is carried out monthly and the Fire Authority has promised to supervise drill when fire-precaution recommendations to the Steward's house, now well under way, have been completed. A mains water supply has been connected to Rubane House and fire hydrants installed. BR 17 told us that since the provision of a mid-day meal by the Education Authority the boys have had a cooked

/breakfast



maintenance of Rubane House, which is an old building, is and we noticed a number of minor defects in running repair. The rooms are in need of redecoration. [REDACTED] BR 17 told [REDACTED] was limited by the amount of money he could spend in any [REDACTED] as there was already a debit showing in the running expenses [REDACTED] He therefore has to deal with running repairs and [REDACTED] on a priority basis. [REDACTED]

[illegible]

Harmon H. Simpson  
1st July, 1958

So far as "A" is concerned, the Home has accommodation for a maximum of 71 boys, and, for the present at any rate, we must assume that those in charge will ensure that no overcrowding takes place. A further safeguard lies in the fact that our visitors will be visiting the Home from time to time, and no doubt keep an eye on this aspect.

As regards "B", while it is unfortunate that the chances of an Intermediate School are so remote, we may rest assured the Committee will pursue the question with the Education

authorities when the time is ripe. You will recall that, in  
 discretion, with **BR 39** on 18.10.57, he said the matter  
 was not then under consideration as it raised other problems.  
 The Committee was not in a position to deal with at that

On connection with "C", failing more adequate accommodation for even United States, the obvious remedy would appear to be a reduction in the number of boys. This is not likely to appeal strongly to the Committee; [REDACTED] BR 17 [REDACTED] who is alive to the

... may therefore be left to solve the problem in his own way. This, I have no doubt, is not beyond his ingenuity. Any invention by the Ministry at this stage would only raise in his mind what would well be false hopes of a Government grant.

Apart from the foregoing it is evident from the report that  
 Home is functioning satisfactorily.

4/3/75  
DPC  
been &  
discussed  
with you &  
Miss Wright.  
I agree  
that this may  
be left pro  
tem. We  
are satisfied  
that the Rubane  
authorities  
are alive to  
the need for  
additional  
recreation space  
& other improvements  
& are making an  
effort to  
provide these  
from their own  
resources. They  
have been  
warned  
about over-  
crowding.  
I would  
like to see  
this done  
somewhere in  
the autumn.  
Perhaps you  
& I this time  
and visit  
in Sept. or  
Oct.



Reference.....T. 165.....

Ministry of Home Affairs,  
Stormont, Belfast.

D/FC

De La Salle Boys' Home, Rubane

On the 8th of October we visited Rubane Boys' Home, Kircubbin, Co. Down.

There were 78 boys in residence, 28 sleeping in the Stewards' House and 50 in the main building. Dr. Simpson pointed out to [REDACTED] BR 17 that this was definite overcrowding and that the numbers should not be permitted to rise above 70. [REDACTED] BR 17 said he realised this, but it was difficult for him to refuse deserving cases. He had been forced to refuse three such cases within the last week because there wasn't room for another bed in the present dormitories.

However he hoped that numbers would be reduced very soon. An additional dormitory, which accommodates two boys, had been brought into use in the Stewards' House. Four boys were waiting to be called to the Merchant Navy, two other boys were soon to be brought before the Court for committal to St. Patrick's Training School. Two boys, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], had been transferred to Muckamore that morning. There are still two Special Care boys in residence but it is not proposed to transfer them at present. The Management Board are still considering the extension of this Home and [REDACTED] BR 17 is hopeful he will be able to put architectural plans for this project before the Board at their next meeting.

We were shown the new swimming pool (a cement construction surrounded by an iron railing) which has been provided in the

/garden



garden at the rear of the school. The swimming pool was built by the gardener/handyman with the help of the boys. There is continuous circulation of water and **BR 17** has had advice from Dr. Scott, Divisional Medical Officer, and I.C.I. on chlorination. We think his initiative in providing this additional amenity is highly commendable and it has given the boys great pleasure this summer.

(Sgd)

M. Wright

Norman J. J. J. J.

29th October, 1959.

D/pc

On enquiring today by phone we were informed by **BR 17** that the number in this time remain at 78 as the Court did not commit the two boys to St Patrick's as expected. He added that he thought the Merchant Navy boys would not be leaving until some time in December.

/RMCM.

MW. 11/5/59



Reference..... T.165

BR 39

BR 6

Rubane House, Kircubbin

*W2*  
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K. B. Forrest  
 A. J. Hill

26th November, 1962.



3.—(1) In these Regulations the following expressions have the meanings hereby respectively assigned to them, that is to say :—

- "the Act" means the Children and Young Persons Act (Northern Ireland), 1950 ;
- "administering authority" means the person or persons carrying on the voluntary home ;
- "child" means a person under the age of eighteen ;
- "Fire Service" means in the area of the County Borough of Belfast the Belfast Fire Brigade and elsewhere in Northern Ireland the Northern Ireland Fire Authority ;
- "home" means a voluntary home as defined by Section 98 of the Act ;
- "primary school" has the same meaning as in the Education Act (Northern Ireland), 1947 ;
- "the Ministry" means the Ministry of Home Affairs for Northern Ireland ;
- "training school" has the same meaning as in the Act.

(2) The Interpretation Act, 1889, shall apply to the interpretation of these Regulations as it applies to the interpretation of an Act of the Parliament of Northern Ireland.

4.—(1) The administering authority shall ensure that each home in its charge is conducted in such a manner and on such principles as will further the well-being of the children in the home.

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

5.—(1) The administering authority shall appoint a person to be in charge of the home :—

Provided that any person in charge of the home immediately before these Regulations come into force shall be deemed to have been appointed to be in charge of the home under this paragraph.

(2) The person in charge of the home shall compile the records referred to in the Schedule to these Regulations and shall keep them at all times available for inspection by any inspector appointed by the Ministry.

(3) The person in charge of the home shall be responsible for the custody of the medical records of each child and shall keep them at all times available to the medical officer or to any inspector appointed by the Ministry.



1 perhaps seen as a rather -- may be seen as a rather  
2 obtuse and technical point, but it deals with the 1952  
3 and the 1975 regulations and this matter of the  
4 visiting -- the monthly visiting. Now we quite  
5 understand the reasons why you say that was a very  
6 important possible means by which abuses might have been  
7 observed. For example, one that might occur is we have  
8 had lots of allegations in this particular module and  
9 indeed in others that you are familiar with where it is  
10 said that severe physical chastisement took place of  
11 children, and therefore if there was a bruise on the  
12 face or something like that and a visitor came in and  
13 asked the child, "How did you come by that?", well, of  
14 course, they might have been given an untrue explanation  
15 it was a sports injury or simply a fall, but if this was  
16 seen more than once, it might again start alarm bells  
17 ringing. Isn't that right?

18 **A. Yes.**

19 Q. That's the type of thing you had in mind.

20 **A. Absolutely, yes.**

21 Q. So again the opportunity in this instance definitely was  
22 lost, because the mechanism was not being provided for  
23 that opportunity to be taken advantage of.

24 **A. Yes. That's right. I mean, the purpose of those visits**  
25 **was specifically within the regulations to report on the**



1       welfare of children. Now you could not do that without  
2       seeing children and being aware of their general or  
3       physical appearance, even if they -- even if they are  
4       not engaging with you in conversation, but, you know,  
5       you would certainly be aware of the physical appearance  
6       of the children.

7   Q. Related to that is the arcane or obtuse point that  
8       I mentioned, which is who was the administering  
9       authority in this instance, because --

10   A. Yes.

11   Q. -- to put it in its simplest way, what was in existence  
12       here was a form of dual management. The diocese through  
13       the Management Committee provided the property,  
14       overseeing the way the structure is managed, building  
15       new buildings, improving existing buildings --

16   A. Yes.

17   Q. -- but the day-to-day conduct of the home was entirely  
18       in the hands of the Brother Superior, who was appointed  
19       by the Order. For many years it appears to be the  
20       position that the Ministry really dealt day-to-day with  
21       the Brother Superior or the manager, as I think he was  
22       also known --

23   A. Yes.

24   Q. -- almost to the exclusion of the diocese.

25   A. Yes.



(a) Name or organisation or society responsible for the Home.

De La Salle Brothers, Milltown, Belfast.

(b) If a local committee exists, the name and address of

(i) the chairman and

(ii) the secretary

(a) Particulars as to whether the Home is an Orphanage, Training Home, shelter or other type of institution.

Orphanage and Training Home.

(b) Usual length of stay in home. School leaving age.

Religious denomination of the Home Catholic.

Particulars as to any special conditions of admission to the Home.

Boys sent by the Welfare Authorities.

Name and designation of the person:

**BR 39**

Number of staff who are

(i) men New establishment, staff not yet appointed.

(ii) women

Total number, excluding staff, for whom accommodation is available at present.

Seventy.

Number of children at present maintained in the Home:- none

Age	Under 2	2 - 4	5 - 8	9 - 13	14 - 16	Over 17	Total
Boys							
Girls							

Number of children at present boarded out from the Home:-

Age	Under 2	2 - 4	5 - 8	9 - 13	14 - 16	Over 17	Total
Boys							
Girls							



authority'. The De La Salle Order adopts the conclusions of Judge Hughes in this regard.

15. Notwithstanding the above, the Order recognises that it had day to day control of operations on the ground and was therefore the only organisation who could actually comply with many of the 1952 regulations on a practical level.
16. Rubane House was properly registered with the Ministry of Home Affairs in accordance with Section 99 (1) of the CYPA 1950. I do not know who made the application, but a copy of the certificate dated 8<sup>th</sup> January 1951 was found among the papers taken from Rubane House in 1985. Notice of de-registration requirement was given by **BR 8** in a letter dated 21<sup>st</sup> June 1985. These records are attached hereto as **Exhibit 6**.
17. I am aware that the Ministry of Home Affairs did inspect Rubane House periodically in accordance with Section 102 of the CYPA. I assume that such inspections were facilitated by the 'Officer in Charge' or in other words the Superior of the De La Salle community at Rubane and I am not aware of the Ministry of Home Affairs ever raising any issue about being denied or delayed access to the Home. There is a reference to an inspection by Dr Simpson and Miss Wright contained within the History of the House dated 19<sup>th</sup> May 1955 which records "inspected Home and examined records" – see **Exhibit 6a**.
18. I now propose to deal with the Regulations in turn;
19. ***Reg 4 (1) – The Administering Authority shall ensure that each home in its charge is conducted in such a manner and on such principles as will further the well-being of children in the home.***

Notwithstanding the admissions and concessions by the Order in respect of how some members of the Congregation, abused children contrary to their vocation, the Order considers that it largely complied with this Regulation. There is no doubt that great hurt and harm was caused by the heinous actions of a small number of Brothers but these needs to be balanced with sentiments of gratitude and thanks that other former residents would volunteer. Contemporaneous reports from the Ministry and Departments were, I believe, largely complimentary and the De La Salle Brothers, hampered at times by staffing, finance and resourcing issues did generally further the well-being of the disadvantaged children who were entrusted to their care.



- 3.2. There was 250 acres of land and a number of outhouses which had previously been associated with the farm. As illustrated by the various records the organisation and administration of the farm was a principal undertaking of the Home in the early years and in addition to providing much needed income gave the boys an education in farming principles and techniques.
  - 3.3. The complex expanded through the years as set out at 2 above to include both a school and accommodation chalets. Some of the farm buildings were at various times used for both accommodation and leisure activities. Old coach houses near the entrance were also used at different times for a variety of purposes including classroom accommodation, table tennis, billiards, films, outdoor pursuits store, clothing store, showing films, tuck shop and toilet facilities.
  - 3.4. In addition to the farmland, there were playing fields (all weather and grass), basketball/tennis courts, a swimming pool; areas of woodland, garden area, general play area with swings, and a pet area with animals. In the early years there was no running water, the water supply being extracted from a nearby well but the home was eventually connected to piped water supply.
  - 3.5. The school was located within the grounds of the home and was regulated by the Ministry/Department of Education. Prior to 1969 it was a 'primary school' and thereafter its status changed to 'Secondary School'.
4. **What the management structure and staffing arrangements were in Rubane House?**

The structure changed at various times through the duration of the Home.

From its inception the Home was under the control of the Board of Governors. The Chairman of the Board of Governors was the Bishop of the Diocese of Down and Connor and fellow members of the Board various Diocesan clergy.

The Director of Rubane was nominated by the Provincial but appointed by the Board of Governors.

The Board held an annual general meeting to which the Director of Rubane presented an annual report. Minutes of these meetings and some of the annual reports survive and a sample is exhibited hereto as Exhibit 3.

Responsibility for day to day running of the Rubane was left largely to the De La Salle Order itself and the Director of the De La Salle Community in Rubane. The Director was effectively 'the officer in charge'.

The Provincial proposed Brothers for positions on the Teaching and Care Staff. In later years they were appointed by the Committee of Management, acting on behalf of the BOG.

Teaching Brothers had to be suitably qualified and recognised by the Department of Education.

The employment and dismissal of lay teaching and care staff was the responsibility of the Director and in later years the Committee of Management.

There were no formal training courses in Child Care in the early years and initially care staff did not require qualifications. Brothers, whom the Provincial thought suitable, were appointed as Prefects and the teaching Brothers helped out with extra curricular activities.

There were few members of staff, if any, who had professional qualifications in Child Care in the 1950's. It is not believed that Rubane House was any different from other residential homes in this regard. New staff acquired and developed their skills under the supervision of other senior, experienced members of staff.





# De La Salle Boys' Voluntary Home

Phone: KIRCUBBIN 261



Patrons:

His Lordship Most Rev. Daniel Mageean, D.D.  
The Countess of Antrim.  
Dr. Eileen Hickey, M.P.  
Alderman J. A. McGlade, J.P.  
James B. Kennedy, J.P.

Rubane House,

Kircubbin,

Co. Down.

17/9/56.

The Secretary,  
Ministry of Home Affairs,  
Stormont,  
Belfast.

Dear Sir,

✓ See for 19/9/56

In compliance with The Children and Young Persons Act, I should like to inform the Ministry of Home Affairs that [REDACTED] BR 17 has succeeded [REDACTED] BR 12 as [REDACTED] of the above-named Home as from the 1st. Sept. 1956.

Yours faithfully

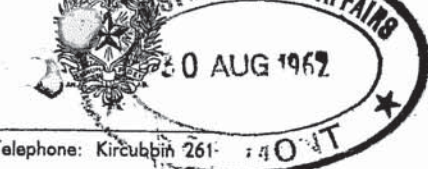
BR 13

See my memo of 19/9/56 hereunder.

RBH  
19/9/56.

(See.)





Rubane,  
Kircubbin,  
Co. Down.

27th. August, 1962

PC.  
To Mr. R. L. 30/8/62.

Dear Sir,  
I wish to inform you that I shall be relinquish-  
ing the post of [redacted] of De La Salle Boys' Home  
on the 31st. inst. All communications, therefore,  
should be addressed to the new Director, Rev. Brother  
BR 6 who takes up duty on 1st. Sept.

Yours Truly,  
BR 17



9. The high level management of Rubane was essentially shared between these two Committees, reporting ultimately to the Bishop of Down and Connor.
10. I use the terminology, 'high level' to distinguish between the low level management, day to day running of the Home which was undertaken by the De La Salle Brothers themselves.
11. The [REDACTED] BR 39 but the realisation of his honourable proposal was only possible with the agreement, backing and support of the Bishop. In general Canonical Law terms, all religious institutes, such as the De La Salle Order, enjoy autonomy as to internal regimes and by reason of this legal institution, the management of religious subjects belongs solely to their superior i.e Br. Provincial. It is the Br Superior who places them at the service of diocesan authority, transfers them, or changes their assignments. However, to exercise the ministry of the Institute (education and child care for the De La Salle Brothers), the permission of the residential Bishop is required. The Agreement drawn up between the Brothers and the Bishop illustrate this very well.
12. While Rubane House [REDACTED] BR 39 to comply with formalities Bishop Mageean would have invited the De La Salle Provincial to appoint a Superior and members of staff to the fledging Home. Thereafter, as Fr McCann volunteered and as the Hughes Inquiry determined the Diocese essentially delegated day to day running of the Home to the De La Salle Brothers.
13. The Bishop of Down & Connor would have continued to assume a level of responsibility for the Home throughout its existence. It is noted that Diocesan Trustees in addition to than De La Salle Brothers were engaged in discussions with the Ministry of Home Affairs on the introduction of the Chalet system from 1963, that the Bishop was consulted and notified about various expansion plans and financing problems and that it was the Bishop who stepped in, to suspend Br BR 1 on receipt of complaints in 1980, without reference to the De La Salle Provincial. In 1977 a formally named 'Management Committee' was established with the said Fr McCann as Chairman. Indeed, it was Fr McCann who told BP 1 to leave the Home in 1980 while an investigation into allegations of physical abuse was undertaken. It may well have been the Diocesan representation on this Management Committee which led Judge Hughes to conclude that the Diocese was the Administering Authority but even if one examines the years preceding 1977 there was little practical difference as to where ultimate authority for the Home lay.
14. It is my view that the Bishop of Down & Connor did, at all times, consider that he had overall responsibility for Rubane House and was essentially the 'administering



authority'. The De La Salle Order adopts the conclusions of Judge Hughes in this regard.

15. Notwithstanding the above, the Order recognises that it had day to day control of operations on the ground and was therefore the only organisation who could actually comply with many of the 1952 regulations on a practical level.
16. Rubane House was properly registered with the Ministry of Home Affairs in accordance with Section 99 (1) of the CYPA 1950. I do not know who made the application, but a copy of the certificate dated 8<sup>th</sup> January 1951 was found among the papers taken from Rubane House in 1985. Notice of de-registration requirement was given by **BR 8** in a letter dated 21<sup>st</sup> June 1985. These records are attached hereto as **Exhibit 6**.
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Notwithstanding the admissions and concessions by the Order in respect of how some members of the Congregation, abused children contrary to their vocation, the Order considers that it largely complied with this Regulation. There is no doubt that great hurt and harm was caused by the heinous actions of a small number of Brothers but these needs to be balanced with sentiments of gratitude and thanks that other former residents would volunteer. Contemporaneous reports from the Ministry and Departments were, I believe, largely complimentary and the De La Salle Brothers, hampered at times by staffing, finance and resourcing issues did generally further the well-being of the disadvantaged children who were entrusted to their care.



The Fifth Meeting  
of the  
Governing Board of De La Salle Boys Home

held at Rubane House, Kircubbin  
on June 11th 1953

Chairman: Most Rev Dr Mageean

The Governing Board of the De La Salle Boys Voluntary Home held its fifth general meeting at Rubane House on June 11th under the Chairmanship of Most Rev Dr Mageean. With the exception of [REDACTED]

was a full attendance of members. Rev. Fr [REDACTED] was unable to attend owing to a serious illness while pressure of work prevented Rev. Fr [REDACTED] from being present. The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted by all and then signed by the Chairman, Most Rev. Dr. Mageean.

In discussing the need for additional accommodation it was pointed out that two courses of action presented themselves. The provision of an extension to the main building or the renovation of the existing courtyard buildings. The provision of extension was deemed to be the more [REDACTED] provided, of course, that the financial [REDACTED] given by the Ministry would be sufficiently [REDACTED] tempting. Failing agreement on this point



with the Ministry plans for altering the courtyard buildings were to be drawn up. In this respect authorisation was given to spend not more than £3,000 (three thousand)

**BR 12**

was requested to enquire from the Local Education Authority regarding the provision of dinners under the School Meals Scheme for the boys. As there was no meals Centre from which Rubane could be serviced it was suggested that perhaps the Local Authority would give a grant for the use of the kitchen at Rubane House.

Dealing with the admission of boys it was ruled that all boys sent from Milltown and from Welfare Authorities were to be accepted. For boys sent by parents or any other responsible authority it was decided that a weekly fee of £3-0-0 (Three pounds) be asked for. In cases of exceptional circumstances it was left to the discretion of the Brother Director whether or not the fee ought to be reduced. His Lordship intimated that he would appoint a General Purposes Committee which would meet monthly to discuss any relevant matters.

+D Mageean,  
30 March, 1954.



Society be approached with a view to an increase of the weekly contribution towards the maintenance of Nazareth Lodge boys at Rubane. The Governors would like to see the weekly contribution raised to £1 and [REDACTED] was instructed to notify the Society of their decision.

BR 6

A long discussion took place on the future development of the Home as envisaged in the architect's submitted plans. The respective merits of the proposed new cottage system as against the present institutional one was lengthily debated. The financial outlay was seen to be excessive and grave doubts were expressed as to whether the new scheme would meet our worries as regards the supervision of the boys and the procuring of suitable housemothers.

It was eventually decided that a sub-committee should be formed to discuss with the Ministry of Home Affairs the future development of the Home. His Lordship suggested that the following members of the Board should form the deputation to the Ministry:

9.

BR 39

The sub-committee were asked to report back to the next meeting of the Board. This concluded the business of the meeting.

19th February, 1964

Mr. Roy's Home

Mr. Belfast

Mr. Hillin

The Board

There was

By Mr. K. O. O.

Chairman

Mr. Hillin

Mr. Mullaly V.G.

By Mr. Namara.

Mr. Montague, P.P.

Mr. Curran, Adm.

Mr. Hillin, Adm.

Mr. Hillin and

It was presented

The proposed a

of the excellent

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The Home

Mr. O'Phelan



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the meeting

A meeting of the Board of Governors of  
De La Salle Boys' Home was held at "Lisbreen"  
on Wednesday, April 3rd, 1985, at 3.00pm.

The attendance was as follows:

Most Rev. Cahal Daly, D.D., Bishop of Down and Connor

Most Rev. Anthony Farquhar, D.D., Auxiliary Bishop.

Rt. Rev. Mgr. Dean Gerard Montague, Vicar General.

Rt. Rev. Mgr. P. J. Mullally.

Fr. P. McCann, P.P.

Fr. H. Armstrong, Adm.

Fr. R. Fullerton, Adm.

BR 6

BR 26

BR 4

BR 8

His Lordship congratulated Fr. McCann  
on his admirable work in representing Rubane  
at the Hughes Inquiry into Children's Homes.  
He sympathized with the De La Salle community  
on their considerable ordeal in dealing with  
unwarranted slurs on the service being  
provided by the Brothers and their staff.

Fr. McCann referred, at Dr. Daly's invitation,  
to the feasibility study carried out by  
Dr. Farquhar and BR 6, BR 26, BR 4

and BR 8. One of the recommendations of  
that study was that consideration be given  
to the closure of the Home. The report  
from the study group was circulated along  
with BR 8 report.

referred to the views of the District Council  
and to the difficulty he had of finding



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Brothers should withdraw. Fr. McCann said that his experience as chairman of the Management Committee led him inevitably to the same conclusion. The Provincial expressed concern for the lay staff. While there will always be work for the Brothers, this is not the case for the secular workers.

Fr. McCann suggested the preparation of a statement for the press in case of unwarranted pressure from reporters. The closure should be handled in as sensitive a manner as possible.

Some discussion ensued as to the timing of closing the Home and the school. It was felt, particularly by [REDACTED] that September, 1985, would be too precipitate. The recent redundancy in the school sought by the Department of Education had led to the other staff concluding that their positions were guaranteed for at least the coming academic year. However, a decision to close was taken in principle, and the latest date for such a closure was fixed at June 30th, 1986. In the meantime no further admissions are to be considered. [REDACTED] asked

that due consideration be given to placing those boys who were still in residence at the time of closure in institutions which would respect their religious persuasions. While this will present difficulties an assurance was given that every effort would be made in this regard.

The meeting concluded with a prayer.



have in the area of sexuality and relationships. In all circumstances, however, it would have been understood by any priest that the content and tone of such discussions should be appropriate to the age of the young person involved and consistent with the dignity of the Church's teaching in this area. Good practice, however, would suggest that any programme of formation for young people in this area, in an institutional rather than a family setting, should be formally approved by the Governing Board, delivered with the support of appropriately trained personnel, using approved resources and with transparent systems for dealing with any issues or difficulties that arise, including disclosures of abuse by the young people involved in the programme. While consistent with its time, the Diocese accepts that this was not the case in relation to the provision of appropriate and necessary formation of young people in the area of sexuality and relationships in Rubane.

