

**OBERSTOWN CHILDREN DETENTION CAMPUS
SUMMARY REPORT OF EXTERNAL REVIEWS**

JULY 2017



OBERSTOWN
CHILDREN
DETENTION **CAMPUS**

CARE EDUCATION HEALTH & WELLBEING

1. Introduction

Oberstown Children Detention Campus (Oberstown) provides safe and secure care and education to young people under 18 years referred by the courts. Established in 2016 as a new legal entity, the Campus has been undergoing significant change with the occupancy of a new purpose built facility, increased staffing and measures to enhance the quality of care within a single Campus.

In light of the challenges experienced in 2016, several external, expert reviews were undertaken to support the development of Oberstown Children Detention Campus into the future. The purpose of this document is to summarise these reviews, outline their recommendations and explain the process underway to ensure their implementation.

2. Background

As the national facility for the detention of young people, Oberstown has responsibility for young people referred by the courts either on remand or following sentence. Oberstown is based on a model of service delivery defined by Care, Education, Health and welfare, Offending Behaviour programme and Preparation for leaving (CEHOP). This approach is mandated by the Children Act, 2001, as amended, which sets out Oberstown's position in the Irish youth justice system. It is reinforced in Ireland's youth justice policy (the Youth Justice Action Plan), which commits to Oberstown as the single national facility for the detention of young people under 18 years.

3. A Single Campus

In April 2012, the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs announced an investment package of €56 million in capital funding to commence the refurbishment of the national children detention facility at Oberstown. Completed and occupied on a phased basis between March and December 2015, the building consists of six new residential units, as well as new education, recreation, visiting, medical and other ancillary facilities. Oberstown also continues to operate three residential units (the former Oberstown Girls School and Trinity House School) as part of the existing estate. At full capacity, it was envisaged that the Campus would accommodate 90 young people. The Campus is currently licensed to accommodate 48 boys and six girls.

In December 2013, a Campus manager was appointed to advance the integration of the three schools. The amalgamation of the three schools into a single entity took place following the enactment of the Children (Amendment) Act 2015 on June 1, 2016. At this point, a new Board of Management was appointed and the Campus Manager was appointed as the Oberstown Director.

A recruitment campaign has been underway since 2014 to recruit the necessary additional residential social care workers and night supervisor officers to operate the new facility. There are currently 272 staff employed at the Campus comprising social care workers, night supervising officers, nursing staff, general operatives, domestic and administrative staff. Appointments have been made to unit manager roles and the current Campus Senior Management Team began to take shape from August 2016.

In 2017, following review, the Board approved a further, modified management structure to support the Director, including a Chief Operations Officer, HR Manager and three Deputy Directors with responsibility for Care Services, Residential Services and Risk and Safety.

4. External Reviews

The necessary change process has created complex conditions at the Oberstown Campus.

Throughout Summer 2016, management worked with staff representatives, via their trade union (Impact), under the auspices of the Workplace Relations Commission to resolve their concerns. The Forde Framework Agreement (September 2016), set out the agreed actions intended to support the resolution of the dispute at Oberstown.

Under the Forde Framework, it was agreed that a number of reviews would be undertaken by external parties in order to provide independent expert support to key areas of Campus development. The areas identified for review were:

- (1) Security
- (2) Health and Safety and
- (3) Behaviour Management (including the physical management of young people).

It was agreed under this process that external experts in their related fields would be nominated and the terms of reference for each review agreed between management and staff representatives. The reports would be issued to management and staff as part of the agreement. This process began in September 2016 and was completed by July 2017 – a report on Campus Security was completed in December 2016, two reports on Health and Safety were completed by February 2017, and a review of Behaviour Management was completed by July 2017. The work involved in completing each review was complex, involving a review of policy, mapping of existing practice and consultation with all relevant stakeholders. In each case, the time-lines had to be adapted to accommodate this complexity and to ensure that each review fulfilled its terms of reference and met the needs of Oberstown.

By July 2017, all the reviews had been completed and shared with the relevant parties, including the Oberstown Board of Management, staff representatives and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. The implementation of the recommendations of the various reports did not await the finalisation of the process, however, and progress has been made over the past six months in working through the various actions identified.

In September 2016, the Board of Management decided, in consultation with the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, to commission a separate external review of Campus operations. Designed as a supportive, developmental process, this Operational Review was undertaken in October/November with a final report submitted in February 2017.

Although common themes emerged, all of the reviews covered different aspects of the Campus' operation. In line with their terms of reference, they have all supported development of the Campus in different ways. Dissemination of each has been determined on a case by case basis, in line with their suitability (taking several factors into account) for publication.

In particular, the reviews into Campus Security, Health and Safety and Behaviour Management were all undertaken under the WRC/Forde Framework and they were, on completion, shared with the other stakeholders in that process, namely staff representatives, the Board and the Irish Youth Justice Service.