11. In my initial statement I set out the view of the Diocese that, while the Diocese retained title for the property at Rubane and the Bishop chaired the Governing Board, what operated in management terms was most accurately described as "joint administering authorities", wherein neither the Diocese nor the De La Salle congregation were in a position of sole management control. More specifically, in relation to allegations of abuse, where these were made known to the Diocese it is clear that the Bishop, or his agent, acted with alacrity in suspending the relevant brother or lay person (e.g. RUB 190, 62.1) pending investigation. The internal management of these allegations, however, appears to have been led by the Brother described in the 'Awareness Statement' (Rub 170-197) provided by the De la Salle Order as 'Director and Manager' of the home. Where there is no record of the Governing Board or the Diocese being aware of allegations against a brother, it is clear that the De La Salle Order itself assumed full responsibility for managing the case. The Brother 'Director and Manager' of the home referred such matters to the Order and not to the Governing Board. The Diocese was not involved. This is to confirm that, in practice, management of this vital area of the administration and oversight of Rubane was presumed by the Order to rest primarily with them. As acknowledged by the Order, 'the Order recognizes that it had day to day control of operations on the ground and was therefore the only organization who could actually comply with many of the [1952] regulations on a practical level' (RUB 1179).

12. It may also assist to clarify that the arrangement agreed between the Order and the Diocese for paying back the original loan(s) used to buy the Rubane site, whereby the Order paid back the loan(s) while the Diocese retained title to the property, was a common method used for establishing new projects in the Diocese at that time. The funds of a Diocesan entity which had a related purpose, in this the Orphan Society, were borrowed to buy the property required for a new entity. Any new entity would have



Address

Rubans House, Kircubbin, Co. Down

Telephone No.

Kircubbin 236

auspices of

De La Salle Brothers, Hilltown, Belfast.

ndent

qualifications)

BR 12

qualifications)

BR 17

ldren's)

qualifications)

5 De La Salle Brothers.

stic)

1 cook, 2 maids

er of beds available

56 (44 in main house + 12 in steward's house)

(at date of visit)

Under 2	2 & Under 5	5 & Under 16		16 & Under 18	18 and over
		At school	Not at school		
48	-	46	2		
.....					
.....					

Dr Simpson  
St. Wright

W.N. or N.N.

Date

Without Notice

17/5/55

Conditions of Admission

- ① Boys over 12 years of age who have been in Noyark House, Belfast
- ② Boys of school age in care of welfare authorities.
- ③ Any deserving case.

Fees charged (if any)

\$ 3-0-0 per week.

Treatment on Admission

A medical certificate is required from the boy's own doctor before admission. All children are medically examined by Dr Graham, Kircubbin, shortly after arrival.

ing

A stock of clothing is maintained & when necessary articles are bought for individual children.

Normal meals and times)

Breakfast 8 a.m.

Lunch 12.30 p.m.

Tea 4.0 p.m.

Supper 6.0 p.m.

A diet book is maintained.

We did not see the diet book when inspecting the kitchen, as owing to the ~~absence~~ the brother responsible was off duty.



Statutory Records

✓ Admission Register

✓ Log book.

Diet book. (not seen)

Fire Record.

✓ Medical Record Cards.

All statutory records seen were satisfactorily maintained.

General Remarks (including information carried over from above)

Rubane is a beautiful Home situated in 250 acres of land. It is also made of the sturges house to accommodate the boys & a new school has recently been built for them adjacent to the main house. There are extensive farm buildings. The holding is well stocked & those boys interested in this type of work can receive an excellent training in all branches of farming. There were several ancient automobiles in evidence & we gathered that boys interested in motor mechanics have great fun with these & have recently compiled a motor car from the various wrecks. We were impressed by the lively activity open to the boys. They have plenty of freedom in the grounds and were enjoying life to the full on the day of our visit. This Wright personally knows a number of the boys who have been placed in employment from this Home, all were interested in their work & anxious to do well. It is evident that their training has been a good preparation for life. Many old boys return for week-ends. There is a cheerful atmosphere at Rubane & the House is well kept.

Date 19/5/55.

St. Wright  
Norman J. Sumner.



## Recreation (Outdoor), Voluntary Organisations, and Outings

The spacious grounds surrounding this Home provide ample opportunity for outdoor activity. There is a football & hockey pitch, fixtures being arranged with other local schools. In the summer the boys play rounders & have swimming in the lake on the estate. All are taken to Glenariff for Summer holidays.

## Religion - Denomination and Observance

RC - Boys attend services in the Chapel in the Home.

## Discipline (including corporal punishment, if any)

Good - Only occasionally has corporal punishment been inflicted.  
No punishment has been recorded this year.

Medical Attendance The school medical officer responsible for the care of the boys is Dr Graham. By Scott Divisional Medical Officer, Co. Down Health Authority, visits the Home frequently & is responsible for the routine medical examination of the boys.

(Is there a First Aid box?) Yes.

Dental Attendance Seen by school Dental Office, at mobile dental clinic.

## Visiting Committee

There is a Board of management but no Visiting Committee.

## Visits from Relatives and Letters

As this Home is difficult to reach by rail & bus, no set visiting days are adhered to. All boys make visits & receive letters. Quite a number go home for holidays.

## General Tone

There is a very happy atmosphere in this Home & the relationships between the staff & the boys is excellent. On Ascension Thursday when we called there was a school holiday. Some boys were playing football & others were enjoying the novelty of the new billiard table. It was a warm sunny day & late afternoon. We saw the boys at leisure on the large field in front of the house. Many of them had little garden plots of their own design & they were delighted to show us how their plants were growing. All were happy responsive children, & without exception looked healthy & well nourished.

## Normal Method of Disposal

Returned to parents.

Placed in employment.

A welfare officer has now been appointed & it is hoped that he will arrange for the Boarding Out of some of these boys.



appreciating that the well being of the child was of paramount importance and that adherence to disciplinary measures should have been very much a secondary issue.

d) **The duties and obligations of the Department:**

1) **Inspections**

Section 102 of the 1950 Act empowered the Department to make inspections of voluntary homes by means of inspectors who had special qualifications or experience in the care of children, although the legislation did not require the frequency or nature of such inspections to equal the obligations of the visitor. Although the Department was not obliged to appoint such Inspectors or to inspect voluntary homes, it clearly exercised the power in relation to Rubane and other voluntary homes. Documents provided by the Inquiry indicate that Departmental inspections of Rubane occurred reasonably frequently from 1951 until 1976. The two Inspectors most frequently involved in Rubane were a Ms Forrest and a Ms Hill, both of whom appear to have retired in or about 1975. Their reports, which may be considered to have reflected standards at the time, reveal that inspections appear to have involved discussion with officers in charge; examination of the 'statutory books' i.e. the records required by regulation; and observation of some of the children, but a lack of direct communication with them. However, it is right to say that it now appears to be generally accepted that children in care during the Rubane years, would have been reluctant, if not unwilling, to discuss problems with a person they would have met, at best once a year. It is also to be remembered that apart from two "incidents" involving the Order in 1958 and 1964, an awareness and acceptance that children in both welfare authority homes and voluntary homes had been sexually and physically abused did not really occur until 1980 with the Kincora scandal.

While therefore recognising that inspections of Rubane should, with the benefit of hindsight, have been more thorough, including meeting with the children, the Department would contend that even if such meetings had taken place, it is far from certain that allegations of abuse would have been made.

2) **The Administering Authority**

It has been acknowledged above that the administering authority, whatever its identity, did not comply with Regulation 4 of the 1952 Regulations. Equally, it is recognised that there was a duty upon the Department to ensure that there was such compliance and that the Department failed to discharge that duty. Even as



late as 1981 when the Social Work Advisory Group undertook an in-depth investigation at Rubane, the failure of the administering authority to carry out its obligations under the 1952 Regulations, was not recognised or noted.

The Ministry of Home Affairs ceased to exist after 1973 and its former powers, duties and responsibilities were divided between the Department of Health and Social Services and the Northern Ireland Office. Unfortunately, the inspection role previously undertaken by Ms Forest and Ms Hill, was not included in the responsibilities of Officers of the Social Work Advisory Group. It has been noted that there were a number of "visits" by an Officer of the Social Work Advisory Group to Rubane between 1976 and 1980, but the Department would not seek to rely upon these visits as constituting inspections.

### 3) **Over-crowding and Insufficient Staff**

The Inquiry has before it considerable documentation demonstrating efforts by the Department to encourage the Order to provide better accommodation and a greater number of staff at Rubane and evidence that the Department considered revoking the registration of Rubane as a voluntary home. Happily, if belatedly, greater accommodation in the form of four new Chalets and an increase in staff levels did bring about a satisfactory conclusion to both these issues. The Department's retained expert, Dr Hilary Harrison, has expressed the view that the only real sanction to prevent overcrowding and understaffing would have been the revocation of the registration of Rubane as a voluntary home. However, such a sanction would have had detrimental consequences for the child residents and welfare authorities alike. Children, until then under the care of the Order, would have come under the care of the welfare authorities and not only is it doubtful whether those authorities could provide accommodation for the children, but such change would also have meant considerable additional financial expense for those authorities. Additionally, the "closure" of an institution run by a Catholic Order almost certainly would have had political repercussions and a deepening of the divide that already existed in Northern Ireland.

### 4) **The 1964 Incident and the Hughes Inquiry**

In August 1964 a resident of Rubane made a complaint of having been sexually assaulted by one of the Brothers. The Police, the Ministry of Home Affairs, the County Down Welfare Committee and the Belfast Welfare Committee were all notified of these allegations. In its initial statement to the



the same conclusions in respect of their capacity to provide a genuine insight into the standard of care in the home might well apply to those carried out from 1950 to the period under consideration by the Hughes Inquiry.

21. A fundamental purpose of any inspection should be to ensure that statutory requirements are being met. The Department accepts that despite annual inspections and frequent visiting by MoHA and DHSS inspectors/advisors, evidence was not sought to demonstrate that the Board of Governors was fulfilling its statutory responsibility regarding the monthly visitation of the home. A person should have been appointed by the Board of Governors to satisfy himself/herself whether the home was being conducted in the interests of the wellbeing of the children and report to the administering authority on the visit.
22. Apart from some early references to communications with the Bishop, the Department also accepts that its predecessors did not appear to engage or communicate with the Board of Governors for Rubane, which was the administering authority for the home. With particular reference to the 1964 incident, the De La Salle Order was permitted to deal with the issue and carry out its own investigation without reference to the Board, which held statutory responsibility for the welfare of children in Rubane and to whom the Order was accountable for the running of the home. The potential for important information to be shared with the MoHA and the police was therefore diminished.
23. The Department acknowledges that these shortcomings are likely to have contributed to a system that failed a significant number of children. Children in Rubane should have experienced care, security and stability. Instead, many were subjected to physical, sexual and emotional abuse which went unrecognised and untold for many years with devastating consequences for the children's future lives. The Department believes that the shortcomings outlined above, had they not occurred, would not of themselves have prevented the abuse of children. Nevertheless, rigour of inspection, proper monitoring by responsible authorities and clearly defined management responsibility and accountability are essential to the wellbeing of children in care. These form part of a comprehensive safeguarding process that should help to create an open environment in which opportunities for abuse are minimised and children feel sufficiently safe to alert staff and others to any concerns they might have and know that they will be heard.



by Board  
1st November

Mr. D.D. was  
present also

Mr. Gannon  
Mr. McCallan,

Mr. McFarlane

Members of the

and and

from

Mr.

Mr.

Mr. D.D. this

Mr. D.D. this

Mr. D.D. this

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Mr. D.D. this

Mr. D.D. this

running of the home was next discussed. Practically all places in the home remained filled during the course of the year. There were 37 new admissions and 32 discharges during 1977. Two new members of staff were employed on the 'caring side' as Housemasters. His Lordship on behalf of the Board expressed appreciation and thanks to all concerned in caring for the children, a work that is becoming ever more demanding and difficult. The adoption of the report was proposed by Mr. McCallan and seconded by Gannon Murphy.

Proposed management Committee:

BR 1

outlined discussions he had had with [redacted] of the Down & Connor Catholic Family Welfare and it was felt by the Board that such a committee would be of great benefit in the more efficient running of the home. Some doubts were expressed as to the powers and functions of such a committee. It was agreed that it would act in a similar manner as the committee of St. Joseph's Children's Home and would be entirely advisory and act as a back up to the manager in any difficulties that might arise. The Gov. Board felt that initially the Committee should be formed on a temporary basis until the next meeting of the Gov. Board and Mr. McCallan, Mr. O'Gannon, BR 46 and BR 1 were directed to meet and appoint other members to a maximum of eight.



The boys stayed at Kilmore House, Glenariff. Activities included football, volleyball, table tennis, bingo, fishing, swimming, rock climbing, treasure hunts, films at local cinema, discos, treks in forest park, visits to places of interest, Ballycastle, Giant's Causeway Carrick a rede rope bridge.

Other records suggest that at times holidays were also undertaken to Scotland and Waterford.

# **10. The procedures which the De La Salle Order had in place to oversee the operation of Rubane House;**

## **10.1. Board of Governors:**

Prior to 1975 and the coming into effect of the Children and Young Persons (Voluntary Home) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1975, the Home was under the control of the Board of Governors who in turn delegated the day to day management of the Home to the De La Salle Order. Membership of the Board of Governors from time to time was determined by the Bishop for the time being of the Diocese and always consisted of five or six Priests of the Diocese of Down and Connor under the chairmanship of the Bishop. The Parish Priest of Kircubbin Parish was always a member of the Board of Governors and in the exercise of his pastoral duties paid regular visits to the Home to administer to the spiritual needs of the residents and any other needs that were apparent to him. In the history of the Home there had been a total of thirty one meetings of the Board of Governors in a thirty three year period.

## **10.2. General Purposes Committee:**

The Minutes of the Board of Governors, dated 30th October 1951, report that it was decided by the Board to set up a General Purposes Committee to advise on matters that might arise between meetings of the Governing Body which it had been decided were to take place annually. This Committee met frequently over a ten year period and meetings of this Committee were kept some of which are exhibited hereto as Exhibit 8. With the passage of time, it became increasingly difficult for the General Purposes Committee to render regular and useful assistance and eventually it lapsed as an effective body. On 21st November 1978 at its Annual Meeting the Board of Governors, who throughout the years had continued to meet on an annual basis to review the running and development of the Home, decided to form a Management Committee.

## **10.3. Management Committee:**

This Committee was established on 5th February 1979 and its role was both executive and advisory. It was responsible to the Governing Body and it met a minimum of six times a year. Its main function was to supervise the management of the Home and to advise the Officer in Charge in all matters pertaining thereto.

The Management Committee undertook responsibilities for the appointment of lay staff, determining the terms and conditions of service and dealing with the employment and dismissal of members of staff and performing its role as adjudicator in decision-making circumstances requiring the resolution of grievances or consideration of breaches of discipline by staff. As well as formal meetings, members of the Management Committee visited the Home regularly between meetings. Every part of the building was inspected - kitchens, dormitories, school rooms and recreation areas. All members of staff were interviewed individually and in an informal manner. Staff were invited to convey any complaint or suggestion through the members of the Committee to the Board of Governors.



of £9 to bring the weekly per capita to £55.00. The Board approved this figure and agreed it should be backdated to 1st Sept. '78. This new figure would be sufficient to clear the deficit and hopefully keep us above board for the rest of the year. The Farm Account was also examined and continued to show a healthy profit, and His Lordship expressed appreciation and thanks to all concerned with the management of the farm.

Annual Report.

The Annual Report on the general running of the Home was presented, and discussed. This included statistics of admissions and discharges, staff changes, educational programme in the school and recreational activities. It was noted that the number of children remained static for the year at 67. His Lordship on behalf of the Board expressed his thanks and satisfaction to all concerned for the continued successful functioning of the Home.

Management Committee.

The Board was informed of the formation of the Management Committee which was approved at the meeting held in Nov. '78. The membership of the Committee is: Fr. P. O'Connell, Chairman, Mrs. Mary O'Neill, Vice Chairman, Bro. **BR 6** Secretary, Fr. John O'Connor, Fr. Kevin Donnelly, Fr. Hugh Stacey, Bro. **BR 46** and Bro. **BR 1**. The first meeting was held on 5th Feb. '79 and subsequent meetings at roughly two



DR DA DALLER BOSTON HUMAN MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The first meeting of the Management Committee was held at Rubane House at 2.30 p.m. on 5th February, 1979. Those present were:

Rev. Fr. John O'Connor  
 Rev. Fr. Peter McCann  
 Rev. Fr. Kevin Donnelly  
 Rev. Fr. Hugh Starkey  
 Mrs. Mary Nihil

BR 1

BR 6

BR 46

As this was the first meeting of the committee no formal agenda had been circulated. It was agreed that the first duty was to elect Chairman, V. Chairman and Secretary. On the proposal of Fr. O'Connor Fr. McCann was elected as Chairman. Fr. Donnelly proposed Mrs. Nihil for the post of V. Chairman and this was agreed. BR 6 consented to accept the post of Secretary.

Father McCann then welcomed all the members and expressed satisfaction that this committee had been formed and said that both he and his fellow clergy brought with them an interest in the home and its work which goes back over a long number of years. He then outlined the broad objectives of the committee and stressed the point that they were principally an advisory body willing to give back up help to the staff and the home in any way they could.

Father O'Connor was then asked to outline what he saw as the most important functions of a childrens home and the areas that most attention should be paid to.

1. His first point was that the Catholic Voluntary Sector must be able to offer a service as good if not better than that provided in state institutions
2. The most important person in a childrens home is the child and so the home must primarily be child-centred and the level of care provided must be of the highest quality
3. Finance must not limit care
4. Quality of care must be analysed and constantly be kept under review.
5. The need to encourage staff training and the necessity of having qualified staff

BR 1 pointed out that some discussion was necessary on the future of the home. Over twenty boys were due to leave this year and the same number next year and he expressed some concern as to how these vacancies were going to be filled. It was pointed out that Nazareth Lodge are not now sending any children as they did in former years. Fr. O'Connor informed the meeting that all the Area Boards were now in the process of building their own homes and thus providing their own accommodation to keep the children as near as possible to their own home and environment.

Other topics briefly discussed were:

- (a) wages and conditions; (b) staff ratio; (c) how would the status of the school change if family groups were accepted into the home; (d) involvement in the local community.

BR 1 was asked to examine and have data available for the next meeting on the following points:

- (a) staff wages; (b) staff training; (c) ratio of staff to children.

It was agreed that a very wide range of topics had been discussed at this meeting and most of them would be treated in greater detail at future meetings.

The next meeting was arranged for Tuesday 3rd April at 2.30 p.m. in Rubane House.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

CHAIRMAN.



DE LA SALLE BOYS' HOME MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The third meeting of the Management Committee was held at Rubane House on 29th May, 1979.

PRESENT: Father Peter McCann, Chairman  
 Father John O'Connor  
 Mrs. Mary Nihill  
 BR 6 Secretary  
 BR 46  
 BR 1

APOLOGIES: Father Kevin Donnelly  
 Father Hugh Starkey

The minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated and were signed by the Chairman.

11. Present number of children in the Home: With six boys having left at Easter and another ten at the end of May there were now 54 children in residence. A further six were due to leave before the end of June. There were queries for four new admissions.  
 As the numbers had now gone down considerably it was suggested that this might be a suitable time to study the effects smaller numbers would have on the Chalets and the overall functioning of the Home. Houseparents should be asked for their observations.
12. New Hostel: No firm date has yet been fixed for first admissions. Some staff still to be appointed and some furniture still to be delivered. We have two boys waiting for places.
13. Salaries, Wages and Holidays: Salaries and wages had now been regularised and everyone seemed happy with the new scales. BR 1 requested some guidelines on holiday entitlement for different grades of staff and Fr. O'Connor agreed to send on the latest information available on this.
14. Conditions of Work: BR 1 outlined to the Committee the steps which led up to the formation of a branch of the National Union of Public Employees in the Home. A letter had been received from [redacted] Northern Ireland Area Officer, requesting a meeting to open negotiations to improve the standard of conditions of employment of their members. The Management Committee decided that until such time as a letter of apology was received from [redacted] for his discourtesy and intrusion no meeting or discussion would take place.
15. Visits by members of Management Committee: Fr. O'Connor suggested that members of the Committee should visit the Home on an informal basis between meetings and meet members of staff and give them the opportunity of speaking openly and airing any grievances they might have. Various parts of the Home should be inspected, a Visitors Book signed and a report made to the next meeting of the Management Committee.
16. Keeping of various Record Books: The importance of keeping proper record books was stressed. These should include records of children (admission, discharge, medical etc.), also records of fire drill, events of importance in connection with the Home, and keeping up to date visitors book, menu books, etc.
17. Per capita cost: Still waiting approval of request for increase of weekly allowance to £55.00.



DE LA SALLE BOYS' HOME MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The fourth meeting of the Management Committee was held at Rubane House on 11th September, 1979.

PRESENT: Father Peter McCann, Chairman  
Father Kevin Donnelly  
Mrs. Mary Nihill

BR 6

BR 46

BR 1

APOLOGIES: Father John O'Connor and Father Hugh Starkey

The first part of the meeting was taken up with an informal visitation of the school. Members of the Committee had the opportunity to observe the school in action and to meet most of the members of the teaching staff. The Committee expressed great satisfaction with many aspects observed especially the following:

- (a) The timetabling and grouping of children, so as to allow for the maximum attention to be given to the most retarded children
- (b) The wide range of subjects on the curriculum to cater for the spread of interests and aptitudes of the boys
- (c) The number and qualifications of staff for the quite small number of boys
- (d) The cleanliness and general appearance of the school was very impressive

20. Number of children in the Home: The number of children in the Home on the date of the meeting was 51. There had been 7 new admissions since the last meeting while 22 boys had left over that period. The smaller number of children in the various units over the holiday period had given the Houseparents an opportunity to observe the quality of care they could bestow and the consequent reaction from the children. Smaller numbers led to more individual attention and a greater approximation to a family unit.

These points were noted by the Committee and they asked that the situation be kept under continuing observation.

21. New Hostel: BR 1 informed the Committee that the Hostel had opened on 28th June and the two boys who were waiting for places had now taken up residence there.

22. N. U. P. E.: The Committee were informed that [redacted] had been on the phone on three occasions. The first call was requesting an explanation as to why his request for a meeting was not answered. He was informed that until such time as an acceptable reply was received to our letter to [redacted] of 6th June no meetings would take place. Both the other calls were raising points re salaries etc. and he was informed that no discussion would take place over the phone and if he had any queries to put them in writing and they would be placed before the Management Committee.

23. Visits by members of the Management Committee: At the last meeting Mrs. Nihill was requested to visit the kitchen quarters of the Home. Mrs. Nihill made her visit on 5th September and presented a very comprehensive and constructive report to the Committee.

While praising many aspects of the general lay-out of the kitchen and canteen, and also of the good and acceptable quality of the meal provided for the boys, she also pointed out some faults which needed to be corrected and made observations which could only make for a more efficient running of the premises.

The members discussed the general attitude they would adopt in visiting the chalets and especially in their conversation with the houseparents. They would try to



DE LA SALLE BOYS' HOME MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The fifth meeting of the Management Committee was held at Rubane House on 6th November, 1979.

PRESENT: Fr. Peter McCann, Chairman  
Fr. John O'Connor  
Fr. Hugh Starkey  
Mrs. Mary Nihill

BR 6

BR 1

APOLOGIES: Fr. Kevin Donnelly and BR 46

28. Number of children in the Home: On the day of the meeting there were 52 children in residence. This showed an increase of one since the last meeting. During that period there were three new admissions and two discharges. A general discussion took place on the present trends and if the pattern of admissions and discharges continued as it is now the long term policy would need looking at or a possible change in the character of the Home. No definite pattern was emerging from any Board in particular.
29. Salaries and Wages: Fr. O'Connor outlined the latest position in this matter. A large increase had been granted in salaries and also there was a complete regrading of staff which would also entitle them to extra money. Unfortunately in the Voluntary Sector no special allowance had been made by the Department for the implementation of these increases as had been made for the Statutory bodies. Fr. O'Connor suggested an interim payment which would carry us over until final details could be worked out.
30. N. U. P. E. There were no further developments with the Union since the last meeting. Fr. McCann restated the policy of the Committee in dealings with the Union and any meetings requested by N.U.P.E. representatives must be by letter to the Secretary of the Management Committee.
31. Visits by members of the Management Committee: At the last meeting Mrs. Nihill had been requested to visit the sleeping accommodation and washing areas in the various units. Her report on the visit was detailed and helpful. Commenting on the two rooms in the main house with seven beds in each - the beds were rather close to each other, but the loftiness of the ceiling and the large windows offset the rather crushed appearance. Her report on the Chalets was very favourable and staff were to be complemented on the high standard of cleanliness and the general atmosphere of these apartments.

The Committee were assured that the recommendations made by Mrs. Nihill as a result of her visit to the Kitchen/Canteen area had or were being implemented.

32. Per capita cost: With the financial year ending at end of February it was thought that the present \$55.00 would be sufficient to carry us until then. Fr. O'Connor suggested the Audit be done as quickly as possible so that any request for an increase can be made as early as possible.
33. Medical Officer: BR 1 had met the local G.P. and he had agreed to carry out the same functions as were agreed between St. Joseph's and their Medical Officer. The only point not fixed was the annual fee as he felt it would be more appropriate if he charged for services as they were given.
34. Purchasing: A certain amount of progress had been made in this connection. A suitable store had been selected and some alterations carried out. Certain firms had been approached regarding prices etc. There were obvious difficulties involved but the scheme would be implemented as speedily as possible.
35. Exterior Painting: [redacted] had been awarded the contract and we were waiting for him to start the work.

The next meeting was fixed for 29th January, 1980 at 2.30 p.m. at St. Joseph's Children's Home.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Chairman



BR 2

## THE LA SALLE BOYS' HOME MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The eleventh meeting of the Management Committee was held at Rubane House on 15th December, 1980.

PRESENT: Father Peter McCann, Chairman.  
Father John O'Connor.  
Father Hugh Starkey.  
Mrs. Mary Nihill.

BR 2

BR 46

BR 6

An apology for absence was received from Father Donnelly.

63. NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN THE HOME.

This first item on the agenda practically took over the whole of the meeting. The number in the Home at the last meeting in October was 33. In the interim period there had been five admissions, five discharges, and two boys were at home on an extended holiday. This left 31 boys present in the Home at the time of the meeting.

Discussion as regards future placement of children in Rubane and the present all time low numbers revolved round two main issues:

1. What would be an acceptable number of children in the Home considering existing facilities and accommodation available.
2. The doubtful continuity of a school on the premises if numbers dropped to an unacceptable level in the opinion of the Education Authorities. Taken into consideration here would be the fact that over the next six months half of the present population in the Home would be due for discharge for various reasons.

64. The School management Committee submitted a letter to the Meeting outlining the present worry and concern among school staff due to sharp decline in numbers and asking for some guidance as regards future policy and pupil intake. The Committee pointed out that it was much concerned over the present situation obtaining in the school. The inevitable redundancies in staff which the falling numbers would seem to necessitate couldn't but be disturbing for teachers concerned. The Committee would like to assure the School Board that it would do all in its power to ascertain the reasons for the falling numbers and what future intake might be expected. However, the Committee would wish to point out that, in the short term, it would be rather presumptive to give any firm assurance as regards future numbers or referrals to the Home.



-2-

Fr. O'Connor remarked that he could see no reason, why, from the outset, an embargo had been placed on the Home. This embargo, dating back to 26th February, was manifesting symptoms of discrimination and victimisation. A strongly worded letter to the Eastern Board complaining about unfair treatment of the Home would be in order, as the long term effects of the embargo would be disastrous.

It was finally decided by the Committee that a personal and confidential letter to Sir Thomas Brown, Chairman of the Eastern Board, would be in order.

Mr. Brian Gibson, Solicitor, had indicated his willingness to attend the Committee Meeting, and at this stage it was decided to avail of his services, as he would bring us up to date with the [REDACTED] case, and also assist in drafting the letter to Sir Thomas Brown.

#### INSPECTION OF CHALETS:

On the 15th March Fr. McCann and Fr. Donnelly called, and with Mrs. Nihill visited Chalet 2. They found the Head of the Unit remarkably agreeable, except for complaints regarding the kitchen situation and occasionally the noise level of the boys which invaded the privacy of his residence. A motion proposed by BR 2 and seconded by BR 46, that Residential Staff should seek outside accommodation in the best interests of the children in the home, was unanimously passed.

The inspection team was greatly impressed with the set up in Chalet 1. They noted the happy relationships between the Staff in the Unit and also that between the Staff and the children. They found [REDACTED] to be quite a remarkable person and Fr. O'Connor suggested that a note of appreciation from the Committee, should be forwarded to both BR 5 and [REDACTED] congratulating them on the happy and relaxed atmosphere obtaining in the Chalet.

In Chalet 4 they had a talk with [REDACTED]. She realised that her youthful appearance had been a handicap and an embarrassment as regards the boys. She felt she needed strong support and complained somewhat, that this was not always forthcoming. She had an offer from Magee College, which she would probably take in the Autumn.

Mrs. Nihill said she was somewhat saddened at the lack of a spiritual atmosphere in some areas, but overall there were many praiseworthy things, and a tribute would also have to be paid to the general excellent state of the buildings.

The date for the next Meeting was fixed for Monday, 7th June, 1982, at Rubane House.



-2-

Two new Members would be appointed as soon as possible, and two further Members in September to replace [REDACTED] and BR 33 [REDACTED]. Some new anticipated Staff might have trouble in accepting posts due to travel problems.

Formal and Voluntary Visitations:

The Committee agreed that in the spirit of the Monitoring of Residential Child Care Service in the Home, a Member of the Committee should be appointed to make regular visits on a formal and voluntary capacity. Staff and children would be aware of these visits and would also know that they had free access to this person and could make known their wants or air any matter of grievance.

Father McCann thought that the Member of the Committee best qualified to carry out this service was Mrs. Nihill. She has the experience and expertise to deal with situations which might arise from such visits.

The Committee was in total agreement with Mrs. Nihill's appointment and she was asked to make a brief report of her visits so that they can be incorporated in the minutes.

Fr. O'Connor was of the opinion that liason with the Eastern Board would be enhanced if that Board were invited to appoint an appropriate Member to visit the Home at intervals. The appointment would not be a formal

one, but the Eastern Board had the responsibility to monitor Homes in their area. [REDACTED] suggested that the appointment of [REDACTED]

might be appropriate. The implementations of these visits would be deferred until after the September Meeting.

The next Meeting was fixed for Monday, 17th September, at 2.30 p.m. at Rubane House.



th March, at 3 p.m.

Rev. Fr. McCann, Chairman,  
Rev. Fr. Donnelly,  
Mrs. Keating,

BR 26

BR 6

tes of the last meeting were accepted and signed by the Chairman.

S REPORT:

f boys in the Home: In his report the Manager pointed out that  
er of boys present on the day of the meeting - 26 - compared very  
ably to the corresponding number twelve months ago which was 38.  
also pointed out that less than a quarter of the boys have been  
by the Eastern Health and Social Services Board. Due to the  
g number of boys the Department of Education had given notification  
quota of teachers for the academic year 1985/1986 was to be reduced

ts Procedure: told the Committee that the interim  
ts procedure had been explained to all the boys and staff. In  
facilitate the boys' access to the voluntary visitor, it had been  
that Mrs. Keating should visit the home on the first Tuesday of  
th. The Parish Priest and Curate had also agreed to cooperate in  
on any complaints which the boys might convey to them.  
icated that he would be attending a seminar on monitoring for  
y Child Care Organizations in Comber.

WITH DEPARTMENT:

g with the Department of Health and Social Services relevant to  
ress of investigations against a Member of Staff was held in  
d House on 27th February, 1985. This meeting was attended by the  
, Fr. McCann, BR 26 and Representatives of the  
ork Advisory Group also attended.

McCann expressed satisfaction as regards how the Meeting had



1           It seems -- something -- one of the inspections  
2       I think does recognise that there is no monthly visitor  
3       --

4   **A. Yes.**

5   Q. -- and then -- but there is nothing done beyond that  
6       then to put that right, whereas all the rest of the  
7       inspections don't really mention it at all.

8   **A. Yes. I think the inspection that you are referring to**  
9       **was -- would that have been the reference to "no**  
10       **visiting committee"?**

11   Q. Yes.

12   **A. Yes. It was a strange reference, that. I didn't**  
13       **understand whether that referred to the visitor**  
14       **appointed by the administering authority or some other**  
15       **kind of visiting committee. I didn't understand it, but**  
16       **you are right. Nothing was done to address it.**

17   Q. Nothing was done?

18   **A. Uh-huh.**

19   Q. The point that you make -- you make it later on in your  
20       statement -- that the consequence of not doing that --  
21       perhaps if I was to put it this way. What is the  
22       benefit to having that check? What benefit was likely  
23       to arise if that system was being run properly?

24   **A. Well, the purpose of the person to be appointed by the**  
25       **administering authority was to visit once a month and**



1 specifically report on the well-being of children in the  
2 home. Obviously of necessity that would require asking  
3 certain questions, perhaps speaking to children, and  
4 gauging some idea of the standards of care that were  
5 being received -- that was being received by the  
6 children, and most importantly feeding that back on  
7 a regular basis to the Management Committee.

8 Now when that is being done properly, that person  
9 should have a very visible presence in the home.  
10 Children should be aware that they're there. Staff  
11 should be aware that they're there and the purpose of  
12 their visit. So just like in a reg... -- a good  
13 inspection function, whilst monitoring -- monthly  
14 monitoring and inspections of themselves will not  
15 prevent the abuse of children, they nevertheless serve  
16 to assist the safeguarding of children by hopefully  
17 minimising opportunities for abuse to occur or by  
18 alerting those who might be tempted to perpetrate abuse  
19 to the effect that there are checks and balances in the  
20 system, that they do not have the opportunity, for  
21 example, to conduct their activities in secret, that  
22 there are people coming in to monitor and inspect the  
23 way the home operates.

24 Q. So the benefit -- and the point you make is it can't  
25 prevent abuse --



1     **A.   No.**

2     Q.   -- but what it can do is make it more difficult --

3     **A.   Yes.**

4     Q.   -- and manage the risk --

5     **A.   Yes.**

6     Q.   -- better.  I suppose when you call a spade a spade and  
7       strip this back to what it is, for the entire existence  
8       of this home basically until right at the end, perhaps  
9       '83, '84, '85, this check on potential abuses and  
10      ensuring on a proactive basis that the place is being  
11      run in the best interests of children just isn't being  
12      performed.  Not only is it not being performed.  Those  
13      with the statutory responsibility to oversee ultimately  
14      don't seem to have been exercised by it.

15           In fairness to the last witness, who was very frank,  
16      even when SWAG do their 1981 inspection at the start of  
17      -- I think I characterised it as a blitz and he accepted  
18      that's probably what it was -- all homes were being  
19      inspected over a two-year period --

20    **A.   Yes.**

21    Q.   -- it still didn't register.  Why do you think, given  
22      how you characterise what it was supposed to achieve --

23    **A.   Uh-huh.**

24    Q.   -- does the Department have any view as to why did it  
25      not register with those who were carrying out their

1 functions that, "This is something that's important,  
2 that we need to be on top of"?

3 A. Yes, yes. I do find it surprising that it didn't.

4 I note that in the early inspections people were  
5 conscious that a chaplain was visiting the home and  
6 whether or not they assumed that there were sufficient  
7 people, clerics coming in from the community or whatever  
8 to -- and that somehow that was serving the same  
9 purpose. It is no excuse. It is no proper excuse, but,  
10 I mean, there may have been some thinking to that  
11 effect.

12 In terms of why the '81 inspection didn't pick up  
13 this point, I had noted that an early monitoring request  
14 sent out by the Department to voluntary homes listing  
15 the type of information that needed to be returned to  
16 the Department had a list of areas and that again wasn't  
17 included. The reports or annual reports of monthly  
18 visitors wasn't included in that list, and I think  
19 the -- I was given the impression that that list also  
20 served to give a structure for inspection reports,  
21 because the inspection reports do seem to follow the  
22 list. It is somewhere in the evidence. I am sorry for  
23 bringing this up now without mentioning it before.

24 Q. I understand what you are saying. If they followed that  
25 --



93

1971

DL 140

On [redacted] died suddenly from [redacted] He had been in failing health for over six months. The Bishop, St. Philbin, and a large number of diocesan clergy attended the obsequies. After solemn Requiem in the Home chapel, the funeral took place to [redacted]

BR 15

In February [redacted] who had been [redacted] years, was transferred to [redacted] period of the opening of the Hall [redacted]

[redacted] home on a holiday from the [redacted] helped as [redacted] in the Main Building for a period of eight weeks. She was most helpful in reorganising the domestic service.

BR 2

On 1st July [redacted] was appointed [redacted] and [redacted]

BR 6

[redacted] who had been [redacted] during the previous [redacted] years [redacted]

BR 6

On the occasion of the change, at a special supper, tribute was paid to [redacted] for the many improvements made during his period of office, especially the introduction of the Chalet-Mouth system, the extension and of the school premises, the provision of all-weather playing grounds, the building of a much needed dining canteen for the boys, the installing of central heating and the general renovation of the Main Building.

BR 4

BR 12

In July, also, [redacted] was appointed [redacted] of the Community [redacted] years and [redacted] who was not anxious to relinquish office on the grounds of advancing years & declining health



De La Salle Boys' Home,  
Kircubbin,  
Newtownards,  
Co. Down.

Telephone: Kircubbin 261

6th Oct. 1955.

Dear Arthur,

Many thanks for your welcome letter and for the promise of the more than welcome cheque. I can well understand the financial strains your conference has been under and I appreciate how difficult it must have been to fulfil all your commitments, during the last few years.

Regarding our own financial position. Well, two years ago things became so bad, due to the very heavy debt incurred by the new buildings and the increasing cost of maintenance, that we were forced to apply to have all our voluntary boys - 20 - taken into care by the Welfare Authorities. After much patience and consultation they agreed to maintain them all and since then the financial worry has eased considerably. Please don't get the idea that everything is plain sailing. Far from it. We still have an outstanding debt and we have to deprive the boys of many of the "accepted" comforts of life. All contributions whether small or great are extremely welcome.

If any of your members or yourself would like to pay a visit to the Home to ~~see~~ discuss the matter further just drop me a line or give a tinkle on the phone.

With kindest regards and memories of old St. Finian's days.

Yours sincerely,

**BR 2**



Children's Officer,

City Welfare Officer,

29.12.71.

De la Salle Boy's Home, Rubane, Kircubbin.

I am surprised that De la Salle are now in retrospect asking for payment for boys they admitted to care on a voluntary basis. I would suspect that this query has arisen since [REDACTED] BR 2 took charge of the Home recently. It may well be that [REDACTED] BR 2 is reviewing the procedures and the boys in his care; intends to try to make some changes, and is consequently asking us to accept financial responsibility for all the boys from our area. This is speculation and it would be essential to know why this has arisen. It would also be necessary to clarify whether [REDACTED] BR 2 is asking for a grant towards the maintenance of the boys or is asking us to accept full financial responsibility.

Theoretically if [REDACTED] BR 2 insists that he will not keep the boys unless we accept financial responsibility it will not leave us with much alternative. If we are only being asked to give a grant then he could still retain his authority to admit children on a voluntary basis. If we are being asked to accept full financial responsibility then it would have to be made absolutely clear to him that all future admissions would have to come through us and we would have to undertake the social work in relation to the boys and families.

There is a further complication in that younger boys and babies can be accepted by St. Josephs or Nazareth Ledge on a voluntary basis and then transferred to De la Salle when they reach the age of eleven. Policy and procedure would therefore have to be clarified with St. Josephs and Nazareth as well, otherwise the voluntary admission may well be a fait accompli before the boy reaches De la Salle and this would put [REDACTED] BR 2 in a difficult position.

If we undertake responsibility then we would have to be given the files on the boys. This would enable us to ascertain the reason for admission and what work has been done with the parents or mother to rehabilitate the boys. I would suspect in many cases that this may be non-existent and there may well have been no contact between boys and parents for some time. This being the case we would be left with the long term care of the boy.

/...

Children and Young Persons Act (NI) 1968Voluntary HomesReturn at 31 March 1974

Form to be used for the return of particulars  
of children and young persons in the care of  
voluntary organisations

Please read the following notes before completing the form:-

- (1) One copy of this form duly completed by the person in charge of the voluntary home should be returned to the Department of Health & Social Services, HSS1A Branch, Dundonald House, not later than .....
- (2) Throughout this form the term "children" includes all persons under the age of eighteen who are in the care of the voluntary home.
- (3) The Department realises that the information required in item 10 can be no more than an estimate, but hopes that the person in charge of the home will try to give as close an estimate as possible.
- (4) If, because of holidays, or for any other reason, there are no children in the home on 31 March 1974 the information furnished should be in respect of the last preceding date on which the home was functioning normally.
- (5) In calculating the number of children boarded out (item 13) only those who are in the charge of the voluntary organisation should be included, and not those remaining in charge of parents although boarded out by the parents with assistance from the voluntary organisation.
- (6) In completing this form temporary absences, eg on holiday or in hospital, should be ignored.

1. Name and full postal address of the Voluntary Home ..DE...LA...SAME...BOYS' HOME,  
.....RUBANE...HOUSE.....  
.....KIRCUBBIN...CO. DOWRI
2. Full name of the person ..... **BR 2** .....
3. Full name and address of the person or organisation carrying on the home .....~~THE TRUSTEES~~...THE GOVERNING BOARD  
.....DE...LA...SAME...BOYS HOME,  
.....RUBANE...HOUSE,  
KIRCUBBIN,  
CO. DOWRI



27/11/75

2

4. Full name and address of the ..... **DL 260** .....

5. Full name and address ..... **BR 2** .....

DE... NA... SAILE... BOYS' HOME.  
KIRCHBIN, ... N' ARDS, ... CO. DOWN

6. If admission to the home is .....  
restricted to certain .....  
categories or age groups of .....  
children, give particulars .....  
.....  
.....  
.....

7. Number and Ages of children in the home on 31 March 1974  
(The figures given should not include those children who are boarded out)

- (a) under the age of 2;  
(b) aged 2 or over but  
not yet 5;  
(c) aged 5 or over but  
not yet 16;  
(d) aged 16 or over but  
not yet 18;

TOTALS OF ITEM 7

(1)		(2)	
TOTALS		Children included in the totals in col (1) who are in the care of an Area Board under the Children and Young Persons Act (NI) 1968	
Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
-	-	-	-
56	-	52	-
13	-	10	-
69		62	

8. Legitimacy of Children in the home on 31 March 1974

Number who are:-

- (a) Legitimate  
(b) Illegitimate

TOTALS OF ITEM 8  
(to agree with totals of  
Col 1, ITEM 7)

Boys	Girls
64	-
5	-
69	-

## RUBANE CHILDREN'S HOME

visited this home on 27 August 1974 when there were 31 boys in residence. Many others were at home on holiday and for the new school term it was expected there could be about 60 boys, including about a dozen from Nazareth Lodge.

The Brothers expressed anxieties about the increased difficulties in coping with boys in present circumstances which lead to more overt aggressive behaviour as well as more abscondings. There had also been problems with a female member of staff, a qualified nurse who had proved very unsuitable. She had now been dismissed. Mr and DL 314 had retired but replacements had been recruited - Mr and Mrs DL 279 is a [redacted] There are only 2 nuns on the staff now. Sister SR 32 and SR 31, both on the child care side and regarded by the Brothers as "the best social workers in the country". The others had returned to America. Two Brothers, [redacted] and [redacted] are being seconded for residential child care training and replacements are being made available by the Order.

Boys seen about the place appeared cheerful and relaxed. Those who had not been able to go home had had holidays at Kilmore House, Glenariffe and at a De La Salle establishment in Waterford, travelling by minibus. There had also been an educational expedition to the West of Ireland by minibus earlier in the year. The full size bus cannot be used at present since DL 421 has retired as no one else has a [redacted] Licence. It would still be useful (for swimming baths and other expeditions) if a [redacted] could be recruited perhaps on a part-time basis.

The play hall site has been levelled but problems have arisen with the planning officer who demands increased work on foundations, over and above what the architect suggested. As it seems likely that a covered pool may be delayed for reasons of finance I would suggest enquiry as to the feasibility of covering the existing open-air pool with an inflatable plastic cover to warm it up and lengthen the season. Every effort is made to keep contact with outside bodies through games and sports leagues as well as other activities.

Rubane had reluctantly admitted 3 boys from Portaferry aged 6, 7 and 8, well under their age limit. They had arranged for them to attend the local school, where they lasted exactly one day before the Headmaster insisted on their removal. Eastern Area Board had been unable to find any other vacancies for these boys and now proposed moving them to Termonbacca if they can get them in there - an arrangement which would seem likely to preclude family contacts with parents in Portaferry. However BR 2 was of opinion that Termonbacca would be unlikely to be able to cope with them. Nazareth Lodge where they might have been expected to go is quite full and this seems to be the general picture in Eastern Area Board with regard to vacancies.

There had been surplus numbers of boys for a short time necessitating the use of the Steward's house. The staff quarters there had been occupied by the unsatisfactory member of staff who was departing on the day of my visit. Rubane is now also minus one of its security men so that the Brothers have to undertake duty in turns, patrolling until 2.00 am. This is very unsatisfactory and it is hoped to recruit a new member of staff for this duty. A further visit was paid on 9 September accompanying Mrs [redacted] who had expressed a wish to visit a Catholic home in the Newtownards area. This visit seemed a very happy occasion for all concerned. Mrs [redacted] saw the school buildings in which repainting had just been completed and where lively work was going on; she then saw the unit operated by the 2 nuns; then met all the staff religious and lay in DL 115's chalet enjoying one of her delightful parties, with all her home-baking, in a very lively atmosphere.

See note below - TC 165  
in Hotel

K B Gorman  
24/9/74

P.T.O.





De La Salle Boys' Home,  
Kircubbin,  
Newtownards,  
Co. Down.

Telephone: Kircubbin 261

8th April, 1974.

Mr. W.J. Kirkpatrick,  
Dept. of H. & S. Services,  
Dundonald House,  
Upper Newtownards Rd.,  
Belfast.

Dear Mr. Kirkpatrick,

In reply to your circular,  
HSS(OSIA) 3/74, we have made a more up to  
date assessment of our registration figure  
and we agree that we should reduce it from the  
original 80 to 70.

This is due to the fact that  
two of the boys' bedrooms in the Main House  
are now being used for staff purposes.

In emergency, we could use  
another building which would cater for the  
needs of another 7 or eight children, but we  
do not consider it suitable for constant use.

Trusting that this is the  
information you require.

Yours sincerely,

BR 2

1           period that I had boys in there.

2           We did try to get boys in and out very quickly.

3           I mean, often we used Rubane as a holding place, you  
4           know, if we needed to remove a child quickly, until we  
5           could maybe get sort of a kinship or a family placement  
6           for them. We tried to remove children very, very,  
7           quickly, that they wouldn't spend time obviously  
8           anywhere, you know, but for that period of time if we  
9           needed to remove a child under a Place of Safety, you  
10          know, and it was a boy, sometimes we would have used  
11          that for older boys, but I have no memories of it and  
12          the boys never raised any issues with regard to their  
13          care there, with regard to, you know, anything that --  
14          their experiences there. So I'm sorry. I don't  
15          remember.

16       Q. You were saying earlier that during 1979 you yourself  
17          were ill and you have a recollection of someone saying  
18          to you --

19       A. Uh-huh.

20       Q. -- that there was some sort of investigation going on  
21          into Rubane at that time.

22       A. That's correct. Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes.

23       Q. But you yourself were never spoken to about it?

24       A. No, I was never spoken to. I know from colleagues of my  
25          and from my line manager at the time that



511 Ormeau Road Belfast BT7 3GS

Telephone 691133

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

22 October 1984

MORANDUM ON DE LA SALLE BOY'S HOME, KIRCUBBIN, CO. DOWN.

A Personal View

Rubane House was [redacted] by the Diocese in 1950, following an approach by the [redacted] to Dr. Mageean, Bishop of Down and Connor. [redacted] BR 39 [redacted] modern accommodation was later added and the attached school was [redacted] ised from Primary to Secondary Status in 1970. The Chalet Unit concept was in its time an advanced and constructive attempt to [redacted] et child care needs and said much for the perception of the [redacted] ocesan authorities and the Brothers.

[redacted], the years which followed, Rubane developed into an Institution [redacted] rving the needs of older boys with its regime reflecting the [redacted] rains and stresses of a single sex facility. From the early [redacted] 70's child care in general began to be re-appraised in all its [redacted] ements by the DHSS and the Area Boards. Residential care was no [redacted] nger seen as the only substitute. Fostering and allowing children [redacted] remain at home under the care of a parent or relative became [redacted] mmon. Children's homes tended to become less institutional and [redacted] ore 'family' orientated. Between 1973 and 1981 there was also a [redacted] rked increase in the number of statutory residential places avail- [redacted] ble (from 121 to 527) while at the same time voluntary children's [redacted] mes' places fell in the same period from 850 to 637 (Appendix A [redacted] sfers).

# THE LA SALLE BOYS' HOME MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE.

The tenth meeting of the Management Committee was held at Rubane House on 6th October, 1980.

PRESENT: Father Peter McCann, Chairman.  
 Father John O'Connor.  
 Father Kevin Donnelly.  
 Father Hugh Starkey.  
 Mrs. Mary Nihill.

BR 2  
 BR 46  
 BR 6

## 56. PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN:

A rather prolonged discussion took place on the vexed question of the present controversial placement of children by the Social Services. At the moment Voluntary Homes seem to be under some threat. Modern day social workers seem to disregard the wishes of parents - which should be of paramount importance - in the placement of children. Religion seems to be of minor importance. What appears to be important is the filling of the Statutory Homes. In connection with Social Workers in general,

BR 2 said that he had complied with the wishes of the Committee by circularising them as regards procedure when children were being visited in the Home. Some officers had replied to the letter and it was pleasing to note that the replies were very favorable to what had been requested.