As the Operational Review was commissioned by the Board legal responsibility for publication fell to it and so independent legal advice was sought to clarify any legal risks associated with publishing the body of the report. The advice received by the Board was that the risks were too great and so the Board decided, regrettably, that the body of the report could not be published. The recommendations of that report – together with a comprehensive response from the Board on each recommendation – was published in July 2017.

There follows a summary of each review, its intended focus and its recommendations.

4.1 Security Review (December 2016)

In September 2016, experts with knowledge of detention facilities were identified and the agreed terms of reference required the reviewers:

To undertake a review of the physical security measures in place at the Oberstown Children Detention Campus to address the purpose and function of the Campus, incorporating internal and perimeter security measures.

To undertake a review of the security procedures at the Oberstown Children Detention Campus to address the purpose and function of the Campus, incorporating internal and perimeter security measures.

To make any recommendations for the improvement of the security measures in place at the Oberstown Children Detention Campus.

The reviewers were also required to consider the skills and experience available on Campus to ensure the effective and full delivery of the required security measures.

In the period since the completion of the Security review, steps have been taken to analyse and prioritise its recommendations. This has been undertaken by the Director together with the Board of Management and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. Priority has been given to the implementation of the recommendations concerning the physical measures necessary to enhance security on the Campus. In addition, the Campus appointed a Deputy Director with responsibility for Safety and Risk, which includes security measures, and significant progress has been made to ensure the adherence to best practice in both the physical and the dynamic aspects of security. Standard operating procedures are under review and training is underway with staff on the implementation of these procedures.

4.2 Health and Safety Reviews (February 2017)

In September 2016, following agreement between staff representatives and management, the State Claims Agency (SCA) were invited to undertake the review of Health and Safety on campus. While the SCA was keen to assist, their resourcing meant that this would not have been possible until 2017. Following consultation with all parties, an external expert in the area was appointed to undertake the review. The terms of reference of this review sought to determine:

Injuries to staff and young people over a five year period, the relationship between these injuries and the management of young peoples' behaviour, considering the Behaviour Management Policy and practices used on Campus.

The environs at the Oberstown Children Detention Campus considering the new building developments, the historical buildings and suitability to meet the behaviour challenges of young people.

The review paid particular attention to the views of all Campus stakeholders, engaging extensively with staff in December 2016 and January 2017. This review was to be completed in January 2017 but in December 2016, in order to respond to the concerns of staff on the necessity for the provision of specified personal protective equipment (PPEs) to residential social care workers and night supervising officers, it was agreed that a discrete review on this issue would be undertaken, taking priority over the general Health and Safety Review.

Both reviews were finalised by February 2017 and while the general report set out a proposed framework for enhancing Health and Safety on Campus, the second report considered the specific necessity for the provision of additional PPEs to staff. In summary, the reviewer recommended that when a health and safety management system is implemented to control risk, the recommendations from the Behaviour Management Review and lessons from incident investigations are implemented, together with the Campus framework on care, then the requirement for additional PPE should not arise. The reviewer suggested that an approach of continuous improvement would result in the provision of a safe and caring environment for both the young people who live and the staff who work on the Campus.

4.3 Behaviour Management review (July 2017)

In December 2016, terms of reference were agreed between management and staff representatives with respect to the review of Behaviour Management on Campus. This identified the need:

To review the behaviour management policies, procedures and practices used on the Campus to determine if they are fit for purpose considering the young people on remanded and on committal orders at the campus. Specific areas of consideration included were 1. Early intervention approaches, 2. Routine practices, 3. Crisis responses, 4. Use of physical intervention, 5. Use of the environment, 6. Managing violent situations, and 7. Safety for young people and staff.

After a short delay due to the difficulty identifying suitable experts, two experts with expertise in child psychology and detention were appointed in late 2016 and between January and July 2017, they undertook site visits, reviewed documentation and they met with young people, staff and management. The review considered legal requirements, national policy and best practice in the environment of working with young offenders. They also considered the Campus Behaviour Management Programme to manage aggressive and violent incidents, while considering the implementation of individual crisis management plans for young people.

The reviewers made ten recommendations to improve the management of behaviour on Campus focusing, in general, on the need for more consistent implementation of policies and procedures. They highlighted the need to develop further communication and engagement with young people and to fully and consistently implement the care framework (CEHOP). More specifically, they supported the continued use of the MAPA programme (the Management of Actual or Potential Aggression) but highlighted that its full range of interventions should be used in order to prevent the escalation of behaviour. They indicated that in order to deal with rare and exceptional situations – where such preventive and de-escalation measures have been unsuccessful – consideration should be given to developing an external resource available to the Campus.