BR 2 made the following points:

57. Two members of staff had been released on a one day week in-service course at Bangor Technical College. These were DL 89 and

DL 12

58. Members of staff were seemingly quite happy with the recent rise in their wages. A further rise would be forthcoming round Christmas.

59. As regards maintenance fees Father O'Connor said he had written to Mr. Bunting asking for a two stage rise, one to take effect from April and a further rise in the Autumn. Mr. Bunting would rather consider the two stage rise in one lot and suggested a 30% rise to take effect as from 1st April. This was a substantial rise, but due to our low numbers it would fall about £20 per capita short of what the recent audited account demanded.



16th June, 1980.

Father McCann,  
Management Committee,  
De la Salle Boys' Home,  
Kircubbin,  
NEWTOWNARDS,  
Co. Down.

RJB/KL

Dear Father McCann,

A recent comparability award provided for an increase in the salaries of Residential Child Care staff with effect from 1st January, 1980. I have enclosed a copy of the revised salary scales and can confirm that the Board will be prepared to meet the cost of implementing these new salaries through an increase in the per capita maintenance charge for the children in your Home.

Yours sincerely,

R.J. Bunting,  
Assistant Director of Social Services

Enc.

ANNUAL REPORT  
1982.

My Lord and Vory Rev, Fathers,

Number of Boys:

On the 31st December, 1982, there were 32 boys in residence at De La Salle Boys' Home, and these were placed in care by the following agencies:-

Eastern Health and Social Services Board	.....	10 boys.
Southern " " " " "	.....	8 "
Western " " " " "	.....	8 "
Northern " " " " "	.....	3 "
Probation Service	.....	3 "

During the year there were 25 boys admitted to the Home, and 25 boys discharged. Of those discharged, 15 returned to their own homes, 6 were placed in St. Patrick's Training School, and 4 were placed in Residential accommodation.

While the number of boys in the Home has remained static compared with 31st December, 1981, there was a marked upturn in the number of children referred to the Home from November, 1982, and this trend has continued into 1983. On the 1st June, 1983, there were 40 boys resident in the Home. To cope with this influx and in keeping with current thinking on the optimum number of children per Residential Unit, Chalet 3 was re-opened in January 1983, and four new Staff were appointed. Despite natural wastage, it is expected that the numbers will continue to range between 40 and 45, and that this fourth Chalet will continue to be utilised.

Residential Staff:

BR 5 replaced BR 23 as [redacted] on 1st January 1982. BR 23 is now full time [redacted]. Both of our [redacted] DL 11 and DL 89 resigned during the year and had to be replaced. BR 10 is now [redacted] and DL 2 is [redacted]. A Head of Unit has yet to be appointed to Chalet 3. In the course of the past year, a number of Residential Staff were appointed - DL 10, DL 2, [redacted] and DL 458 in [redacted] DL 459 and DL 460 [redacted] in [redacted] DL 461, [redacted] DL 462 and DL 463 [redacted] in [redacted] BR 9, DL 464, [redacted] DL 465, and BR 33 in [redacted]. Many of the new members of Staff are graduates and they bring a refreshing enthusiasm, dedication, and wholehearted commitment to the work which is encouraging for the future.

As DL 98 was made redundant on 31st December, 1982, there is now just one farmhand.

At present the Staff, excluding Teachers, is comprised of the following:

- 1 Manager,
- 1 Deputy Manager,
- 3 Heads of Units,
- 5 Houseparents,
- 7 Assistant Houseparent,
- 1 Voluntary Helper. (Brother)
- 1 Salaries and Wages Clerk,
- 1 Secretary, (Part Time)
- 11 Ancillary Domestic Staff,
- 1 Groundsman,
- 1 Maintenance Man,
- 1 Farmhand,
- 1 Night Watchman,
- 1 Farm Manager.

BR 2 [redacted] attended a Pastoral Course in Rome from 6th January - 1st June, 1983, and in his absence was replaced by BR 7 [redacted]. BR 5 acted as [redacted] during this period.

School:

BR 3 resigned as [redacted] on 31st August, 1982, [redacted] Over../



15 4076 1

26 January 1981

Mr E S Gilliland BSc(Edn)  
Director of Social Services  
Eastern Health and Social Services Board  
65 University Street  
BELFAST  
BT7 1EB

Dear Mr Gilliland

DE LA MALLE BOYS' HOME, RUBANE HOUSE, KIRCUBBIN

y I think you should know that we will shortly be meeting representatives of the Management Committee of this Home at their request when issues about the aims, objectives and no doubt child care practice in the Home will arise.

Nevertheless I think I should make it clear that, in my view, the Department's registration and inspectorial functions do not in any way diminish the responsibility of Boards to actively pursue the needs of the individual children in their care who are accommodated in voluntary homes with appropriate senior staff or, if need be, with the Management Committee of the Home concerned.

y It follows that the complaints/criticisms aired by Miss A Walker should, if you think it advisable, be taken up by your senior staff in accordance with your Board's policy.

We would wish to be informed if it does not prove possible to resolve problems through the procedure outlined above.

Yours sincerely

J A MILNE  
Chief Social Work Adviser

copy of information - We intend to carry out an inspection  
of Rubane during the week  
9-13 March

fa  
28/1/81

15 4076 1

26 January 1981

Mr E S Gilliland BSc(Edn)  
Director of Social Services  
Eastern Health and Social Services Board  
65 University Street  
BELFAST  
BT7 1EB

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DE LA SALLE BOYS' HOME, RUBANE HOUSE, KIRCUBBIN

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Yours sincerely

J A MILNE  
Chief Social Work Adviser

copy of information - We intend to carry out an inspection  
of Rubane during the week  
9-13 March

fa  
28/1/81



R E P O R T

ON

RUBANE HOUSE

KIRCUBBIN

Social Work Advisory Group  
Department of Health and Social Services  
July 1981



REPORT  
ON  
RUBANE HOUSE, KIRCUBBIN

Social Work Advisory Group  
Department of Health and Social Services  
Dundonald House  
BELFAST  
BT4 3SF

July 1981



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Inspection report on: De La Salle Boys' Home  
Gransha Road  
Kircubbin  
NEWTOWNARDS  
Co Down  
BT22 1AJ

1. Introduction

- 1.1 De La Salle Boys' Home, known as Rubane House, is registered as a children's home by the Department of Health and Social Services. It is held in trust by the Diocese of Down and Connor and managed by the De La Salle Order. It is situated in a rural setting between Kircubbin and Portaferry about two miles from Kircubbin and within the administrative area of the North Down and Ards District of the Eastern Health and Social Services Board.
- 1.2 The inspection was carried out in accordance with the provisions of Section 168 of the Children and Young Persons Act (Northern Ireland) 1968. Recent Departmental policy provides for a more detailed inspection of children's facilities with a view to making reports available to the Department of Health and Social Services, the Management Committees of voluntary children's homes or to the Health and Social Services Boards in respect of their statutory provisions. In addition the Home's Management Committee, who had been seeking a meeting with representatives of the Department, expressed the view that they would welcome an evaluation of the Home's performance of its present function to facilitate planning for possible future changes.
- 1.3 The inspection was carried out by [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] of the Social Work Advisory Group  
from 9-13 March 1981.



## 2. Method

2.1 Prior to the inspection information about the staff employed in the Home, the young people accommodated there and procedural matters including the draft of a recently compiled staff handbook was made available to the inspectors by [REDACTED] BR 2, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

2.2 The facts and views expressed in this report were based on this information and on observations during the five days spent in the Home as well as on discussions with Very Rev Peter McCann, Chairman of the Management Committee, [REDACTED] BR 2 and [REDACTED] BR 7,

[REDACTED] Most of the members of the Home's caring staff were also interviewed during the course of the inspection. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] spent one evening in the Home in one of the chalets where they had an evening meal and joined in discussions with the young people. On the completion of the inspection the team's findings were discussed with Father McCann and [REDACTED] BR 2.

2.3 The inspection team wishes to record its sincere thanks to Father McCann, [REDACTED] BR 2 and to all the staff of the Home for their co-operation, assistance and hospitality during the inspection. The open, thoughtful and frank manner of [REDACTED] BR 2's responses to the many questions put to him over the five days about the daily life in and management of the Home was most impressive and helpful.

## 2. Description of the Facility

- 2.1 The Home is approximately 15 miles from Belfast and situated off a minor road near the main Kircubbin/Portaferry Road and within sight of Strangford Lough. It is set on rising ground overlooking farming land. The estate includes 200 acres of arable land and 50 acres of woodland. The former land steward's house and extensive farm buildings are situated on the west side of the complex. There were 90 cattle wintering in two sheds. None of the boys works on the farm.
- 3.2 Rubane House is a large Georgian building with a Tudor annex, the only remaining part of the original mansion which was destroyed by fire. The annex is now used as a chapel. The property was purchased in 1950 with the consent of the Roman Catholic Bishop of the Down and Connor Diocese to provide residential accommodation for "the growing numbers of orphans and boys in need of care and protection". It began as the De La Salle Orphan Boys' Home and the first group of 35 boys took up residence there in 1951. It was the practice until recent years to transfer boys resident in Nazareth Lodge Children's Home, Belfast, to Rubane House when they reached the age of 11 years. By 1966 the total number of boys accommodated there had risen to over 80. In an effort to provide more homely accommodation the 'Cottage Unit System' was considered to try to create living conditions closer to those of the ordinary family. Two new double chalets were completed in 1968 and 1969, each incorporating living accommodation for two groups of from 12-14 boys. About the same time a new gymnasium, woodwork and metalwork rooms, a library, science rooms and a number of new classrooms were built. Soon afterwards an all-weather playing pitch was created and a new recreation hall was erected.



3.3 The main house contains the Brothers' quarters, chapel, general office and accommodation for 14 boys on the first floor. It is linked by a broad corridor to the school canteen and kitchen. The secondary school with accommodation for up to 100 pupils is located at the rear of the house with the chalets on each side of it. Each chalet has staff accommodation at the gable ends, with a central entrance leading to each of the two units. There is bedroom accommodation for three members of the community on the first floor immediately above the entrance hall.

3.4 Rubane House at present has accommodation for 70 boys. In an attempt to adjust the running of the Home to a recent marked decline in numbers and to try to effect economies the Management Committee in October 1980 decided to close two of the chalets. The residents were transferred to the main house where they now occupy two large bedrooms on the first floor. There are five beds in each room. The remaining 22 boys are accommodated in the other two chalets. The two-storey units have three bedrooms each with accommodation for 4 boys and two single bedrooms with bath/shower/w.c. facilities all on the first floor. On the ground floor there is a large lounge with an open fireplace, a kitchen, a laundry room, a small games room, a w.c. and a cloakroom with lockers. The staff accommodation which occupies two floors at the gable end consists of three bedrooms, a sitting-room and a bathroom/w.c. Resident staff share the kitchen in the unit with the boys.

3.5 Apart from the inadequate bath/shower provision we were impressed with the material standards provided in the chalets. They are bright and comfortable with emphasis being placed on tidiness and cleanliness. However the extensive use of floor tiles accentuates the institutional aspects of the accommodation. Furthermore, bedrooms which accommodate four boys do not allow for the extra privacy which older children require. Generally the accommodation is up to acceptable standards and is well maintained.

3.6 Fire Precaution Arrangements

The means of escape in the event of fire appear to be adequate. There are two external fire escapes, one at the front and one at the rear of the house. The chalets each have three internal staircases including those which form part of the staff accommodation. Fire drills are carried out during each school term. The frequency of fire drills should be examined by management to ensure that both staff and boys are familiar with evacuation procedures. Records which must be completed when fire drills are carried out should include the details of the personnel involved and the time taken to evacuate the buildings.

There is no recent record of a Fire Authority report on Rubane House in the Department's file.



#### 4. Profile of Residents

- 4.1 The Home is registered by the Department to provide accommodation for 70 boys aged from 11-16 years. At the time of the inspection there were 32 boys in residence whose ages ranged from 11 to 16 years. About 88% of the young people were the subjects of Fit Person Orders. It would seem that, when admitted, the intention was for most of the residents to remain in the Home until they attain the age of 16. There were four sibling groups each with two brothers.
- 4.2 All the children living in the Home with the exception of one boy, who was the subject of a Probation Order, had been placed there by the four Area Health and Social Services Boards. There were fourteen boys from the Eastern Board, ten from the Southern Board, four from the Western Board and three from the Northern Board. In all these cases maintenance charges were paid by the Boards. The boy on the Probation Order was paid for by the Northern Ireland Office.
- 4.3 One boy, aged 16 years, was attending a Grammar School in Portaferry and was to take 'O' level examinations this summer. The remainder all attended the Secondary School at the Home.
- 4.4 During the course of our discussions BR 2 referred to the requests made by Boards for accommodation and to the perception of Rubane House usually presented to him by social workers in which they saw the Home as providing consistent discipline in a structured setting. Further comment will be made on this point at a later stage in the report. (See paragraph 7.3)

### 5. Management

5.1 The Board of Governors of De La Salle Boys' Home is presided over by The Most Rev Dr William Philbin, Bishop of Down and Connor, and the members are: The Ven Archdeacon G Montague, The Right Rev Monsignor P J Mullally and The Very Rev Fr P McCann. The Board have entrusted the functional management of the Home to the De La Salle Brothers.

As trustees of the Home the Board receives an Annual Report with a Financial Statement from the Manager.

5.2 The role of the Manager of Rubane House as set out in the draft handbook is:-

"In all effective administration the following is a generally accepted principle of organisation; there is a single executive head, the manager, who holds responsibility for the Home's policy. While the manager cannot delegate his responsibility he does delegate authority to subordinate team members in particular functions."

5.3 The Home has a Management Committee. The members are:-

The Very Rev P McCann (Chairman), Fr J O'Connor, Fr H Starkey, Fr K Donnelly, BR 2, BR 46,

BR 6 and Mrs M Nihill. This Committee held its first meeting on 5 February 1979. It meets regularly and acts in an advisory capacity to the Manager of the Home. Much of its work has been in connection with procedural items and staffing matters mainly concerning terms and conditions of service. Mrs Nihill has also taken a particular interest in the domestic and catering arrangements in the Home and many of her recommendations have been implemented. Committee members visit the Home periodically.



## 6. Staffing

6.1 The acting manager of the Home is **BR 2** who **[REDACTED]** He trained as a teacher in **[REDACTED]** where he received a Diploma in Special Education. He joined the staff of Rubane House in 1964 with a dual role as a specialist teacher for children requiring remedial education and as a residential worker. In **[REDACTED]** **BR 2** was **[REDACTED]** and worked in this capacity until 1977 when he went to **[REDACTED]** to undertake a 3-year course of study in Social Administration, Sociology and Social Work. He was awarded a B.Soc.Sc. (Honours) degree in 1980. The course had a practical element which **BR 2** pursued in Ireland and in the **[REDACTED]** At the end of the course he was asked to resume management responsibility for the Home. He is also Head of the Community of Brothers living at Rubane House.

The deputy manager is **BR 7**, who took up his appointment in October 1980. His previous post from 1972 was as Head of the Assessment Unit at **[REDACTED]** He holds a B.Soc.Sc. (Hons) Degree from **[REDACTED]** a Diploma in Educational Studies, an MA (Social Work) and CQSW from the University of **[REDACTED]**

**DL 89**, a senior houseparent, is in charge of those boys presently accommodated in the main building at Rubane House. The acting manager and the deputy manager assist her in caring for this group. **DL 89** was formerly Head of Unit in the chalet which has been closed down. She has five years' experience of residential work since joining the staff of Rubane House in 1976. She had previously worked as a **[REDACTED]** **DL 89** is currently attending the in-service course on Social Care at **[REDACTED]**

**DL 11** is a Senior Houseparent and Head of Unit. He is an ex-serviceman, who spent [REDACTED] Before joining the staff of the Home in 1976 he had worked as a [REDACTED] and as [REDACTED] He has attended an in-service training course. **DL 11** is also the [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**DL 12**, who works as a Houseparent with her husband, joined the staff around the same time as he did. She had experience of working as a nursing assistant and is presently undertaking the in-service course on Social Care at [REDACTED]

**DL 81** is a Houseparent who took up the post in 1977 having previously worked as [REDACTED] Since then he has completed an in-service training course and more recently obtained the Certificate in the Residential Care of Children and Young Persons following full-time studies at the [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Mr and Mrs **DL 11** and **DL 81** work together as a team caring for a group of boys living in one of the chalets.

**BR 23** is a Senior Houseparent and Head of a Unit. He worked in Rubane House at its inception as a Boys' Home in [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] He returned in 1976 and in recent years he has combined his residential worker role with the position of [REDACTED] The farm extends to approximately 250 acres and whilst most of it is used for grazing a proportion of it is cultivated.

**DL 240** is a part-time employee in the post of Houseparent. A recent addition to the staff she has a Diploma in Domestic Science and was once in charge of catering at the [REDACTED] where she worked for 15 years.



BR 23 and DL 240 provide care for the boys in the other Chalet.

BR 10 is designated as [REDACTED]. He has worked in the Home for 6 years. Prior to that he worked as a teacher in one of the Order's schools in [REDACTED].

Three teachers, BR 3, [REDACTED], BR 6, and DL 149 participate in the caring functions by assisting with the supervision of the young people in their out-of-school activities.

BR 6 also undertakes sleeping-in duties by being on night call in one of the Chalets.

The Manager of De La Salle Boys' Home, BR 1, and a Houseparent, DL509, were under suspension from duty at the time of the inspection.

- 6.2 We believe that BR 2 has the personality, skills and application to develop a high standard of child care practice at Rubane House. However, we are concerned that his effectiveness in this respect is diminished because of the many demands made on his time. He carries the responsibility for administering, without secretarial help, a complex organisation employing twenty-eight full or part-time staff as well as being accountable for the standard of child-care practice in the Home. Furthermore, current staffing levels which are referred to in detail later (see paragraph 6.7) require BR 2 to be directly involved in helping to look after one group of children outside of school hours and during the night. We suggest that he be relieved of his regular duties with the children and that he also be provided with competent secretarial support as soon as is convenient to allow him time to concentrate wholly on his management task.

6.3 One possible

BR 2

identification with a particular group of children is that it could complicate his job of promoting good practice and co-ordinating the separate units which make up the Home. To try to overcome this problem we recommend that he should initiate meetings with the heads of units to discuss matters of policy and practice and to facilitate a cohesive approach between the groups.

6.4

BR 2

holds a weekly meeting of all the caring staff and invites them to contribute items to the Agenda. One meeting coincided with our inspection and we attended as observers. Matters discussed included "staff co-operation" and the "boys' weekly review". As the meeting progressed it was apparent to us that there were some differences of opinion between management and staff, between lay staff and Brothers and between staff from the different units. It seemed as though the formal agenda was an overlay and that more contentious issues were emerging subtly although these had not been included. It confirmed our belief that however frustrating and repetitious staff debates may be they make an important contribution to the functioning of the Home. Their intrinsic worth lies in the opportunity which they provide for sharing experience, knowledge and anxieties with colleagues since the regular exchange of views aids communication and liaison. Without such a forum there is a risk of increased discontent amongst staff resulting in a preoccupation with rules and structure to an extent to which their work with children can be impaired. Consequently we have emphasised the importance of staff meetings and recommend that BR 2 continues to hold them on a regular basis.

6.5 The role of deputy manager is unclear and requires defining. It is conceivable that BR 7 could continue to undertake caring work in a Unit, while sharing some of the management and supervisory functions with BR 2. We were concerned that the



philosophy of "a single executive head" outlined in the draft handbook might give rise to some difficulty in the delegation of authority.

As a [REDACTED] with considerable experience [REDACTED] BR 7 should have an important part to play and a valuable contribution to make in the development of the social work task in the Home. It was not clear to us that he was being given the chance to do so.

6.6 While we were pleased to learn that a number of staff had been allowed to attend in-service training courses on a day release basis we must stress that this is not an adequate substitute for professional training. We acknowledge that one staff member has just completed a full-time course but the recruitment of trained staff when vacancies arise and the continued secondment of existing staff for professional training should be seen as a priority. The Department can provide voluntary organisation with financial assistance towards the latter.

6.7 The ratio of residential social workers to boys in Rubane House is a matter for concern. The four units were each designed to accommodate fourteen boys with a fifth group living in the main house, making a total of seventy boys. The fall in numbers in recent years has resulted in the closure of two of the chalets and there are now only three groups. At the time of the inspection two groups had a complement of three staff each and the third group had two staff, one of whom was employed full time and one part time. Although this size of unit and staffing ratio were acceptable in the 1960s present-day practice favours smaller groups and in particular when caring for adolescents. In addition to the staff mentioned above others are involved in providing activities for the boys and in supervising their leisure time. Some are also on the sleeping-in duty rota. The Department has offered to provide [REDACTED] BR 2 with further advice on current ideas about staffing ratios. He said that he would welcome the opportunity to discuss the matter.

6.3 A related problem arises because of the range of functions performed by some members of staff. As already mentioned the acting manager has a role in one of the units and a head of a unit is also the farm manager. In addition the Brothers sleep in the units and are on call all the time. We appreciate the commitment that membership of a religious community entails and we understand the Brothers' ready acceptance of their work as part of their vocation. Nevertheless work with disadvantaged and emotionally deprived children makes heavy demands on those concerned. Fatigue brought about by long hours of duty can cause staff to become less sensitive to the needs and demands of those in their care. In turn this can lead to less effective work and to allegations of unprofessional behaviour. Staff, therefore, require a management arrangement which allows them sufficient free time to rest and recover.



## 7. Aims and Objectives

7.1 The general description of the aims and regimes of the Home given in "A Directory of Residential and Day Care Facilities in Northern Ireland (DHSS NI 1977) is: "To provide within an open planned environment care, protection and guidance to children deprived of normal family life." A special objective is also cited as follows: "To provide for the individual need of each boy with the view to his rehabilitation within his own family." While the latter is a commendable objective in most instances, it is doubtful whether it is capable of achievement in all cases.

7.2 In the past when many of the residents were in voluntary care Rubane House had the services of a social worker whose main job was to make after-care arrangements for the boys in preparation for their discharge from the Home. Nowadays decisions about returning boys to their own homes or placing them elsewhere are taken by the Boards' social workers. Indeed in some cases a return home may be considered undesirable and in others unrealistic, e.g. if the family unit has broken down. One consequence of this change is that it seems impracticable to maintain "rehabilitation within the family" as a realistic objective for the Home. "Rehabilitation within the community" would be more appropriate.

7.3 The perception of Rubane House that some social workers have conveyed in their reports is that the Home provides supervision, control, consistency and an organised structure of care for the children. The acting manager suggests that they have misunderstood the aims of the Home and he believes that it has much more to offer. The social workers may have formed their impressions from the attitudes and practices of the caring staff, some of whom we found to be advocates of routine management of the boys with an emphasis on discipline and

sanctions. They seemed to concentrate more on activities and to be less responsive to the individual needs of the children. They appeared to resist the efforts of other members of staff to promote good child care practice. Social workers, therefore, may have some grounds for their misunderstanding of the kind of care provided in the Home.

7.4 The De La Salle Order was founded for the primary purpose of the "Christian education of youth". The Order's Secondary School is located on the campus and the majority of boys receive their education at it while they are resident in the Home. Although the school is managed separately its influence on the regime in the Home is pervasive. An essential criterion for admission to the Home is that boys must fall within the age limits for the school and the decision to admit is made only after consultation with the Principal. The school is also a party to a system of rewards and sanctions operating in Rubane House and some teachers supervise compulsory activities for the boys after school hours on behalf of the Home.

7.5 Subject to our reservation in para 7.2 we commend the aims and objectives of the Home as stated above (para 7.1). However, from our observations we could find no consensus amongst the staff concerning the general direction of their work towards the fulfilment of these objectives. Their ideas about the aims and objectives varied according to their position in the hierarchy and some had obviously been influenced by the expectations of the social workers who referred the boys for places in the Home. Organisational goals which facilitate the running of the Home and reduce demands on staff and the imparting of academic skills seemed to have equal priority. The fostering of relationships between staff and boys and meeting the individual needs of the residents were accorded a much lower ranking.



## 8. Approach to the Residential Social Work Task

8.1 The residential social workers' task has two main elements:

(a) working with a number of individuals who live together in a group and (b) working beyond the boundaries of the Home with the children's social workers, families, friends, schools and potential employers. Both elements are inextricably interlinked. At times they may cause conflict but ideally they should dovetail into a comprehensive plan for the future of each child. The process ought to begin at the referral stage when the reasons for admission should be clearly defined and understood. A plan should also be developed and a time scale should be agreed. A residential worker should be nominated to take responsibility for helping the child to cope more effectively with himself and with his new environment. Plans along these lines including arrangements for their implementation were not always evident at Rubane House. Requests for admission to the Home are normally made by a telephone call to the Acting Manager who usually makes a tentative response reserving his decision until he receives a social history. He next discusses the referral with the Principal of the school and later consults the houseparents. When a boy is accepted he is admitted to the Home on a trial basis and his case is reviewed after a month.