4.4 Operational Review (February 2017)

Separate to the above WRC supported process, the Oberstown Board of Management decided in consultation with the Minister to commission a further review of Campus operations from the perspective of best practice and international standards. In September 2016, two people with expertise in detention were identified and the terms of reference were agreed. Designed as a supportive and developmental process, to enable continuing reforms to take place in line with international best practice, the review was:

1. To evaluate practice and policy in line with international standards and best practice;
2. To identify obstacles or barriers to achieving greater implementation of international standards and best practice and,
3. To make recommendations to ensure greater and more successful implementation of these standards.

Preparatory and fieldwork visits took place in October/November 2016, involving engagement with staff and young people and meetings with various stakeholders and the final report was received in February 2017. The review documented the change process underway at Oberstown and in Irish youth justice more generally and noted the various challenges experienced in providing a high standard of care to young people on Campus. The recommendations address matters of national youth justice law and policy, Oberstown policy and procedures on care, education and health and identify the steps necessary to ensure that better care is provided to young people on Campus. Recommendations address the use of restrictive practices, such as the use of handcuffs, single separation and restraint, and highlight the need for inclusive, post-incident reviews.

The review also addresses some wider issues – including bail support and detention on remand – as well as the need to improve Campus communication, strengthen management capacity and ensure that all staff are trained, supervised and held to account in the provision of high quality care.

In July 2017, the Board published a response to the report’s recommendations. As the response explains, the implementation of these recommendations is well underway with continued programmes to build capacity and improve decision-making on Campus, measures to ensure the views of young people are taken into account and the adoption and communication of new policies and procedures relevant to the care of young people, with more rigorous systems in place to govern and record such decision-making.

5. Tracking Implementation of the Reviews

In light of the volume and complexity of recommendations emanating from all of the above reviews, in March 2017, the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs established a Review Implementation Group chaired by Professor Ursula Kilkelly, Chair of the Board of Management at Oberstown, with representation from Oberstown management, staff, trade union, the Irish Youth Justice Service and an external expert in child development. This Group is tasked with analysing all of the recommendations, tracking their implementation and producing a comprehensive implementation plan.

Since its establishment, the Review Implementation Group has considered the 120 discrete recommendations emerging from all of the reviews, classifying them according to priority, required resource and owner. Shaped by the five goals agreed by the Board of Management in the Action Plan adopted in January 2017 (i.e. care of young people, workforce, standards, communication and accountability) the recommendations were grouped under these headings. Further analysis of the recommendations produced 14 themes under these five goals and all 120 recommendations were categorised accordingly. A summary of this information is set out below.

The recommendations have now been issued to their respective owner (Director, Board or the Irish Youth Justice Service) and information is being returned to the Group on the implementation of each recommendation, including timelines, cost and any obstacles to their implementation. These returns will be considered by the Review Implementation Group in September 2017, following which a comprehensive action plan will be submitted to the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs. It is expected that the work of the Group will be completed, in line with the terms of reference, by the end of 2017.

6. Themes

As explained, the recommendations of the external reviews have now been analysed and categorised by the Review Implementation Group under five headings, with 14 themes. There follows a summary of the recommendations that fall under each heading and theme.

6.1 *Provide the best possible care for young people*

The first goal is to provide the best possible care for young people and four themes were identified under this heading, which captured 57 recommendations. Recommendations were identified to ensure a secure and safe environment through the provision of suitable physical infrastructure (e.g. fences, doors). This also included the implementation of effective operational procedures by all staff in the use of the facilities. The reports also identified the need for a process to collate, analyse, utilise and publish relevant information on care of young people in Oberstown, necessary to support the ongoing strategic and operational improvements for all stakeholders on Campus. A range of recommendations addressed the need to ensure the development and approval of care policies and procedures, with full implementation through training and monitoring of a best practice approach in all elements of the care of young people. Specific

recommendations related to the need to ensure consistent approaches in the areas of care, education, health, offending behaviour and preparing for leaving. Very specific recommendations addressed the need to ensure that all restrictive practices – separation, physical restraint, use of handcuffs - are in line with law and policy, appropriately used and their use monitored, reviewed and reported regularly.

6.2 Development of a motivated, cohesive and skilled workforce

The second goal addresses the workforce (namely the development of a motivated, cohesive and skilled workforce) and 38 recommendations were grouped under four themes under this heading. Recommendations highlighted the need to ensure that staff are well informed by and confident about Campus policies and procedures. Recommendations also highlighted the need to ensure a performance management system is in place at all levels across the organisation, in order to ensure that organisational objectives are met and effective line management in place. Recommendations highlighted the need to instil confidence amongst staff through effective leadership and consultation. A key priority identified was the provision of training, mentoring and supervision to staff in their roles in line with the ethos and purpose of the campus. Creating a safe working environment for staff was a strong overarching theme of the recommendations which addressed the need for health and safety systems to be put in place and managed and monitored effectively.