8.2 The main considerations at the review are based on reports about the manner in which the boy is fitting into the Home and on his adjustment to the school. Difficulties on either count can result in the social worker being asked to withdraw him. Those who remain in Rubane House find that little is done to prepare them adequately for life outside. We recognise that planning for the children's future is not the sole responsibility of the residential staff and that there must be working agreements with the social workers who place them in the Home. Nevertheless the staff at Rubane House should make certain that their

judgement and decisions are not inflexible and too heavily influenced by the established patterns and routine of the Home but are fashioned to meet the needs of adolescent boys in such a way that their stay there can be a wholly beneficial experience. We were concerned to find that the decision to discharge boys from the Home often coincides with the attainment of the school-leaving age. This could be seen as an example of meeting institutional requirements rather than demonstrating a concern about individual need.

8.3 In the past the Management Committee had an arrangement with the Down and Connor Catholic Family Welfare Society for the secondment of a social worker to the Home. It was agreed that the person nominated would be a child care specialist who would give half of her working time to the Home. The social worker's role was set out as follows:-

- (1) To advise the residential child care staff on the social and child care needs of the children.
- (2) To participate in the on-going review of the children in the Home and in any plans made for the children.
- (3) To ensure that the children have appropriate social work services either by providing them herself or liaising with the Board's social workers to achieve this.
- (4) To organise and participate in any group work necessary within the Home.
- (5) To be responsible for staff in-service training.
- (6) To be responsible for any student training.
- (7) To be responsible for establishing links with the community through Youth Organisations, Schools, Parent/Teacher Organisations, community groups and interested local families or individuals.
- (8) To establish close liaison with the Board's social workers who are responsible for the child and his family.



It is unfortunate that this arrangement fell into abeyance over the past year during a period when support and advice were of vital importance to the staff in the Home. We consider that the attachment of a social worker to Rubane is an essential element both for the well-being of the children and for the stimulus it can give to staff development and we recommend that the scheme be re-established without delay.

- 8.4 The influence of the school with its well-organised and structured regime extends into the daily routine of the Home. We acknowledge that in an educational setting teachers are expected to prepare pupils for the requirements of an external examination system. The task entails maintaining a degree of control often by using an authoritarian approach and through managing children in small groups. In Rubane we found a similar approach to leisure time. From Monday to Friday outside of school hours there is a full programme of compulsory and organised activities for the boys. Weekends are also highly planned although there are some variations in the times for rising and going to bed but these appear to be at the discretion of the staff. There is an emphasis on the frequent "line up" with confinement to the "yard" at certain times. A number of areas are designated as "out of bounds" to the boys. The living accommodation in the units can only be used at certain times. This questionable practice results, for example, in some boys having to watch T.V. in the games hall during the afternoon instead of being allowed to view it in the comfort of their chalets. Visitors for the boys are encouraged and welcomed but they are requested to come after school hours or at the week-ends. We were concerned at the lack of involvement of the residential workers with the boys during the late afternoon and early evening on weekdays. These times seemed opportune for responding to individual children or for group counselling. While we understand the requirement for an organised approach to schooling there should be a more relaxed environment after school in the home

which provides care for children, many of whom have suffered varying degrees of deprivation.

8.5 We could find no record of a continuing assessment of the children's needs by the staff in the Home nor any evidence of agreements on plans for the children's future. However, brief progress reports were prepared for the six-monthly review meetings. Unusual occurrences were entered in the logbook provided in each Unit. Keeping an open logbook which is available for reading by both staff and children has some implications for the residential social work task. We refer to this matter later in paragraph 9.2 of the report.

8.6 The staff in the Home participate in a system of points awards to boys (see Appendix 11) based upon their behaviour and performance. The system is common to the school and the Home and a maximum of 10 marks per week can be earned by a boy in each setting. The allocation of pocket money and "extra privileges" are dependent upon the total number of marks received. The "rewards" are distributed at weekly meetings of boys and staff. New boys can be awarded a maximum allowance of £1.50 if they achieve the full 20 marks. After six weeks this sum may be increased to a maximum of £3.00 per week. However, the amount received is related to the marks achieved and it is reduced on a sliding scale. We were concerned to find that boys who are marked below 4 in the school and in the Home lose their allowance completely. While it is not for us to comment on the use of a marks system in an educational establishment we consider that pocket money should be given to the children as of right and should not be withheld by teaching or residential staff. We recommend that the pocket money scale set out in the Model Scheme of Boarding Out Allowances used by the Health and Social Services Boards be adopted at Rubane House. This scheme relates the allowances to the age of the child. Such a change in the pocket money system would mean the adoption of a different incentive scheme for desirable behaviour. We suggest that in any scheme a base line for appropriate conduct should be set



and extra privileges given to reinforce exceptional behaviour. Where correction is needed it should, to be most effective, follow immediately after the undesirable behaviour instead of being postponed until the weekly marks meeting. Staff should be encouraged to consider constructively the aims and objectives of their work and how to provide for the needs of individual boys instead of thinking in the negative terms of applying sanctions.

8.7 One of the advantages of working in a residential setting is that it provides a good opportunity for staff to engage in group work with the residents. From a practical point of view management, workers and residents can participate in group meetings to discuss and plan activities, projects and leisure pursuits. But groups can also be valuable in helping people to mix more readily with others and in enabling them to communicate more easily. The dynamics of the group with its pressures and support can create a useful learning experience. We were informed that recently some social workers from the Boards had attempted group work with the boys. Despite their good intention we were told that their work was misunderstood by the staff in the Home, and that this confusion created problems for the children. We can only conclude that the attempt may not have been very sensitively handled. However, we do not believe that this experience is sufficient reason for residential workers to be doubtful about the value of group work and we recommend that they should be given opportunities to learn more about it and to practise it.

8.8 We welcomed the opportunity to attend the weekly staff meeting at Rubane House. The agendas for these meetings cover a wide range of subjects but we would have liked to see aspects of caring practice receiving a greater prominence. We consider these meetings to be worthwhile as a forum for communication amongst staff but they can not serve as a substitute for proper staff supervision. Supervision is a process by which the manager

or his deputy oversees and evaluates, on a regular basis, the work of the staff to ensure that the Home's task is properly carried out. Supervision has also a developmental value through which staff are helped to make the best use of their own knowledge and skills. We recommend that BR 2 when the demands on his time are reduced should have regular meetings, preferably weekly, with individual members of staff for the purpose of supervising their work.

8.9 We fully accept that a home managed by a religious community will embrace the Christian philosophy. We noted that a code of ethics is included in the draft staff handbook to guide staff "in their united efforts to instruct, train and direct the behaviour of those entrusted to their care in a way that will promote their full development as persons". The code advocates a desirable and worthwhile life style for the practice of Christianity but for staff who are working with children in residential care it requires to be supplemented by training which includes a knowledge of human growth and development, an understanding of the cultural background of the young people in their care, together with an ability to consider situations from the children's point of view. We consider that a religious commitment alone does not equip staff to meet the demands of professional practice in the residential care of children.

8.10 The children residing in Rubane benefit from living in clean, comfortable accommodation and enjoy well prepared and appetising food. As stated in paragraph 3.4 the declining number of admissions and the consequent economic factors precipitated the movement of one group of children from the chalet units to less suitable living space in the original building. Here the children have to share the house with the administrative offices, the living accommodation of the community of Brothers and the Chapel. We would hope that an early opportunity can be



found to return them to the modern amenities in the chalets.

Some consideration should be given to reducing the size of each group from fourteen which is too big for satisfactory group living. Present-day standards for the residential care of adolescents would suggest an optimum figure of nine or ten.

8.11 Until the beginning of this year the management of Rubane made bulk purchases of clothing for boys residing in the Home. The clothes were then distributed from a central store. Since this practice had the disadvantage of attiring everyone in similar fashion it has now been discontinued except for school uniforms. We acknowledge and commend the recent introduction of a scheme which allows the boys to purchase their own clothing in shops of their own choosing and to pay for it in cash. This innovation diminishes the chance of uniformity in dress and serves to inculcate a responsible attitude by the young people towards the purchase and care of clothing as well as teaching an essential social and life skill.

8.12 There is no record of returns having been made to the Department on the use of corporal punishment in the Home during 1980. The last such return (a nil return) was made on 31 December 1979. These returns are required to be made under the Children and Young Persons (Voluntary Homes) Regulations 1975. In a letter from the Department to the Manager in April 1979 the Management Committee's views were sought on the use of corporal punishment in the Home. The Manager's reply, in May 1979, stated that the Management Committee were not in favour of corporal punishment and that their views were adhered to in Rubane House.

9. Records and Review Arrangements

9.1 Individual case files are kept for all the boys. There is a business-like approach to the administrative work of the establishment and an orderly and a methodical system for filing and storing information. However we found that the information on some of the files was out of date. We consider it important that files are always kept up to date. ~~It would be helpful if individual case files contained a summary sheet~~ which would provide at a glance the pertinent details in respect of the child. This summary sheet should include personal data, date of birth, legal status, date of admission to care, next of kin and the name, office address and telephone number of the boy's social worker. A case file has a particular value in relation to the child in care. It should reflect clearly and concisely the progress made by the child with a note about significant events in his life. Well-kept files are an essential part of the treatment process.

9.2 We feel that the records compiled in the Home would benefit from the inclusion of regular comments by care staff. We referred in para 8.5 to the practice of keeping open log-books in which entries are made in respect of incidents in the Unit. Aspects of a boy's behaviour are recorded and the log-book is available to all the boys in the chalet. Whereas this has some practical application in terms of providing a daily record of events it has limited value because of the confidential nature of some information which is recorded. We would stress the need for more detailed information to be recorded by care staff and to be included in each boy's case file. Health records have been maintained but there is some variation in the degree of their completion.



9.3 In general, content of files varied considerably. Some lacked clear treatment plans while others contained vague proposals about future arrangements. We saw examples of proposed action, in some instances back-dated by several years which did not appear to have been followed up or if it had, the outcome had not been recorded. We would quote the history in care of one boy who is now aged 16 years to illustrate the consequence of the failure to plan effectively for return to the community. The child of a single mother, he was admitted in 1964 into residential care through arrangements made by a voluntary organisation in consultation with his mother. There followed three unsuccessful adoption and fostering placements by the voluntary agency. He appears to have been received into the care of the statutory agency in 1973 through a voluntary arrangement between his mother and the agency. In 1974 the following comment by a social worker is recorded: "I am very concerned about the boy's future and feel that some sort of plan will have to be envisaged." The case file refers to boarding-out being considered in 1974 and a Parental Rights Order being applied for in 1975. A Parental Rights Order was made in 1976 although the information given prior to the inspection showed this boy to be in care under Section 103 of the Children and Young Persons Act, that is, on a voluntary basis. The social worker's comment in 1977 was that the boy's "future now seems to indicate a choice between either Kircubbin or some other community home". He was admitted to Rubane House in 1977 and has continued his regular contact with a family in Belfast with whom he may go to live in the near future. All the reviews appear to have examined the case in relation to the progress made instead of attempting to plan ahead for the boy's future. We quote this case as an illustration of the general problem in the existing review procedures.

9.4 Reviews of children are carried out at least every 6 months and we were told that the boys are seen by their social workers on a monthly basis. There is a need to guard against reviews becoming ritualistic and to

ensure that they are given structure and direction. We attended one case review during the course of our inspection. It seemed to us that there was some ambivalence about whether the staff of the Board or those in the Home should take responsibility for recording the minutes of the meetings. We suggest that the Manager should have this responsibility with the assistance of the secretarial help referred to in para 6.2. We feel that the minutes should record the agreed action, name the person assigned to carry it out and subsequently record the outcome.

- 9.5 Since the primary objective of residential care is to devise treatment plans designed to enable boys to return to the community and, if possible, to their own families at the earliest possible moment, then the current review arrangements would appear to be largely ineffective. In a number of instances treatment objectives where they existed suggested that boys should remain in Rubane House until they attained school-leaving age. This demonstrates a very limited perspective of the use and value of residential care. To try to surmount this difficulty the Manager should ensure that an appropriate plan is prepared for each boy immediately after his admission. He should insist that the details of the plan are pursued and implemented by the staff concerned with the boy's case.



10. Financial Arrangements

- 10.1 Revenue for the Home is derived entirely from per capita charges levied on Area Boards. The charge per boy currently stands at £102 per week having been increased from £55 per week during the past year.
- 10.2 The Management Committee is understandably concerned and anxious about the declining numbers in Rubane House. If this trend continues one inevitable result will be higher weekly charges. At a meeting of the Personal Social Services Committee of the Eastern Board held on the 12 March 1981 it was stated that "if maintenance costs continue to rise because of falling occupancy the Board will not accept financial responsibility should the numbers fall to an unreasonable figure in any facility". We referred in paragraph 6.6 to the existing staff/child ratios. We are aware that the achievement of a more acceptable level of staffing will result in increased running costs.
- 10.3 Management have made strenuous efforts to effect economies. Last year the closure of the two chalets resulted in considerable savings on heating oil and general running costs. In addition clothing allocations in respect of short-term admissions were closely monitored and expenditure on boys' week-end travelling was reduced to a minimum.
- 10.4 The management have identified a particular financial problem relating to children in short-term care. On coming to Rubane they are provided with clothing which they retain when they are discharged. The cost of this provision to date has been borne by Rubane House. Area Boards can provide initial clothing grants

for children coming into care who may have little or no clothing. We feel that this financial authority should be used where appropriate to reduce the burden on Rubane House.



## 11. Support Services

### 11.1 Social Work

Children are said to be visited by their social workers about once a month either in Rubane House or whilst they are at home on week-end leave. In para 8.3 we referred to the social worker attached to the Home from the Down and Connor Catholic Family Welfare Society (see also Appendix 1). **BR 2** felt that this arrangement was very helpful. It has now lapsed and there has been no contact with the Home over the past 6 months by the social worker. We suggest that early efforts should be made to re-establish the attachment.

11.2 As was pointed out in para 8.7 some visiting social workers introduced the idea of group work and attempted it with a number of the boys. **BR 2** expressed some concern that the groups had tended to concentrate on "young people's rights and privileges". He felt that this approach had resulted in problems for management in that, as he put it, the young people were subsequently "more difficult to please and tended to be cheeky". Nevertheless, we suggest that group work, skilfully handled by competent leaders and with clearly thought-out objectives, can be an effective method for working with boys in a residential setting. We therefore repeat our recommendation that the use of group work in Rubane House be examined and that staff be afforded the opportunity of acquiring appropriate skills in it.

### 11.3 Health Services

The Medical Officer of Rubane House is one of the local general practitioners, Dr A C Glennie, Kircubbin. He visits the Home when requested and submits written reports to **BR 2** about the patients referred to him. All boys are on his list for

General Practitioner services. We feel that it would be beneficial if Rubane House had community nursing support on a regular basis as in the past. [REDACTED] BR 2 felt that a nursing service could be a great help in disseminating information and offering advice on health matters. We suggest that the Social Work Advisory Group should consult with the Department's Chief Nursing Officer with a view to establishing a regular nursing service for the Home.

#### 11.4 Psychological and Psychiatric Services

There is no established psychiatric or psychological service to the Home. The School's Psychological Service is available when required for educational matters through the South Eastern Education and Library Board. In the past the Home enjoyed regular psychiatric support by Dr McAuley, Child Psychiatry Unit, Belfast City Hospital, who then resided in Kircubbin. [REDACTED] BR 2 felt that such a service would be helpful not only in clinical matters but would also be beneficial to staff in coping with the boys' problems. We feel that with the number of children in the Home and in view of the complexity and difficulty of the problems presented by an adolescent group, the staff should have access to regular psychiatric and psychological services. We suggest that here again the Social Work Advisory Group should pursue the matter with the Department's Chief Medical Officer.



## 12. Conclusions

12.1 We have referred in the preceding chapters to the decline in the number of young people being admitted to Rubane House. There would appear to be a number of reasons which could have contributed to this trend, the size of the facility, its remote geographical location, its single sex provision for one denominational group, the group living arrangements and, possibly, the allegations made against some members of the staff last year. Social workers' perceptions of the Home were largely substantiated from our observations during the inspection. There is a restriction on the age range of children for whom provision is made. Associated with this is the limitation placed on the Home as a caring establishment by the pervasiveness of the school influence. An environment has been created, however unintentionally, which subtly envelops the children and conditions their responses. In addition the development of social contacts, which is generally regarded as an important aspect of the life experiences of deprived children in care, is extremely limited and this also tends to increase the institutional nature of the regime in the Home.

12.2 The De La Salle Order, from its inception, has been primarily concerned with the Christian education of disadvantaged youth. Its focus has been on the provision of a range of schools and the training of its members as teachers. In view of the increase in the numbers of statutory children's homes and the possibility of a further fall in the number of referrals to voluntary homes we feel that the Management Committee will need to consider its future policy and a possible change in the function of Rubane House.

13. Recommendations

1. We recommend that **BR 2** 's working schedule be reorganised to enable him to concentrate on his  (Para 6.2).
2. There is a need for the Manager to arrange meetings with the heads of units on matters of policy and practice so that the work of the units is better co-ordinated (Para 6.3).
3. Meetings with care staff play an important part in the functioning of the Home and it is important that they continue on a regular basis (Para 6.4).
4. The role of the Deputy Manager should be more clearly defined (Para 6.5).
5. There is a need to review the current ratio of staff to children (Para 6.7).
6. Members of the De La Salle Community who have a caring role and are required to work long hours should have sufficient time for relaxation (Para 6.8).
7. We recommend that the arrangement made with the Down and Connor Catholic Welfare Society for the attachment of a social worker should be re-established (Para 8.3, 11.1).
8. Efforts should be made to provide a variation in the daily routine of the Home to enable residential workers to spend more time with the boys in units outside school hours (Para 8.4).
9. We consider that pocket money should be given as of right and that the scale included in the Area Boards' Model Scheme of Boarding-out Allowance should be adopted (Para 8.6).
10. We recommend that the residential workers be given opportunities to learn about group work and to practise it (Para 8.7, 11.2).



6.3 A related problem arises because of the range of functions performed by some members of staff. As already mentioned the acting manager has a role in one of the units and a head of a unit is also the farm manager. In addition the Brothers sleep in the units and are on call all the time. We appreciate the commitment that membership of a religious community entails and we understand the Brothers' ready acceptance of their work as part of their vocation. Nevertheless work with disadvantaged and emotionally deprived children makes heavy demands on those concerned. Fatigue brought about by long hours of duty can cause staff to become less sensitive to the needs and demands of those in their care. In turn this can lead to less effective work and to allegations of unprofessional behaviour. Staff, therefore, require a management arrangement which allows them sufficient free time to rest and recover.

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DE LA BATTLE BOYS' HOME MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE.

The 14th meeting of the Management Committee was held in Rubane House on the 28th September, 1981.

PRESENT: Rev. Peter McCann, Chairman.  
Fr. Hugh Starkey.  
Fr. Kevin Donnelly.  
Fr. John O'Connor.

BR2

BR6

APOLOGY: Mrs. Mary Hill.

80. CHILDREN IN THE HOME:

According to statistics presented by BR2 the number of admissions to the Home since the 2nd Feb., '81 to the date of the meeting was 23, the discharges were 24, leaving the number of boys in the Home stabilising at about 30. How this number would affect future staffing in the School would have to be worked out by the School Committee and the Education Authorities.

81. CONTRACTS OF EMPLOYMENT:

The Contracts of Employment distributed to the staff seem to have been generally, apart from a few demurs, very well accepted. The fact that there has been no word from the Unions would seem to indicate that all parties are happy with the situation.

82. NEW STAFF:

The Committee was anxious to know as to how the new members of staff had settled into their various duties. At the interviewing sessions members of the Committee had been impressed by the quality of the people interviewed. They were delighted to hear from BR2 that the new members had settled in satisfactorily, and apart from a few teething problems it was hoped the extra staff would enrich further the already high quality of care in the Home.

83. SICKNESS BENEFIT:

BR2 pointed out that it might be a good thing to introduce a Sickness Benefit scheme to the Home. He had been approached by a member of staff about this. The Committee agreed that such a scheme would be in order, that it should apply to full time employees and

BR2 was asked to formulate a draught copy which would come under review at the next meeting.

The Committee was worried by the image of a Home dominated by structures, regimentation, sanctions, staff and institutional needs.

BR2 pointed out that since 80% of the children were admitted under a Fit Person Order, it would stand to reason that some form of discipline and structures would be needed for these children. But he would hate to think that the Home provided nothing more than that.

Also, it was very difficult to understand the statement in Paragraph 8.2 to the effect that the Home was doing precious little to equip the children for aftercare living. The members of the Committee agreed that they read passages like these with almost incredulity if not dismay. Amusement was expressed at the paucity of praise given to many positive qualities which the Home undoubtedly possesses. Why a home which down through the years had given the Community efficient and faithful service, and which had earned high commendation from officials of Home Affairs and Education, should suddenly be considered almost obsolete, was difficult to comprehend.

In the light of the foregoing the Committee requested BR2 to draft a balanced reply to the Report as it was imperative to know which direction Social policy was leading.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Chairman.



[redacted]  
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the continuance of a school on the premises  
 precarious, but the Department of Education has, as yet,  
 made no final decision on this apart from making  
 one teacher redundant. The boys now occupy 3  
 chalet units. The fourth unit is being used for  
 a project called Independent Living. Even though  
 the number of children has declined considerably, the  
 number of staff in each unit has been increased in order  
 to comply with modern child to staff ratio standards.

During the year a full scale inspection  
 of the Home took place. This inspection was conducted  
 by the Child Care Advisory Board. All Children's  
 Homes in N.I. are to have this type of comprehen-  
 sive enquiry. They published their report later on  
 in the year, and their conclusions in general  
 were far from acceptable to either the staff of  
 the Home, or to the Management Committee. Their  
 recommendations were quite acceptable and positive,  
 and were easily enough implemented, but various  
 statements in the body of the Report were regarded  
 as less than fair or just towards the work being  
 done in the Home, at present, and over the past 30  
 years.

BR2

[redacted] was asked to  
 reply to the Report, and the document he produced  
 received high commendation, both from the Management  
 Committee, and from members of the Community. This reply  
 was discussed with the Social Advisory team, and a sub  
 committee of the Management Board. The Advisory Board team  
 tried to point out that they did not in any way try  
 to cast suspicion on the quality of care being provided  
 for the children. They were only trying to pinpoint  
 certain areas, where, perhaps, change, or a different

1981

attitude could be taken in the interests of all concerned.

They also pointed out that the number of boys in the Home would probably remain at the present level, or perhaps drop lower during the affluent years of 1970-77 too many homes had been built, and there were now too many places available for the number of children coming into care. Also our geographical setting was against us, as we were perceived to be too far removed from general amenities etc. Fostering was being upstaged as also community care and awareness, leading to better preventative measures being taken. The institutional aspect of the Home was stressed, the numbers hitherto were too big, smaller family units were now the acceptable norm.

They would like us to consider what unique contribution Rubane House could make in the field of Child Care. Can our Home relate to any special identifiable need within the community?

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cial Services Advisory Board was held in Rubane House on Thursday,  
er, 1961. The Management Committee was represented by --

Mr. McCann, Chairman,

Mr. O'Connor,

BR 2

BR 7

BR 6

cial Services Advisory Board was represented by the full team which  
e inspection of the Home, namely --

Mr. P. Armstrong,

Mr. J. O'Kane,

Mr. W. Donnell,

Mr. D. O'Brien.

Mr. R. Stirling -- Undersecretary for Child Care Services.

Mr. Stirling thanked the Management Committee for going to such great pains  
the report and the inspection team was only too willing to co-operate  
to facilitate the interpretation and implementation of the report.

Mr. Stirling to attend as he is directly involved in implementing  
port. Mr. Stirling speaking on the Black Report stressed the  
f Child Care policy. As far as possible all children should be reared  
own Community bounds. To remove them to a Home or Hostel, etc., was  
in an artificial set up, no matter how good the quality of the  
d.

ents must be made by the Education Authorities to help out the  
rived child within the Community. Principals, teachers, counsellors,  
ers, should all be involved with front line agencies in dealing with  
Pastoral agencies should also be involved, even if the community  
detrimental to the child's upbringing, he has to return to it some  
t its strains and stresses.

ffluent years of 1970 to 1976 too many Homes were built and too  
ere now available for the number of children coming into care.

you have X number of places now available in Rubane House, does  
y Board or Agency to send you placements. Also a very high degree  
as been given to the area boards and it would be wrong for the  
o pressurize them in any way as regards placing of children. It

19

The 19th Meeting of the Management Committee took place at Rubane House on Tuesday, 12th October, 1982.

Present: Rev. Fr. McCann - Chairman,  
Rev. Fr. O'Connor,  
Mrs. Nihill.

BR 2  
BR 6

Apology received from Rev. Fr. Donnelly.

The minutes of the previous meeting were discussed.

Regarding the case of [REDACTED] DL 81 Fr. McCann was of the opinion that [REDACTED] DL 81 did not intend pressing his case, as there had been no communication from his Solicitor for over six months. He was glad to announce that the embargo on the Home had been lifted as from 5th August.

There was a short discussion on the Minutes arising from the Meeting between representatives of the Management Committee and representatives from the Eastern Area Board and Department of Health and Social Services. One came away from the Meeting with very little enlightenment and a certain amount of pessimism. Mrs. Nihill was very disappointed at the lack of praise for the Home and a certain amount of hostility was evidenced. If the object of the Meeting was to find out what future lay in store for Rubane, then the Meeting was a failure.

On the 5th May a further Meeting was held in Rubane House between the Heads of the four Area Boards and representatives of the Management Committee. Again at this Meeting a veiled hostility was in evidence, though some of the Boards were supportive of the Home.

BR 2 [REDACTED] said that the Committee had given him sanction to appoint Members of Staff to replace those who had resigned their posts over the summer. He had awarded voluntary redundancy money to [REDACTED] DL 11 and facilitated him in every way in his quest for a post in [REDACTED]. In the light of the economic situation looming over the Home it was decided to close down Chalet 3. It was not the ideal situation because it led to fairly big numbers in Chalets 1 and 2. However, with numbers slowly creeping up, it might be possible to re-open a third Chalet in the very near future.

Position of Down and Connor Social Worker: Fr. O'Connor pointed out that he had postponed for 3 months a decision as to whether [REDACTED] should continue her present role in Rubane. When the Department Report as a background, he had drawn up a report which

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Over/..

ldren's Home, Belfast over the same period of time. The difference in response is marked between the two Homes. The positive advances in Joseph's, the improvement of its image and credibility, the betterment of pay and conditions of staff, the improvement of quality of care were not mirrored at Rubane. A great number of issues were consistently raised at Rubane meetings, were listened to politely and were then had the impression) not carried through with any enthusiasm. The Committee and its members were consistently used to extricate the Home from one crisis or another and were never repaid by seeing a steady improvement in the quality of child care. No one would deny that Rubane has had more than a fair share of problems. There is equally no doubt that given the interest and expertise of the (external) members of the Management Committee, most of these problems could have been overcome if only the Brothers and their staff had reciprocated. In conclusion, the Committee could have achieved more but did not. Perhaps, it could not, given the attitudes it encountered.

#### THE D.H.S.S. REPORT

The Department of Health & Social Services inspection of the Home in 1981 and its Report is now a matter of history. The Home's reaction to the Report was firstly defensive. Recollection of the initial global reaction of the Brothers to the Report was that they felt their efforts over the years had not been really appreciated, that the Inspection Team had been over-reactive in identifying 'authoritarian' structures, regimentation, sanctions, privileges, staff and institution-needs as opposed to the residents needs and severe restricted contact with the world outside the walls'. It is true that the Management Committee was the vehicle by which the Home's official response to the Inspection Report was made. It is the opinion of at least one member of the Committee that the price for moderating the Brothers' angry response was an apparent acquiescence in what was eventually said. Equally, one had entertained the hope that things would now improve in the future given an informal and grudging acceptance of the



... I feel has been shown above) and one is driven to the conclusion that the Diocese would be best served by cutting its losses and closing the Home. Some will argue that there might be a use for Rubane as a specialised unit' but given Rubane's recent history and the over-provision of places in the Statutory Sector, it is more likely that specialised units will be established within each Area Board and that Rubane would be left to its own devices. In spite of assurances to the contrary, the DHSS and Boards can ignore the Voluntary Sector if they wish and Rubane would be one of the least attractive institutions to head for survival.

... should be said that the continued existence of Rubane as it stands poses the Diocese (whatever about the Brothers) in a most invidious and indeed risky position. It will be ultimately the Diocese that bears responsibility; it is therefore the Diocese that must now take the decisions necessary, if only to protect itself.

#### COMMENDATION

... would therefore recommend that following formal investigation by a committee of the Governing Body and some discussion with DHSS and Area Boards and the Brothers that a decision be taken to close Rubane soon as is practicable. It is a moot point whether an announcement of this effect be made before, during or after the Kincora enquiry. The feeling is that, tactically, a statement as to closure would be best made during the Kincora Hearing as an index of our 'wisdom' in the face of realities we cannot change.

  
Rev. John C. O'Connor

Director

Brothers willing to work in Kircubbin. His Lordship expressed satisfaction with the clarity of both reports and also with the success experienced by St. Patrick's Training School over the past twelve months.

BR 4 acknowledged the hierarchy's assistance to St. Patrick's in recent times and admitted that his institution and Rubane were in competition with each other for residents.

BR 6 said that the decision to close would in the view of some of the community be reneging on the really poor. However his Lordship stressed that the Brothers should serve in that number of establishments most appropriate to the available personnel. He felt it would be better if the Home were to close from a position of relative strength rather than to allow the quality of care gradually to deteriorate to an untenable level. He identified two critical areas:

- (1) the lack of a guarantee that Brothers would be available to work in Rubane, and
- (2) the adverse financial situation.

Jr. McLann argued for closure at a time of year which would facilitate staff in seeking alternative employment. His Lordship said that the relevant question was not whether those at the meeting would like to see Rubane continue but whether it was possible to keep the Home open. Bt. Yelan stated that it was the unanimous view of the District Council that the



- 3.2. There was 250 acres of land and a number of outhouses which had previously been associated with the farm. As illustrated by the various records the organisation and administration of the farm was a principal undertaking of the Home in the early years and in addition to providing much needed income gave the boys an education in farming principles and techniques.
  - 3.3. The complex expanded through the years as set out at 2 above to include both a school and accommodation chalets. Some of the farm buildings were at various times used for both accommodation and leisure activities. Old coach houses near the entrance were also used at different times for a variety of purposes including classroom accommodation, table tennis, billiards, films, outdoor pursuits store, clothing store, showing films, tuck shop and toilet facilities.
  - 3.4. In addition to the farmland, there were playing fields (all weather and grass), basketball/tennis courts, a swimming pool; areas of woodland, garden area, general play area with swings, and a pet area with animals. In the early years there was no running water, the water supply being extracted from a nearby well but the home was eventually connected to piped water supply.
  - 3.5. The school was located within the grounds of the home and was regulated by the Ministry/Department of Education. Prior to 1969 it was a 'primary school' and thereafter its status changed to 'Secondary School'.
4. **What the management structure and staffing arrangements were in Rubane House?**

The structure changed at various times through the duration of the Home.

From its inception the Home was under the control of the Board of Governors. The Chairman of the Board of Governors was the Bishop of the Diocese of Down and Connor and fellow members of the Board various Diocesan clergy.

The Director of Rubane was nominated by the Provincial but appointed by the Board of Governors.

The Board held an annual general meeting to which the Director of Rubane presented an annual report. Minutes of these meetings and some of the annual reports survive and a sample is exhibited hereto as Exhibit 3.

Responsibility for day to day running of the Rubane was left largely to the De La Salle Order itself and the Director of the De La Salle Community in Rubane. The Director was effectively 'the officer in charge'.

The Provincial proposed Brothers for positions on the Teaching and Care Staff. In later years they were appointed by the Committee of Management, acting on behalf of the BOG.

Teaching Brothers had to be suitably qualified and recognised by the Department of Education.

The employment and dismissal of lay teaching and care staff was the responsibility of the Director and in later years the Committee of Management.

There were no formal training courses in Child Care in the early years and initially care staff did not require qualifications. Brothers, whom the Provincial thought suitable, were appointed as Prefects and the teaching Brothers helped out with extra curricular activities.

There were few members of staff, if any, who had professional qualifications in Child Care in the 1950's. It is not believed that Rubane House was any different from other residential homes in this regard. New staff acquired and developed their skills under the supervision of other senior, experienced members of staff.

PRIVATE

23. I left Nazareth Lodge when I was 12 on 16<sup>th</sup> August 1967. I was transferred to Rubane with a group of other boys around the same age.

**Rubane House, Kircubbin (16<sup>th</sup> August 1967 – 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1971)**

24. I moved to Rubane when I was 12 on 16<sup>th</sup> August 1967. I remained there until I was 16. I left on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1971.

25. Rubane was better than Nazareth Lodge; at least you got food in it anyway.

26. The Brothers I remember are **BR 6** **BR 3** and **BR 13**  
**BR 13**

27. **BR 13** is **BR 13** but he was a nice man. He used to take us out for a walk and then we would sit on a wall and he would give us biscuits. We always called this wall biscuit corner. If it was your birthday, **BR 13** would give you an apple. The apples were really small and bitter.

28. The rooms in Rubane were chalets. Before that, there was just the big old house and the farmhouse. Everyone slept in the big house together but then they built the chalets and we were all split up. I was in Chalet **BR 22** **BR 22** was in **BR 22** I had my own room in the chalets but other boys had to share. In my room I had my bed, a cupboard for hanging my clothes and a cabinet.

29. In Rubane we weren't called by our names, we were called by numbers. I was number 22. There was a room called the loft where all the clothes were kept. It was in the old farm building up the stairs. In the loft, there were big lockers with all our clothes stored in them and I had to go to number 22 to get my clothes. I think **BR 15** was in charge of the **BR 15** He is dead now.

30. The school was onsite and I remember I was in **BR 3** class. I didn't like school in Rubane, they didn't teach us much.



PRIVATE

29. My social worker, [DL 369] came to visit the home and although she asked you if everything was alright I never complained to her. I don't recall any other outsiders coming to visit or check on us at Rubane House.
30. [DL 370] was the [redacted] in Kircubbin. Your meals were always hot and you got the best of food. There would have been about sixty children in the dining hall in one sitting.
31. I couldn't wait to get out of the big house because that's where the abuse happened to me. There were about three dormitories in it with around fifteen in each dormitory. There were others who slept down the road in a farm house. The older boys stayed down there but you knew to avoid them after a while as their behaviour was very predatory.
32. The home was warm and there was warm water and you never wanted for anything. It wasn't all bad, there were a lot of good times. I don't know anyone who had a swimming pool in their house and two tennis courts and a football pitch and a snooker table. We used to go swimming to Newtownards every Saturday and to the pictures nearly every other week. As the years went on it got easier and you got to more places.
33. I was fifteen when I left the home. I went back to visit the brothers as it was the only family I knew. They weren't perfect but they were good to me. I visited them sometimes to let them know how I was doing. You would always get something to eat in it, it was like your home from home.

#### Life after care

34. I had no preparation for leaving the home. I went to a boarding house at [redacted]. It was worse than any home I was ever in. There were eighteen people in this house with bunk beds in rooms that housed four to six people in each room. It was filthy.

appropriate, and social workers were made welcome. Boys who were injured were brought to hospital. As early as February 1968 I have a note of taking [HIA 511] to [redacted] after he was bitten by a [redacted] indeed my diaries go on to detail other residents hospital stays – for instance – 18<sup>th</sup> June 1976 – [DL 83] *takes pain....brought to hospital – appendicitis, 21<sup>st</sup> June 1975 – Up to see [DL 83]* I am satisfied that we always obtained medical intervention for the boys where it was indicated.

63. Bed wetting was recognised as a problem and medical experts consulted. [redacted] from [redacted] was a [redacted] who visited the Home/School every month to check up on the boys medical needs and to treat/advise in respect of scabies, nits and lice. She also advised on methods to minimise the risk of bed wetting; avoiding late night snacks, wakening boys about an hour after they went to bed. We also introduced alarm blankets but this proved ineffective. My diary records [redacted] brought 6 sheets (alarm blankets) for wet beds on 15<sup>th</sup> January 1970.
64. Boys were encouraged to participate in sports and outdoor activities. There was a focus on making the boys self reliant in preparation for the day they had to face life post Rubane. We knew it was not going to be easy – hence the aftercare committees and half way houses but there was a limit to the amount that the De La Salle Order or indeed the Diocese could do for the boys at this stage – especially those who had no motivation to be helped.
65. In terms of recreational facilities and opportunities it is difficult for me to comment pre 1964. Films, table tennis and billiards together with football and hurling would have been introduced at a very early stage. By the mid 1970s the breadth of activities offered to the children surpassed what many other children in ‘normal’ families would have experienced and certainly went beyond what I anticipate the Memo expected. From sports, to fishing, hill walking, historical trips, camping, athletics, gardening, pets, disco and music we did try and facilitate opportunities to mix with different sections of the community and gain a sense of self worth, discipline and responsibility through their extra-curricular activities.



ing, geography, history and mathematics. With three brothers and five lay teachers for a group of sixty-four boys, the pupil/teacher ratio of 8:1 is very favourable for remedial work and close personal care. Some of the boys write the certificate of Secondary Education examination; the others follow job-orientated courses. The teaching of religion receives diligent attention, while for Mass and Liturgical Services there is a beautiful chapel, containing two exquisite stained-glass windows on the theme of children by artist, Mr J. Braniff.<sup>102</sup>

BR 1, is chiefly concerned for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the boys, their health and happiness. He works with the welfare authorities to find employment for the boys when that is judged the right thing to do, and to counter the isolationism that is a problem in a small boarding establishment, he sees they have regular visits home if that is possible, educational outings, and visits to discotheques in Downpatrick.<sup>103</sup> BR 1 and his staff are anxious that the boys have the care and love of which for too long they have been deprived.

#### St Patrick's Training School, Glen Road, Belfast

BR 39 was no theorist, but a practical man. When he became , he became in some special way a man for others. He intuitively saw himself as an agent chosen by obedience to do something positive for Catholic boys who were falling into the hands of the police in a city that was a forcing ground for crime and juvenile delinquency. He could see that there was much that was good in those boys, that they were being swept along by the tide of a consumer-orientated society, with its hedonistic mentality and its fondness for social competition. He would endeavour to see that justice was done. He would give those boys a good religious, moral and vocational training and so build up their self-respect and self-confidence. And it was the determined pursuit of those ideals that gave unity to the seeming discrete adventures of his eventful life. He formulated plans and programmes and, with the leadership status to involve others, the job became a community effort as colleagues, government and people generally came to realise the sincerity of the manager, the worth and feasibility of his objectives.

The advantages of a brass and reed band were long appreciated and

PRIVATE

23. The school was in the grounds. You had to line up on a Sunday when they were giving out pocket money and you were called by a number, they didn't call you by name. I was number eighty two. At school they called you by your surname.
24. You got pocket money on a Sunday, thruppence or something if you were good. If you weren't good you did not get any pocket money. If you were good you got it and you could spend it in the shop on the grounds. They had a small sweet shop on the grounds, in the house.
25. The [REDACTED] in the school were [REDACTED] BR 6 [REDACTED] BR 2 [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] BR 3 [REDACTED].
26. The lessons were poor. We did reading and maths but it was the same as the Lodge, they never gave you any homework and the standard of education was poor. [REDACTED] DL 6 [REDACTED] was a civilian [REDACTED] teacher. There was a nun who taught [REDACTED] [REDACTED] BR 4 [REDACTED] taught [REDACTED] [REDACTED] BR 2 [REDACTED] taught [REDACTED] [REDACTED] BR 3 [REDACTED] taught [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] BR 6 [REDACTED] taught in the school also but I cannot recall his subject.
27. At lunch time you weren't allowed to stay in the school, you had to stay outside, even during the winter. There was little to do so you were often hanging about in the freezing cold.
28. You had lunch in the main house but the food was bad and you were always hungry. You had your evening meal in the chalet.
29. After school you had sports, hurling, basketball and there was an outdoor swimming pool and tennis courts. [REDACTED] BR 4 [REDACTED] and Brother [REDACTED] BR 2 [REDACTED] supervised the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] BR 4 [REDACTED] was a tough man. He used to give you a lot of beatings. He would beat you for many reasons and for arguing with the other boys. He would use a stick and give you six of the best on the hands. Many of the brothers used this form of punishment.



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11. I was in one of six small dormitories with ten boys who were a mix of ages. The Brothers had their own bedrooms. They would come into the dormitory and cane us if we were talking at night. That happened to me a few times.
12. There was also a very religious aspect to the routine in Rubane. We got up early to go to mass. We had breakfast, went to school and had benediction.
13. We went to school on site. It was terrible. It was geared towards religion. We had to say the rosary every morning before school. If you didn't have your rosary beads in your pocket in the morning you would be caned. There were no formal exams and I have no memory of homework.
14. There was a white line in the playground which you were not allowed to cross. If you did you were caned by one of the Brothers.
15. We had chores to do. We had to do the housework before school which could be cleaning the corridors or scrubbing the stairs. Our chores were done every day before school and if we had not finished them before school we continued them after school.
16. There was a room where you could play pool as long as the older boys weren't already on the pool table. You had to play hurling but I was not really interested in it.
17. The food was terrible. The Brothers got better food than us. The Brothers would get apples and oranges. Some of the boys would take the Brothers' scraps out

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was no homework. I thought I needed something more than this and I wanted to go to another school. When I asked [REDACTED] BR 2 if I could go to another school he gave me an "O"-Level paper to look at and told me that if I was able to complete it I could go to another school. Of course I had no idea how to complete the paper so I was stuck where I was.

32. There was one day at school when I was being taught by [REDACTED] BR 4 I was sitting beside [REDACTED] DL 95 daydreaming and [REDACTED] BR 4 walked past and said "you need to stop copying". I replied "Brother, I don't copy". [REDACTED] BR 4 used to keep a rolled up strap in his pocket. He took out the strap and hit me several times on the hand with it. The tears were streaming down my face. I remember my hand was so sore I could not lift my pencil so when I could not get on with my work he hit me across my left ear and knocked me off my seat.

33. I decided after this that I had had enough and I told my [REDACTED] DL 527 [REDACTED] DL 527. She asked me what I wanted to happen and I told her I just did not want it to happen again. I do not know what she said or did but [REDACTED] BR 4 did not cane me or hit me again.

34. There was a [REDACTED] teacher called [REDACTED] DL 6. He was good at [REDACTED] but he was a poor teacher and he was the most bad-tempered man I have ever met. He had a habit of throwing things at us like T-squares, hammers or dusters, for example. He used to call me names like [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I was not good at [REDACTED]. Something happened in class one day and he hit me with a steel ruler. He pulled my arm behind my back and hit me on the fingers. I lost the finger nail on my little finger on my right hand. He knew where to hit you to hurt you the most.

35. [REDACTED] BR 15 was in charge of the [REDACTED] and one of the jobs I had was to help him. He would have touched me up and touched my penis but it never went any further than that. He was notorious for touching your backside and other parts. I had heard stories about him so I learned to stay away from him whenever possible.



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9. The Christian Brothers were very rough and frequently used the cane on the boys. I would have been hit with the cane once or twice a week in the school. The Brothers sexually abused me in the gymnasium in the home, where I would have gone to play football. I have blanked out a lot of the details because I have been an alcoholic for the past 30 years. I do remember that **BR 6** and another Brother abused me right up until I left De La Salle when I was 15. **BR 6** and the other Brother would make me perform oral sex on them. I was abused 6 or 7 times in total, but I never told anyone because I did not think that anyone would believe me, and I also blamed myself for what was happening to me. I think that the abuse was probably happening to other boys, but we never talked about it.
10. We received pocket money that we could spend at the disco. I think that we got about £10. **BR 6** gave us extra money after sexually abusing us, which he would have given us straight away following the abuse. I can remember him giving me an extra £10.
11. I attended the school at Rubane for a couple of months. I am not sure which Brothers taught in the school, but I did not learn anything there. Instead of going to school, I was sent to work as a gardener with a caretaker, but I cannot recall his name. I have learning difficulties, and it seemed that I was better out doing this kind of work rather than going to school. I later went to a school outside **██████████**. I have no qualifications; even when I was in primary school I was stuck at the back of the classroom with a game to play with. It is not the same for children with learning difficulties today.
12. My father came to visit me once in the year and a half that I was at Rubane. My father and I did not get on, and we still do not speak to each other today. I have not had any sort of relationship with him for the past 6 or 7 years. My father has always treated me differently than how he treats the rest of my brothers. I remember other boys from Rubane getting to go home during the holidays, but I am not sure whether or not I was allowed to go home. My mother never came to visit me, as her and my father was separated.

PRIVATE

Rubane House, Kircubbin (09/10/1977 – 11/1/1978)

3. HIA 218 and I were placed in Rubane on 9<sup>th</sup> October 1977. We were thirteen when we were sent to Rubane. We stayed in the big house. There was about five or six of us in single beds in a dormitory. Our dormitory was above the main front door. The Brothers all lived in the house in their own quarters.
4. On the third night we had gone to bed and the lights were turned out. The next thing the doors were opened and about six older boys around sixteen and seventeen years old came in. My bed was next to the window and HIA 218 bed was right next to mine. The older boys came straight over to me and HIA. They grabbed us and turned us over so we were face down on the bed. They pinned me down. I was petrified. I thought that it was some sort of game aimed to frighten the little ones. Two Brothers came in naked. One Brother came to me and another Brother went over to HIA. We were buggered. I knew they were Brothers because I had seen them before in the home.
5. The next night the same thing happened. A group of older boys came in and this time two different Brothers. The older boys held us down and one Brother buggered me and the other Brother buggered HIA. Afterwards they walked out and didn't speak. This happened about five or six times, maybe more. The other boys in the dorm hid under their blankets and the next day they didn't say anything and pretended it didn't happen. On other occasions it happened to other boys in the room and we didn't say or do anything. I think it went on in other dorms as well.
6. We were put out on the farm to work with the rest of our class. There was about ten in the class. There was a Brother in charge of [REDACTED]. I do not know his name. He didn't wear his robes during the day – only at night. He looked like a down and out. He wore a pair of black trousers with a string around his waist as a belt and an old jumper. He was an evil man. He would have been in his sixties and had a [REDACTED] accent. He was rather overweight. He used a paddle or oar which had a shortened handle to slap the cows to get them to move. When he was herding cows he started to hit us with the paddle. He gave us jobs to do such as putting the cow muck in a wheelbarrow and giving new



HIA REF: [ DL 11 ]  
NAME: DL 11  
DATE: [ 26<sup>th</sup> November 2014 ]

## THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

### Witness Statement of

I, DL 11 will say as follows: -

1. With reference to HIA 25 statement. Paragraph 14. I categorically deny the allegation that I physically abused HIA 25 at any time during the period he was at Rubane. I deny that at any time did I locked in the kitchen to eat his vegetables. It is untrue that was not allowed to talk at the dinner table. It is untrue that I brought buckets of chicken and cans of coke into the Chalet for the boys to eat and it is untrue that I ever sent to bed for any reason.

I am surprised that states that we didn't get on, I thought we had a good relationship. With regard to the Chalets dining regime. The boys, myself, and my family all ate together in the dining room, we sat down together as a family group and on finishing, all, including my children helped with clearing up and washing up. There was always a genial atmosphere at the table, no one was made to eat anything they did not like. The food was always good and there was seldom any left overs. The kitchen was not able to be locked, there were swing doors between the dining room and the kitchen, it was not possible to lock anyone in the kitchen.

With regard to the matter of buckets of chicken and cans of coke. There was nowhere within the local area that such items could be bought and I certainly could not afford to buy them on such a large scale. 20 including my family! Boys were never sent to their rooms as a punishment they could just walk out, so there would be no point.

With reference to HIA 25 statement. Paragraph 15. I categorically deny that I gave crosses with regard to pocket money. As far as I recall, I or the House Staff had no say regarding pocket money. This was the Brothers domain. If a boy had been badly misbehaved within the Chalet then the matter would have been reported to the Principle. I don't recall this happening in HIA 25 case as he was always helpful and well

Mournes, Saul, Nendrum Castle, Scrabo Tower and other activities included visits to historical and geographical places of interest.

53. The opening of the residential chalet units in 1968/69 and the refurbishment of the main house eased the living conditions considerably for boys and staff. While life in the Home could not replicate normal family life, nevertheless, an attempt was made to try and ensure that the ordinary daily routine was as similar as possible to that of other children and families. The following was the normal daily routine from Monday to Friday with a more relaxed approach at weekends and school holidays.

8.00 a.m.	...	Wake up, wash, tidy beds and clothes.
8.20 a.m.	...	Breakfast
8.45 a.m.	...	School Yard
9.00 a.m.	...	School
1.00 p.m.	...	Lunch Hour
2.00 p.m.	...	School
3.30 p.m.	...	Afternoon tea and change clothes
4.00 p.m.	...	Extra curricular activities.
6.00 p.m.	...	Supper and group discussion
7.00 p.m.	...	Activities.
8.00 p.m.	...	Showers, homework, indoor activities, T.V.
9.00 p.m.	...	Night drink
10.00 p.m.	...	Bed, Lights out.

54. To provide for individual needs, as far as possible, there were three bedrooms each containing four beds with individual bedside lockers, wardrobes and pin up boards. There were also two single rooms provided for the older adolescent boys who, apart from the need for privacy, also had opportunities to develop independence before leaving the Home.

55. The introduction of female and male Houseparents counterbalanced the all male staff of Brothers of previous years and gave the boys opportunities to talk to them about their feelings, anxieties and hopes. In general, the Houseparents were to be responsible for the day to day management of the unit, to provide a supportive and healthy environment and to help to meet the boys' physical and emotional needs. They were requested keep progress records which had been seriously lacking and sometimes non existent in the past and to



PRIVATE

14. I continued to live at home with my mum for a few years. I attended [REDACTED] Primary School and then I moved to [REDACTED] Secondary School. I loved [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I was only there about two or three years and then I was moved to [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Secondary School as our mother moved house. [REDACTED] was like a recruiting office for the IRA. It was very rough and I didn't like it so I started mitching. I think I mitched for about two years.
15. My Aunt died in November 1981 and my mother wouldn't take us all to the funeral so she placed us in Termonbacca for three days while she attended the funeral.
16. I was taken to court along with [REDACTED] HIA 382 because we were mitching school. The judge gave us the choice to either go back to school or go to Rubane. We chose to go to Rubane for a break from our life at home.

#### Rubane (1982 – 1984)

17. I was placed in Rubane House under a Court Order when I was fifteen years old. I have no complaints about my time in Rubane House. I loved it there. Brother [REDACTED] BR 2 was in charge of the home and I got on alright with him. I remember there was also a Brother called [REDACTED] BR 7 and he was okay. I never had any trouble with the Brothers. I had a room of my own in chalet [REDACTED] and I was given pocket money and a clothing allowance every month. [REDACTED] BR 5 was in charge of chalet [REDACTED]
18. We were allowed to go home at weekends but [REDACTED] HIA 382 and I chose to stay at the home and work. We did gardening and decorating - basically anything that needed done and the Brothers paid us.
19. I did not witness any sexual abuse whilst I was in Rubane and I did not suffer any physical abuse.



outbreak of infectious disease among any of the children which the medical officer regards as sufficiently serious to be so notified.

(2) Where a child dies in the home or contracts an illness or sustains an accident which the medical officer considers to be serious, the administering authority shall notify the circumstances forthwith to the parent or guardian of the child, and, if the child were placed in the home by a welfare authority, to that welfare authority.

10.—(1) The administering authority shall obtain the advice of the Fire Service before opening a new home or making any structural alterations to an existing home, and shall arrange for the periodic inspection of each home in its charge by the Fire Service.

(2) The administering authority shall ensure that periodic fire drills and practice are carried out in each home in its charge, so that the staff, and so far as possible the children, are well versed in the procedure for saving life in case of fire.

(3) The administering authority shall report to the Ministry forthwith any outbreaks of fire in any home in its charge.

11.—(1) The person in charge of a home shall ensure that generally order is maintained by his personal influence and understanding and that of his staff, and resort to corporal punishment shall be avoided as far as possible.

(2) Where correction is needed for minor acts of misbehaviour, the punishment shall take the form of forfeiture of rewards or privileges (including pocket money) or temporary loss of recreation; provided that a light tap of the hand may occasionally be applied to the hand of a child with the object of indicating urgent disapproval rather than that of inflicting pain.

(3) Other forms of corporal punishment shall be subject to the following conditions:—

(a) It shall be inflicted only on the hands or posterior with a light cane and shall not exceed six strokes in the case of a child over 10 years of age, and 2 strokes in the case of a child over 8 and under 10 years of age. No child under 8 years of age shall be so punished.

(b) It shall not be administered by any person other than the person in charge of the home or in his absence his duly authorised deputy.

(c) A second member of staff shall invariably be present to witness the proceedings.

(d) No caning shall be administered in the presence of another child.

(e) Any child known to have a physical or mental disability shall not be subjected to corporal punishment without the sanction of the medical officer.



\* The use of the words, « Thy, Thou and Thee », is limited to God and His Saints.

5. The Brothers shall be careful never to touch or strike any one of their scholars and never to repulse or treat them rudely : all such means of correction should never be used by the Brothers, as being very unbecoming and opposed to charity and Christian meekness.

\* Corporal punishment is forbidden.

6. They shall not punish their pupils during Catechism or prayer; the correction should usually be put off until another time.

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## CHAPTER IX

THE MANNER IN WHICH THE BROTHERS ARE TO BEHAVE  
IN SCHOOL WITH REGARD TO THEMSELVES,  
THEIR BROTHERS, AND SECULAR PERSONS.

1. It shall never be permitted to any Brother, not even the Brother Director, to teach in other schools than those of the Institute for any reason whatever.

2. The Brothers who teach school in the house shall go to their classes immediately after the three decades of the Rosary, both morning and afternoon.

3. The Brothers who teach school outside of the house shall go all together immediately after the prayers,

## CHAPTER VIII

THE MANNER IN WHICH THE BROTHERS ARE TO BEHAVE  
WHEN OBLIGED TO CORRECT THEIR PUPILS

1. The Brothers shall exercise all possible attention and vigilance over themselves so as to punish their pupils very rarely, being convinced, as they should be, that this is one of the chief means of managing their school properly, and of establishing very good order.

2. When it is necessary for the Brothers to punish any of the pupils, they shall be extremely careful to do so with great moderation and self-possession, and with the conditions prescribed in the *Management of the Christian Schools*; therefore, they shall never undertake to punish in hastiness, or when they feel excited.

3. For this purpose, on such occasions, the Brothers shall watch over themselves, so that neither the passion of anger nor the slightest touch of impatience have any part, either in the penances they impose, or in any of their words or actions; being convinced, as they should be, that, unless they take this precaution, the pupils will not profit by the correction—which is, however, the object that the Brothers should have in view in administering it—and God will not give it His blessing.

4. The Brothers shall carefully avoid, then and at all other times, calling their pupils abusive or unbecoming names; and they shall never address them otherwise than by their names, and with all the respect due to them.



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- (ii) That boy got backhanders to assault other boys,
- (iii) Staff allowed older boys to punish other residents;

There is no evidence that HIA 436 was ever in Rubane and his contribution to this Module is perhaps to simply highlight that there are individuals who will recount 'experiences' which can only be false.

## Conclusion

- 8.83 Attitudes to physical chastisement both within normal family settings or standard schools changed dramatically over the operational life-span of Rubane House. Corporal Punishment was permitted by Statute in 1950 but was effectively prohibited by 1985.
- 8.84 The Inquiry has heard varying accounts of both the severity and regularity of punishment of the boys. If there is a general theme it is that by the mid-1960s the physical aspect of Rubane had 'calmed somewhat' and thereafter isolated events of punishment were generally within the regulatory framework.
- 8.85 The Order accepts that the regime under **BR 17** was certainly harsh at times. While a number of applicants, like HIA 24 and HIA 247, did not recount anything which was openly in excess of normal corporal punishment, the Order was impressed by the account of HIA 252 and the excessive caning he received for 'theft'. The Order was equally impressed by HIA 252's account of **BR 15** 'strapping boys in the shower' and HIA 183's account of the collective punishment perpetrated by **BR 15** HIA 390, with some emotion, recounted the indiscriminate 'whipping' by **BR 15** in the steward's house. While it is difficult to reconcile this type of behaviour with the account of HIA 159, the Order accepts that there were occasions when the boundary between corporal punishment and physical abuse was definitely crossed.
- 8.86 The applicants' reflections on 'boxing' were largely new to the Order on the commencement of this Inquiry. While the Order accepts that some boys may have perceived it as a 'punishment,' the general theme of the witnesses was that it was a sporting activity, albeit seemingly used at times by the Brothers to settle disputes between boys who were fighting. That may seem a very alien concept by today's standards but perhaps not uncommon in the 1950/1960s even in 'normal' family



## Chapter 8                      Corporal Punishment and Physical Abuse

A large number of applicants intertwined their recollections of physical chastisement and physical abuse.

### **8.1 Corporal Punishment**

- 8.11 Corporal Punishment (CP) was permitted by regulation within the Home and formed part of the discipline regime within the School. It is important to remember that CP applied to both the 'Home' and the 'School' under different regulations. Former residents did not draw any distinction between 'Home' and 'School' and it is accepted that the practical distinctions may have become blurred, as perceived by both residents and Brothers.
- 8.12 Two important distinctions between the respective regulations are;
- (i) CP in the School could be administered in front of other pupils.
  - (ii) There was no requirement to record CP in the School.
- 8.13 The Inquiry has heard reflections from a number of residents which recounted incidents which quite clearly went above and beyond 'six of the best' or in other words exceeded that permitted by the Regulations. Some of these accounts, if correct, quite clearly describe physical abuse. Others may be describing an attempt at CP albeit reflecting '12' strokes as opposed to '6'. It is for the Inquiry to determine the instances when CP becomes physical abuse.
- 8.14 There was a general theme pertaining that corporal punishment was prevalent throughout the existence of Rubane. It is accepted, as expressed by the Applicants themselves, that CP was a feature of schooling right up to the mid-1980s. While the Order's Rule stipulated non-adherence to corporal punishment as a principle it would certainly not have been uncommon to find it as a facet of school life throughout the UK & Ireland. Indeed, smacking would have been widespread in most familial homes at that time as well. The administration of the cane/strap was viewed by society as an appropriate way to correct bad behaviour.
- 8.15 The majority of the applicants, when recounting CP, gave the impression that it was generally conducted in accordance with regulation.

HIA 59 stated 'it was three strokes of the cane or six strokes of the cane. That's the way it worked'<sup>1</sup>.

HIA 244 agreed that it was '3 slaps on each hand'<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Day 55 91:15-16

PRIVATE

were ill enough to stay in bed. I had a toothache once and I got to stay in bed for the day but then a month later I said I had a toothache again because I just wanted to stay in bed. That plan backfired though because they brought me to a dentist and made me get my tooth out.

15. We had a lot of chores to do in Rubane House. On a Saturday morning, my job was to clean the main staircase. We also had to clean the dormitories and polish the linoleum with heavy wooden buffers. In September we were out picking potatoes from 7.30am for local farmers. We got time off school to do it. The Brothers got paid £1 a day for us and we got a shilling on Sunday. We used to bring field mice home in our pockets and keep them as pets until one day we were told by one of the Brothers that the next person to bring a mouse back would burn in hell. I cannot recall which Brother issued that threat.

16. We were constantly threatened with burning in hell. On one occasion soon after I went in, a priest came to visit from [REDACTED] to give us a lecture on Christianity. I cannot recall the name of this priest. He basically told us there was only one thing keeping us out of hell and that was saying our prayers and if we didn't say our prayers we would burn in hell. He also told us that the only thing that kept us from dying at night was our breathing and if we stopped breathing and died in our sleep without saying our prayers we would go straight to hell. I was only nine years old and this terrified me. That night I couldn't sleep and I lay awake crying. My brother was in the bed next to mine and asked me what was wrong. I said I was frightened to go to sleep in case I stopped breathing. He was three years older than me but he told me not to worry and that he would listen out for my breathing and if I stopped, he would wake me up.

17. There was a lot of brutality in Rubane. I remember on one occasion I wandered into the main house, [REDACTED] **BR 12** was there and he asked me what I was doing. I said I was getting something from the locker and he shouted at me to get out and that I shouldn't be in the house at that time of day. He took a swing at me with his arm and hit my head and bounced me off the wall.



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windows were smashed when I was staying there. They did not want Catholics staying in the area. My grandparents were the only Catholic family living in a mainly Protestant street. A young lad who lived across the road from my grandparents hit my grandfather on the back of the head with a gun. A minister, [REDACTED] helped to relocate my grandparents to [REDACTED]

36. The Brothers would pick us up at the end of the summer and I hated going back as it meant not seeing NHB 12 again. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] I keep in touch with my brothers.

37. The dentist at Rubane House came up in a caravan to provide treatment and we were scared of him as he used to pull out a lot of teeth at a time rather than giving you fillings. I can't remember his real name. We called him [REDACTED]

38. There was a [REDACTED] at Rubane House, DL 6 who was very wicked. He called you fat head or something insulting like that. He threw wooden mallets and chisels at us and sometimes he would hit you with it if you made a mistake. The Brothers didn't mind him being there because he was one of their very good [REDACTED]

39. BR 3 and BR 6 also hit me on the hand with a cane during my time at Rubane House. This was normally only for something trivial like having dirty shoes. BR 12 hit me with a stick on my backside. I understand that BR 12 and BR 6 may now [REDACTED] I would not want to see BR 3 brought to court for any assaults upon me due to the fact that he is now quite elderly.

40. I do not recall any inspections in Nazareth Lodge but there were open days at Rubane House when well dressed rich people gave donations. I recall the Lord Mayor talking to us. I cannot recall if we were allowed or not allowed to speak to these people. I think we were separated from them and they spoke to the brothers. We got plenty of notice they were coming and we had to dress up in our scouts outfits. I have photographs of the Lord Mayor's visit and there is a photograph of me when I was fourteen in the scouts.

PRIVATE

10. I was often cold at night because there were no heaters in the dormitories. We did have 2 or 3 blankets on the bed with a quilt, but it was not warm enough in the winter.

11. We were given rough trousers, a rough jacket and a shirt to wear. The shirt was changed once a week or once a fortnight, I cannot be sure how often. I had a pair of boots that I had to wear all the time, even after cleaning out the pigs on the farm. We also had to wear the same clothes all the time even if we had been sweating into them.

12. We were very seldom called by our Christian names; we were more often called by our surname. We each had a number, which was used mainly for our laundry and towels. My number was 50 something.

13. I was never seen by a doctor during my time in Rubane. I do remember an old man and woman checking our hair for lice on one occasion, but I am not sure exactly who they were. I had a bad toothache one time, and I told Brother BR 17 BR 14 and BR 15 but they never gave me anything for it or took me to see a dentist. The pain was so bad that it kept me up all night. My uncle had to bring me to a dentist in [REDACTED] when I was home for the holidays, but this was nearly two months after the tooth first started to cause me pain. I was never taken to the dentist by the Brothers.

14. I was often beaten in Rubane. The day after I first arrived I was crying to get home, and BR 17 came up to me and hit me across the side of the head 4 or 5 times with his hand, telling me to shut up. This only made me cry harder, and he hit me another couple of times. Over the next week or fortnight I was beaten a number of times in an attempt to make me keep quiet. I was terrified of the place and I just wanted to get home. I didn't know where I was, and I was a long way from home. The Brothers showed us no sympathy.

15. I was sexually abused in 1955 by BR 17. BR 17 abused me four times in total, within a short period of time. The first time he abused me, he brought me into an office and asked me how I was settling into



PRIVATE

19. We were allowed to watch the television in the dining room during the evenings, although we were sent to bed by 9pm. We got to watch movies occasionally, and I remember watching John Wayne films. [REDACTED] BR 14 [REDACTED] BR 17 [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] BR 15 [REDACTED] would sit very close to the boys with their arms around them. It would often be the same boys that I would see being taken out by the Brothers at night.
20. [REDACTED] BR 42 [REDACTED] was a wicked man. He beat me several times, and I witnessed him beating other boys on numerous occasions.
21. I was able to go home for a holiday in the summer, but I cannot remember if it was for a week or a fortnight. On the way back to Rubane after a Christmas holiday, I jumped off the train at [REDACTED] station and jumped over a wall to get away. Someone must have seen me and told the guard, who grabbed me down the street and brought me back to the station. The guards handed me over to the RUC, who called [REDACTED] DL 411 [REDACTED] When I was left back to Rubane, [REDACTED] BR 17 [REDACTED] brought me into a classroom, made me take down my trousers and walloped me with a stick. He hit me around 15- 20 times, and after the beating I felt blood on my back, but I did not receive any medical treatment for my injuries.
22. In 1958 after I ran away on another occasion, I told [REDACTED] DL 411 [REDACTED] that Brother [REDACTED] BR 17 [REDACTED] had interfered with me. I told him this because I did not want to go back to Rubane. [REDACTED] DL 411 [REDACTED] shouted at me, telling me that I was lying, and that the Brothers were religious men who wouldn't do that. [REDACTED] DL 411 [REDACTED] failed to do anything about it. I did not tell anyone else what had happened to me because I thought that they would not believe me and that it would be a waste of time.
23. We got a shilling a week pocket money, which I would gather up and use to buy cigarettes from the post office. The [REDACTED] who worked in there would phone [REDACTED] BR 17 [REDACTED] who would be standing waiting on me and would see me smoking. He would bring me into a classroom and beat me with straps or a stick. On another occasion when I was 14 or 15 I got accused of stealing

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woman was my mother. In all my time at Nazareth Lodge I had no other visitors other than [REDACTED] and the [REDACTED]. I had no social worker and I do not remember any inspections.

**De La Salle Boys' Home, Rubane House, Kircubbin (12/08/1957 – 13/07/1960)**

13. I was transferred to Rubane House on 12<sup>th</sup> August 1957. Nazareth Lodge was horrendous and going to Rubane was like stepping out of the frying pan into the fire. Brother [REDACTED] **BR 17** was in charge. He came to collect about twelve of us from Nazareth Lodge in a minivan. I was in a dormitory in the big house for a year or two. There were two or three dormitories in the big house with eight or nine boys in each one. After a while I was transferred to the smaller house near the farm. There were two dormitories in the smaller house.
14. I found Rubane very intimidating. We did not receive a good education. I think everyone was educationally slow. There was no competition and there was no extra help. I was in the choir and I could only read The Lord's Prayer in Latin because I was taught it.
15. There was a [REDACTED] who was in Rubane for a couple of months when I first arrived. He had a lot of compassion. He was the only person who took time with us and realised the importance of education and made you feel important. He was the first person who taught me how to tell the time and he taught me how to write my name. I remember crying when he left. He was the only one who made me feel important and he made me realise how important it was to get an education. No one else seemed to care about our education. I think they thought we were damaged goods and were beyond teaching.
16. I also remember an occasion in school when [REDACTED] **BR 17** called me to the front of the classroom and asked me what we were learning. I replied we were learning the hymn. He threw me over the table and beat me black and blue with his fists. This was because I said "hymn" instead of "Latin". One of the boys in the class eventually shouted out "it's Latin you're learning". So I said "it's Latin". He only stopped when I said that. I was sobbing really hard. I was not right for



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18. Another time we were down at the swimming pool and **BR 15** threw a young boy who couldn't swim into the pool just for fun. I think the boy's name was **DL 269** or **DL 269**. He was about a year younger than me, he was around eight and small for his age. He managed to scramble to the side and was gripping onto the handrail at the side when **BR 15** dragged him off it and threw him in again. The boy was trying to paddle underwater and he was screaming 'please Brother, I can't swim, I'll give you my shilling on Sunday'. **BR 15** just laughed and said 'now you see, you can swim if you want, can't you?'. The boy had to agree but he could not swim and he was terrified.

19. I remember when two boys ran away from Rubane and were brought back by police. We were all gathered in the front school room and the boys who had run away were at the front. We were forced to watch while they were given a beating by **BR 17**. The boys were dressed in just their swimming trunks so they had no protection at all. **BR 17** beat them on their backsides and their thighs with a very brutal stick. The boys were beaten so badly they leapt in the air with pain. **BR 17** had sweat dripping off him he was putting so much effort into the beating. Looking back now, I can see the purpose of this public beating was to terrify the boys and show us what would happen if we had the audacity to run away.

20. I was sexually abused in Rubane by **BR 17**. The first time it happened I was about nine years of age. It was a summer evening and I was coming back from playing football. I went up to the dormitory and **BR 17** was there. I was looking for a headache tablet and he gave me an Alka Seltzer then he put his hand up my shorts and touched my private parts. This happened in his room beside the dorms. I didn't know what to do. He kissed me on the forehead and I walked out of the room. **BR 17** did this to me a few times. I knew it was wrong but I never knew what to do. I decided to tell the priest in confession but he just told me to tell the Principal. I cannot recall the name of the priest but he was the regular priest who **[REDACTED]** at Rubane. I blurted out that the Principal knew

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soiled sheets for a week before they were changed. There was a strong smell of urine in the dormitories from the damp mattresses.

8. Everybody had chores to do in the morning before breakfast. The wooden floors in the posh bit of the house got scuffed because of the shoes worn by the Brothers. We had to sweep the floors and then five or six boys would shuffle arm in arm, cleaning and polishing the floors with rags on our feet. If we weren't polishing the floors, we would have maybe been cleaning toilets, sweeping the dormitories or mopping. We then had to run to get breakfast, but if we were caught running, we wouldn't get any breakfast and we were given a hiding instead. The Brothers always used a cane to punish us and we were hit round the back of the legs.
9. The Brothers had a habit of grabbing us by the ear, if we stepped out of line. If we said anything, they would give us a good hiding with the cane. I remember one young boy was caught smoking and he was stripped right down to his underpants. They bent him over a chair and whipped him. The door was shut and whatever went on behind closed doors, stayed there. It's as simple as that.
10. The food wasn't great. I don't remember eating any nice food. For breakfast we were given lumpy porridge and a slice of bread, with old-fashioned margarine. I remember eating corned beef. It was the same food every day, and we were never given enough. We were always hungry.
11. We used to have to pick potatoes in the fields from very early in the morning. I think we were collected by a tractor or van every morning and taken to the fields. I'm not sure if the farmers paid for us to help or if they gave potatoes to the Brothers. I never saw any money for it. I'll never forget it. I think it was winter time because it was freezing cold, and we were only wearing shorts and wellies that were far too big for us. My hands were blue and my legs were cold. The only way I could warm myself up was to urinate on my hands. I would then be smacked around the ear. One day I was trying to lift the potatoes out with a pitchfork, but my hands were so cold that I couldn't work it



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cigarettes from the Brothers, and BR 17 brought all of the boys into a classroom, made me take down my trousers and gave me 15 or 20 lashes of a stick. Some lashes hit me on the bottom and some hit me across my back. He also hit me about the face with his hand. I remember that there was blood on my back after this beating, but I did not get any medical treatment after this incident. I remember workmen who were carrying out work around the Home would sneak me cigarettes from time to time.

24. BR 15 was a [REDACTED] and he was a wicked man. We used to get showers on a Saturday night in the shower room. On one occasion a boy was talking in the row of showers and BR 15 took out his strap and hit each of us in turn around the back and face. The Brothers were supposed to be religious men, but the violence and sexual abuse made those 8 or 9 years the worst years of my life.

25. The other Brothers in the home could be wicked and very cross. They would hit you for looking at them. BR 14 walloped me several times. I once accidentally knocked over a vase in a changing room and he went berserk, hitting me around the face with his strap. He told me to clean up the broken vase, and when I bent down, he kicked me hard in the side, about 4 or 5 times with the toe of his shoe, like someone would kick a football. I was sore for about a fortnight after, and I was bruised and blood vessels had been burst. I was beaten several more times by BR 14 although I cannot be sure exactly how many times.

26. I tried to run away on a few occasions, but I think that some of the other boys were watching me, as I would never get far down the road before Brother BR 17 would find me and bring me back in his car. Once I had almost reached Kircubbin, and I tried to flag down a car, but it was BR 17. He went mad on the road, leapt out of the car and walloped me around the face. After I had tried to run away on another occasion when I was 16, Brother BR 17 made me wear short trousers, thinking that I wouldn't try to go away again. I assume that he thought that I might have been too embarrassed, but I

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would check your hands and the back of your neck and make sure you had a wash that morning.

17. If we were outside playing and it rained we used to go into the school building. They had some old farm buildings that were done up and we had a TV room, snooker room and a games room there so that's where we used to go if it was raining but otherwise we just played out in the yard or played down in the football pitch.
18. I was quite well behaved when I was younger but there were a few boys who would run away. I saw one boy in particular who kept running away getting about ten belts of the cane in front of everyone in a big classroom. I cannot recall his name. **BR 17** was the [REDACTED] and I saw him beating quite a few of the boys really hard with a big cane. I recall the sweat was pouring off him as he was doing this and he looked like he was enjoying it too much.
19. We got up at about seven o'clock. We went to mass first of all before we had our breakfast and straight after mass we all had jobs to do. Some boys had to clean the toilets, the showers, the bedrooms, the hall, the landing. We all had our own jobs to do. My particular task was to look after the priest's house with another boy. The priest had a small house down beside the old school. We used to go down and make his bed, sweep out the place, prepare the fire for lighting, clean it out so all he had to do was put a match to it. He had a little kitchen there as well and we used to clean up the kitchen and wash. We then went to school.
20. We had school each morning, then lunch and back to school again. If the weather was good in the afternoon we used to go to the bottom of the field and play football or just run around. There were some allotments there as well. I had a little allotment and I used to grow radishes.
21. My mother and my sister came once to visit me during my stay at Rubane House. I think I had been there for quite some time when they came to visit. Normally if anybody had visitors like their parents they would sit in the



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entire time I was there, and never moved on. There were people there who could hardly read or write and I was sitting alongside them even though I was quite advanced.

22. You could be in school one day and taken out to work the next. I was generally involved in repairs around the farm, and assisted a civilian worker called **DL 392**. I didn't mind because I figured that I might as well be learning about building, given that I wasn't learning anything at school. I went on to become a  so at least something good came out of it. Other boys were taken out of school to work on the gardens, the vegetable patch or the pig farm. The cooking was all done by the boys, as well as the washing up. The Brothers may have supervised, but the boys did all the work.

23. In late September/early October, they dragged us out of school to go potato picking for local farmers. The potato picking went on all day, every day, for a few weeks each year. The farmers were paying the Brothers £1 a day for us and they gave us one shilling a week. The dirt would split the skin on your fingers and some mornings the ground would be white with frost. My hands would be numb with the cold, red raw, cut and bleeding, but you still had to pick the potatoes. I tried saying I couldn't do it because my hands were sore but they just forced me to carry on. Sometimes my fingers were so sore that I tried instead to cup my palms around the potatoes. When we were out potato picking, we had to eat the same food every day for breakfast, lunch and dinner – spam, margarine and brown sauce. It was awful. I hated it. Along the hedge, there was a trail of spam because we just couldn't eat anymore of it and we would throw it away. Then we would be starving with hunger all day.

24. Rubane was just a hell hole; it was a complete nightmare. We were constantly ducking and diving from the Brothers; you never knew when you'd get hit by them. If **BR 6** was going to punish you, he would take you to the school house, and slap you six times on each hand with a bamboo cane. If we were ever caught in the main house outside of the cleaning time you would get a really bad hiding from **BR 6**. If you were caught smoking down behind the school you would get battered. Any one of the Brothers, except for

1     **A.**   Basically it was -- well, there was a group of boys  
2           obviously in the choir, and when he -- when we start to  
3           sing, he had this like a tuning thing.  It is like  
4           a fork thing, and to get the high pitch noise of where  
5           he wanted you -- that highness he wanted you to sing and  
6           then you'd go up and down, he used to ding it like that,  
7           and if you were not paying attention, he would come  
8           along and ding it on your head.  It didn't hurt, like,  
9           but he would do that sort of thing.  That was -- that's  
10          what the tuning fork was.

11    **Q.**   And you described it -- we are obviously going to come  
12          on to some other matters concerning him in terms of  
13          sexual abuse --

14    **A.**   **Yes.**

15    **Q.**   -- but you mentioned the term "Jekyll and Hyde" in  
16          relation to BR17 when you were speaking to me.  Can you  
17          explain to the Panel what you mean by that?

18    **A.**   Well, I was in BR17's class.  See, he was my teacher  
19          like, and BR17 could be smiling and joking one minute  
20          and the next minute he was a completely different  
21          person.  He would be throwing dusters at you and things  
22          like that.

23    **Q.**   So you now relate that to the story of Jekyll and Hyde  
24          in terms of --

25    **A.**   No, I didn't at the time, but obviously thinking about



1       it now, that's the type of person that he was. He could  
2       be -- he could be normal one minute and the next minute  
3       he'd go into a rage type of thing.

4   CHAIRMAN: I suppose those of us who were brought up in the  
5       day before whiteboards know what you mean, a solid  
6       wooden thing that was used to brush the chalk off the  
7       board.

8   A. Yes, the duster, yes. Yes, the duster, yes.

9   Q. It was thrown at you? It was a missile?

10  A. Not just me, but he would throw it at any -- whoever he  
11       thought was -- I don't know for any reason -- what  
12       reason he did it. He was well calm one minute and then  
13       the next minute you got a duster flying at you.

14  MR AIKEN: And what I want to do then, please, is move on to  
15       look at the sexual abuse you describe. Just as do I  
16       that, HIA247, the Inquiry has heard of other Brothers,  
17       principally BR15 and BR14, who were there at the same  
18       time who were physically abusive to boys. Those are  
19       allegations that others have brought to the Inquiry.  
20       You had no difficulty with either of those Brothers?

21  A. I didn't have any experience like that with BR15 or  
22       BR14.

23  Q. We will come back to look at BR14, and you had a good  
24       relationship. You were keen on sports?

25  A. Well, I used to play all of the Gaelic football and the

19. I remember being taken to the dentist once by a Welfare Officer. This woman took me to Newtownards. The same day I went to visit my elder sister in lodgings in [REDACTED] for a half an hour. I was given Ice-cream and was sick. That was the only time anybody ever came to see how things were going.
20. The whole time I was there I never saw a Doctor. I often wonder about that. There must have been someone took sick in the six years I was there but I never saw or heard anyone wanting to see a Doctor. No Doctor came for regular inspections. If we got a bad beating no one would patch us up. About a dozen of us came down with the flu and we spent three or four days in the big house. Apart from that I don't remember a sick bay.
21. I don't remember anybody being sent to hospital. I have not remember ever receiving any inoculations.
22. Twice while I was at the home we were taken to a place in Waterfoot in the Glens of Antrim. It was a holiday home that I think belonged to the Brothers. It was much the same as being at the home except we didn't have school for two weeks.

### Life after care

23. I left the home at 15 and went to work as an [REDACTED] on the [REDACTED]. I stayed for five or six months and then went to work as a [REDACTED] in the [REDACTED] Hotel. After about a year I moved to the [REDACTED] Hotel on the [REDACTED]. After a few months I [REDACTED] and was based with the [REDACTED]. I stayed in the [REDACTED] and spent a lot of time in [REDACTED]. I left after 14 and a half years in 1973 and lived in [REDACTED]. I [REDACTED] in 1977 and was [REDACTED] again. That's when I met my wife, [REDACTED]. We have [REDACTED] son and he has just had his [REDACTED] child, our [REDACTED]. My [REDACTED] now but I still treat him like a wee one. I still look out for him and we love him to bits.



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De La Salle Boy's Home, Rubane House, Kircubbin (3<sup>rd</sup> February 1961 – 27<sup>th</sup> March 1964)

4. I thought that I was taken to Rubane when I was approximately nine years of age, however records suggest that I was admitted on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1961 and I remained there until 27<sup>th</sup> March 1964.
  
5. BR 15 was a horrible man. He was a [REDACTED] and he always smelled of cigarettes. He used to rule by fear. I didn't want to upset him, as he would make life hard. He used to call me [REDACTED] and say I was from [REDACTED] because [REDACTED]. When we were in the television room, he would sit at the front of the room, put a boy on his lap and put his hand on the boy's leg. We were all wearing shorts. He seemed to have his favourite boys for this. I just thought it wasn't right, because there was no need for his hand to be there. He also used to watch the boys in the showers, but he wasn't the only Brother to do this. I remember a [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I don't believe that they were there just to supervise us. Again I just thought it wasn't right, the way they stood watching us. It made me uncomfortable.
  
6. There were a few nightwalkers in Rubane, two of whom stick out in my mind. I remember BR 15 and the same [REDACTED] who would have watched us in the shower. I would be lying in bed, and would see somebody wandering about the dormitory with a torch, and then sitting on a boy's bed. I would just pull the covers over my head. None of the nightwalkers ever came near me. I never saw any overt sexual activity going on in Rubane, but the other boys spoke of it and we all knew what was going on. I tried not to talk about any of this, as it was better not to know. I think that maybe my scarring might have protected me in some way because BR 15 never came near me or tried to touch me in a sexual manner.
  
7. A lot of boys wet the bed in Rubane. Whenever they wet the bed, they had to lie in the same damp sheets all night, and the mattress underneath would be soaked. The boys were too frightened to admit that they had wet the bed because of what might happen. Some boys would have to lie in the same

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22. There was another occasion when we were watching television. We were carrying on a bit and **BR 15** put all the boys in to the basement for two hours. This happened two or three times. There were about fifty or sixty boys. There was no heating and there was condensation on the walls. While we were down there some of the boys were still carrying on. **BR 15** came down to see who was carrying on. He picked out a boy called **DL 398** and hit him across the face with a bamboo cane. The blood was pouring out of him. **BR 15** then hit him across the legs and back. He could not sit down for a couple of days afterwards. **BR 15** had a vicious temper and I actually thought he got a kick out of it. I have never been able to forget that incident.
23. **DL 398** and I remained friends after we left care. We cycled together. His work colleagues called him **DL 398** because he could always fix things. I have always thought that if **DL 398** had had a proper upbringing he would have been a great engineer as he could have fixed anything. He was also a great **DL 398**
24. I received no stimulation at Rubane House. I was never picked for the football team and I could never get near the snooker table. I think I involved myself in so many activities when I was older like cycling, walking and golf to try to make up for not having much recreation when I was a child.

### Life After Care

25. I left Rubane House in **DL 398** I remember leaving Rubane and walking down the road to get the bus to go to my first job. I had a suitcase with two of everything, two pairs of pants, two pairs of socks and one suit. It was the loneliest day of my life. I had no-one. I had no education and I was worried about how I was going to cope with the outside world.
26. I recall when I settled in to my lodgings after leaving Kircubbin I would wake up after having a nightmare thinking that I was still in Kircubbin. It was such a relief



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25. The other Brothers in the home could be wicked and very cross. They would hit you for looking at them. [BR 14] walloped me several times. I once accidentally knocked over a vase in a changing room and he went berserk, hitting me around the face with his strap. He told me to clean up the broken vase, and when I bent down, he kicked me hard in the side, about 4 or 5 times with the toe of his shoe, like someone would kick a football. I was sore for about a fortnight after, and I was bruised and blood vessels had been burst. I was beaten several more times by [BR 14] although I cannot be sure exactly how many times.

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4. I think now that my Mum had depression that wasn't treated and she wasn't fit to look after the children.

De La Salle Boys Home, Rubane House, Kircubbin

5. I remember the day we went into the home. When I arrived at the Home we were told to strip and shower I was given the number [REDACTED] my brother DL 399 was given [REDACTED]. Sometime after we went into the home maybe a year, DL 399 was sent to [REDACTED]. I don't know why he went there because he seemed alright, intelligent enough. I didn't see him again until I came out of the Home and by then he seemed much worse. I don't know if that was because of the other people in [REDACTED] with him. I was not told he was going away, I just found out he was gone.
6. BR 15 [REDACTED] was in charge of [REDACTED] for the home. He was the Brother who looked after us on a day to day basis. He used to go into Belfast once a month at least. He would come back late at night and he would have drink on him, you could smell it. He would come into our room, we'd be in our bunk beds and he would just lash out with a whip at everybody in sight. There were children screaming. One boy called [REDACTED] he wasn't quite right and he used to get an awful lot of the battering. I think it was because he used to sit and rock backwards and forwards. He picked on him and he got a serious beating. We were very afraid of BR 15 [REDACTED] and we knew that when he came in he was going to beat us.
7. I'm sure there was sexual abuse going on at the home. I remember one younger boy, DL 401 [REDACTED]. Every time you went into the television room Brother BR 15 [REDACTED] was sitting with DL 401 [REDACTED] at the back of the room. I believe Brother BR 15 [REDACTED] was sexually playing with DL 401 [REDACTED]. I didn't see anything specific but BR 15 [REDACTED] was always wrestling with DL 401 [REDACTED]. I remember feeling at the time that something sexual was going on.



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of abuse to **DL 140**. I told him and he went to see my mother. He came back and told me not to worry about things as that Brother was ill and required treatment and would not be there much longer. However, **BR 15** remained in the home for quite some time after I reported the matter. He also had a really bad temper and would have hit the boys often with a stick. He hit me once on my kneecap with a stick. He did eventually leave the home. It wasn't just me, he did it on quite a few people. I tried to suppress it and move on but it was all the other boys talked about, they frequently talked about things of a sexual nature.

20. That was the only abuse I experienced from a Brother. There was plenty of abuse on other boys by **BR 15**. People take advantage of people who are vulnerable or weak.

21. I could actually feel people looking at me and knowing that they knew somebody had touched me and that it was a known fact and everyone in the home knew this Brother had me in his room.

22. When I went there first it was only a big house and then they built four chalets. I was in Chalet **DL 115**. There were fourteen children in each chalet. **DL 115** and **DL 115** looked after my chalet. They were very good people. She was firm with us but she and her husband ate with us and I was close to her. I told her that I had been abused. She always said put this behind you and forget about it, the Brother is no longer here now and he's getting treatment. She was open and honest.

23. I never really talked about it because it was unspeakable and you didn't want to talk about it. They would say to you "you were got by **BR 15**" or "he got you in the woods".

24. There were other boys in other chalets and they were being abused. I knew that but there was little I could do about it. I was friendly with **HIA 56**, **HIA 132** and **HIA 21** when I was in the home. They were in the

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26. I recall when I settled in to my lodgings after leaving Kircubbin I would wake up after having a nightmare thinking that I was still in Kircubbin. It was such a relief



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cigarettes from the Brothers, and BR 17 brought all of the boys into a classroom, made me take down my trousers and gave me 15 or 20 lashes of a stick. Some lashes hit me on the bottom and some hit me across my back. He also hit me about the face with his hand. I remember that there was blood on my back after this beating, but I did not get any medical treatment after this incident. I remember workmen who were carrying out work around the Home would sneak me cigarettes from time to time.

24. BR 15 was a [REDACTED] and he was a wicked man. We used to get showers on a Saturday night in the shower room. On one occasion a boy was talking in the row of showers and BR 15 took out his strap and hit each of us in turn around the back and face. The Brothers were supposed to be religious men, but the violence and sexual abuse made those 8 or 9 years the worst years of my life.

25. The other Brothers in the home could be wicked and very cross. They would hit you for looking at them. BR 14 walloped me several times. I once accidentally knocked over a vase in a changing room and he went berserk, hitting me around the face with his strap. He told me to clean up the broken vase, and when I bent down, he kicked me hard in the side, about 4 or 5 times with the toe of his shoe, like someone would kick a football. I was sore for about a fortnight after, and I was bruised and blood vessels had been burst. I was beaten several more times by BR 14 although I cannot be sure exactly how many times.

26. I tried to run away on a few occasions, but I think that some of the other boys were watching me, as I would never get far down the road before Brother BR 17 would find me and bring me back in his car. Once I had almost reached Kircubbin, and I tried to flag down a car, but it was BR 17. He went mad on the road, leapt out of the car and walloped me around the face. After I had tried to run away on another occasion when I was 16, Brother BR 17 made me wear short trousers, thinking that I wouldn't try to go away again. I assume that he thought that I might have been too embarrassed, but I

Witness Name: **DL 244**

Date: 31<sup>st</sup> January 2016.

### The Inquiry into Historical Institutional Abuse 1922 to 1985

I, **DL 244** make this statement for the purpose of assisting the Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry. I am content for the statement to be shown to the Inquiry team. I am happy to discuss its contents and my experiences in care with the Inquiry team.

1. When I was approximately 5 years old my mother **DL 244** I had **DL 244** brothers and **DL 244** sisters and my father was unable to cope. I was placed into Nazareth Lodge, my elder brother **DL 244** went into Rubane House, my younger brother into **DL 244** baby home and my **DL 244** sisters into Nazareth House.
2. I didn't like Nazareth Lodge. I have no specific complaint to make about it but it was an austere sort of place. The nuns were very strict. If you stepped out of line you would certainly have been punished. I suppose the nuns had a hard job to control us all but it was tough at times. One of the nuns, **DL 244** was particularly unpleasant. Despite the fact that I disliked the place I stayed in touch with the nuns and recently, together with a number of other former residents, attended the unveiling of a memorial to the Sisters of Nazareth.
3. My sisters used to come and visit and take me out on weekends to see my father. I also recall being brought over to the babies' home to see my little brother **DL 244**. The nuns tried to keep my family in contact.
4. I remember the day I transferred to Rubane. It was 15<sup>th</sup> August 1964. I was looking forward to going. My brother **DL 244** had been there between in 1960 for nine months and he had come up on visits to see me in Nazareth Lodge. He didn't talk to me very much about it but he certainly never complained or warned me about anything. Sadly he has since died.
5. To me it was a feeling of relief going to Rubane. I recall 4 of the boys on the bus were crying but I was glad to be leaving Nazareth Lodge. I remember arriving, meeting **BR 3** and being shown the swimming pool, the Gaelic pitches and the snooker table. It looked like a different place to Nazareth and it was. To be honest, even today I look at it as 'heaven and hell'. We had so much to do at Rubane. We even got 'paid', like pocket money – it was the first time I had ever had money. I remember going potato picking on local farms in October. I got 2/6 each night. I really enjoyed it, we got out to local farms, got stew for lunch and had a great time. I wouldn't spend all my money but save some through a 'stamp' saving scheme run with the Post Office. I also remember getting to see films regularly.
6. I went into the main house and shared a dorm with boys of various ages.



7. I recall a number of the Brothers;

- (i) **BR 6** – he was a ‘smashing fellow’. To be fair I do vaguely remember him bringing someone in to the class for absconding and caning him in front of us but other than that I never saw or heard of him striking anyone. I never heard anything untoward about him and certainly nothing to suggest that he physically or sexually assaulted anyone.
- (ii) **BR 2** – he was another ‘gentleman’. He taught me hurling, football and table tennis. Largely thanks to **BR 2** I went on to play hurling until I was thirty. I never heard anything untoward about him and certainly nothing to suggest that he physically or sexually assaulted anyone.
- (iii) **BR 3** – I was his ‘blue eye’, his pet if you like. I thought he was wonderful. We got on very well. I remember he used to sneak me Mars Bars out of the tuck shop. I don’t know why we got on so well – we just clicked. I found all the Brothers approachable. They used to ‘march’ up and down the yard in a rather militaristic fashion but if you went up to them they were always willing and happy to chat and interact. I never saw **BR 3** strike anyone and never heard anything about him interfering with anyone.
- (iv) [REDACTED] – He was the handyman. He was good to the boys and got us music singles and showed us films. He punished me once, for stealing strawberries but I never heard anything untoward about him.
- (v) [REDACTED] – He was known as [REDACTED]. He was very unpleasant. He was the [REDACTED] teacher and used to become annoyed if you couldn’t get the [REDACTED] right – he’d crack you across the knuckles with a drum stick. If you lost or damaged your Rosary Beads then he would give you a slap. He was the only one who would do this.
- (vi) **BR 13** – we knew him as [REDACTED]. He was an angel – a real elderly gent. He looked after the Strawberries and Vegetables. My abiding memory of him is that he always had a pocketful of sweets and would dish them out to the boys. That may sound bad but both then and now I’m convinced it was absolutely genuine. I never heard a harsh word about him.
- (vii) **BR 12** – He ran the [REDACTED]. He was an old [REDACTED]. I never heard anything untoward about him. I do recall working in the house, cleaning duties and **BR 12** being in my presence but I never felt threatened by him.

8. I never recall a **BR 1** visiting the home.

9. I don't recall ever being visited by a Social Worker – either in Nazareth or Rubane.
10. My family never visited me in Rubane. It was probably just too far for them to go. I didn't go home for weekends or holidays.
11. During Easter, Summer and Christmas vacations I used to go to a family called [REDACTED] in [REDACTED]. I never went with the rest of the boys to Glenariffe but do recall a visit or two to Ballyhornan.
12. To be fair, despite my admiration for the De La Salle Brothers, I left Rubane with a very limited education. The [REDACTED] recognised this, and put me in touch with a man called [REDACTED] who ran the [REDACTED]. I went there for a summer vacation just after I left Rubane and [REDACTED] then arranged for me to have a year in [REDACTED] in [REDACTED]. I went on to spend most of my working career in the [REDACTED] business.
13. Throughout my time in Rubane I never heard any talk of Brothers sexually interfering with boys. Indeed it was not until the mid 1990s, when the RUC came to my door, that I first became aware that any allegations had been made. The police asked me whether I had been sexually abused. I told them I hadn't but did tell them about [REDACTED] at Nazareth.
14. I stayed in touch with a lot of boys after I returned from [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
none of them ever mentioned anything about Brothers abusing boys.
15. Boys were certainly interfering with each other sexually. It was part of life in Rubane but I didn't think too much about it at the time. You knew which boys to avoid and tried not to cross them. I suppose that aspect was difficult. Some of the boys, the boys who had not gone through the orphanages were fairly tough, rough types. Bullying was an issue:- as a young boy you got bullied, as an older boy you bullied. We just came through the system.
16. I have not applied to the Acknowledgment Forum. I don't consider myself to be either a victim or a survivor. To be honest when I heard about the Inquiry my first feelings were one of embarrassment. I know what went on in the Home amongst the boys. I have never told my wife or my children about that aspect of my time in care and I immediately thought that it will come out that the boys were interfering with each other.
17. I have read newspaper reports about various Brothers abusing boys in the home. I understand that some ex-residents are making allegations against the Brothers. I find this difficult to believe. Nothing ever happened to me and I never heard of it happening to anyone else.
18. Notwithstanding the embarrassment I feel about the issue I am prepared and willing to talk to the Inquiry team and if necessary give evidence at the Inquiry.



19. I enjoyed my time in Rubane and I'm indebted to the De La Salle Brothers for the care they provided to me at a time when my family were, through tragic circumstances, unable too.

Signed:

**DL 244**

Dated:

31/1/14

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21. You got pocket money at weekends depending on whether or not you had behaved during the week. It was a type of reward system where other Brothers gave marks out of ten for how well you had behaved and your pocket money was determined by this score.
22. **BR 77** taught [REDACTED] at Rubane House. He was a masochist and enjoyed hitting boys in the school. He used to terrify us. He would terrify us by saying he was going to give us [REDACTED] to learn and he would walk around the classroom with a cane and a belt in his hand swinging it and smiling and he would say "if you don't know it tomorrow, you're in for it". Most of the boys in the class were so paralysed with fear that you simply could not learn in that environment and he would take great pleasure in seeing how terrified we were. Even if you had managed to learn something you would be so nervous the next day that you could not recall it. He enjoyed beating the boys, you could see he got a real buzz out of it. I was beaten by **BR 77** quite often.
23. **BR 6** taught [REDACTED] and although he could be nice to you at times you did not want to get on the wrong side of him as he had a very bad temper and would really tear into you. He was [REDACTED] in stature but once he started hitting you he would lose his temper and never stopped. I was beaten by **BR 6** a couple of times.
24. **BR 18** was in charge of [REDACTED]. He was an ex-[REDACTED] and he was feared most out of all the brothers. You never spoke back to him and you never crossed him as he was vicious and would have beat the living daylights out of you. I recall on the last day of the summer term one year a boy called [REDACTED] annoyed him and he dragged him out in front of all the other boys and gave him a severe beating. He had black eyes and an injured arm and some of the boys had to intervene and pull **BR 18** off this boy. They then had to carry him out of the canteen. There was a worker who I think was called **DL 11** and lived in Chalet [REDACTED] and he lost his temper when he heard what had happened and he went to the staff room and threatened to kill



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Rubane House, Kircubbin (8th October 1964 – 19 June 1970)

4. At the time Rubane House usually did not take boys under eleven but I was placed there when I was nine years old. I had one brother already in the home **HIA 262** who was two years older than me. I don't think I should have been placed in Rubane House at nine years old as it was not suitable for my age group.
5. You got up in the morning and before school you had to go to mass everyday then you did some cleaning in the rooms, stairs and hall and got your breakfast. The age range of the boys was eleven to sixteen so as I was a younger boy I had to be quick to get food or I didn't get any at all. You got semolina or tapioca with jam in it but you very rarely got fresh fruit.
6. Each dormitory had a Brothers room backing on to it. **BR 15** had a room next to my dormitory. We had sheets on our beds and grey woollen blankets sewn with red thread at the top.
7. The school was close to the main house. The teachers were De La Salle Brothers. You weren't taught well. You used to get slapped. The Brothers used to have a cane and if you were too noisy or didn't do what they told you to then they used to hit you with the cane. They used to bang the cane off the desk to split the ends of it and then put tape on it and cane you on your arm, your hands, your legs or on your backside. **BR 3** **BR 6** and **BR 2** would all hit you with a cane in this way. You would be beaten if they did not like you, if you did anything wrong or if you were noisy. The cane would leave lumps and welts on your legs and on occasion they would beat you until your bare legs would bleed.
8. **BR 6** was the [redacted] and he was in [redacted] **BR 3**, **BR 2** and **BR 6** were the three main [redacted] **DL 6** was the [redacted] teacher. He lived in a cottage at the [redacted] I think the Brothers owned [redacted] You did [redacted]