6.3 Standards

Under the third goal of Standards (which includes defining the high standards, the associated measures and evaluation), eight recommendations were made and captured under one main theme. The focus here was on developing and implementing robust policies and procedures that are informed by best practice, approved by the Board, implemented comprehensively by management and delivered by staff. These are to be reviewed and inspected to ensure that they are fit for purpose.

6.4 Communication

The fourth goal is to prioritise communication and six recommendations were categorised under this heading, captured under two themes. The first of these is to ensure that there are effective modern communication systems in place, that these are utilised by staff to collate information, determine trends and that support review and evaluation on Campus. The second theme is to ensure that effective communications are in place with internal and external stakeholders to support the operation of the Campus.

6.5 Accountability

The final goal is accountability, specifically the need to ensure that there are robust systems in place to ensure effective accountability at all levels of the organisation. Eleven recommendations were grouped under this goal, categorised under three themes. The recommendations highlighted the need to ensure engagement with young people and to seek their views in the development of their care. Recommendations also sought to ensure that effective governance is in place from the Board of Management and the Director and that there are systems in place to determine areas of responsibility and accountability. An additional focus of the recommendations was the need to develop and implement a Campus strategy to identify and implement key organisational objectives, government policy, and to ensure a safe working environment and best outcomes for young people.

7. Implementation of the Reviews: Summary Progress to date

Implementation of the recommendations identified by each review has been underway on Campus over the last six months led by Oberstown management, under the framework of the Action Plan adopted by the Board of Management in January 2017. There follows a snapshot of some of the progress achieved to date under these headings.

7.1 *Young People: Providing the Best Possible Care*

The progress to date includes the following:

- The Oberstown CEHOP framework (care, education, health, offending behaviour programs and preparation for leaving) has been finalised and is being rolled out for full implementation by the end of 2017. This is being supported by a new information management system to improve reporting and recording. This is the specific responsibility of the Deputy Director with responsibility for Care Services and the Head of Care.
- Oberstown has taken responsibility for all under 18 year olds remanded or sentenced to detention, ending Ireland's practice of detaining children in adult prison.
- In assuming responsibilities for young people under 18 years, we have finalised an agreement with the Prison service in working together to meet young people's needs if they are to continue their sentence after 18 in adult prison.
- Steps have been taken towards a co-ordinated and inclusive approach to the care of young people, integrating vital aspects of care – such as that provided by the Tusla ACTS team and HSE psychiatric services on Campus - into the process of planning and delivering care. This has led to a better understanding of young people's needs and will lead to more appropriate, planned interventions.
- Engagement with young people and with their families has improved through the co-ordination of placement planning by the Head of Care under the CEHOP framework.
- Following extensive preparation and planning, separate processes and accommodation is now provided to young people on remand in Oberstown. The needs of young people serving long term sentences are also being separately accommodated.
- Work has progressed on a Strategy for the Participation of Children in Decision-Making with the establishment of a young person's advisory group and the extension of the School Council to a Campus Council. Enhancements are being made to the complaints and advocacy systems.

7.2 *Workforce: Developing a Skilled and Cohesive Workforce*

Among the progress achieved in this area are the following:

- Following review, the Board of Management approved a new Campus management team to support the Director and reflect the new Campus structure of Residential Care, Young People's Care, Risk and Safety, HR and general operations.
- External supports have been identified and put in place to support Unit Managers with group supervision, role development and decision-making.
- A new Deputy Director with responsibility for Risk and Safety has been appointed and the operations of the central hub have been reviewed, with particular focus on health and safety. Dedicated staff on Campus are now tasked with developing an awareness of risk assessments, investigations and the individual's responsibility to keep everyone safe.
- There have been steps taken to improve both physical and dynamic security with the adoption of a Health and Safety roadmap.
- A facilities management company has been appointed to provide external support in this area, with the effect of enhancing response times and completing timely and effective remedial building works.

- A comprehensive HR department has been established providing a wide range of services and supports to all staff.
- Significant changes have taken place in the last 18 months to ensure that training now focuses on target areas of: health and safety, managing behaviour, child protection, CEHOP and recording.
- A Performance Management Development System (PMDS) is being rolled out at all levels of Oberstown management and this will be embedded further throughout 2017. It will be rolled out across the Campus to all staff in 2018.

7.3 Standards: Define the high standards, associated measures and evaluate

A range of steps have been taken in this area to include the following:

- A strategic review of all Campus policies has been undertaken with the decision taken to separate policies from procedures, to enable a clear communication of policy positions and operating protocols respectively. The Policy Operations Consultative Committee has been actively reviewing policies developed by the Oberstown research and policy officer and seven new or revised Campus have already been approved by the Board of Management. These are currently being disseminated to staff through briefing sessions and their implementation is supported through Unit and Senior Management oversight and review.
- Work has also been undertaken, under the auspices of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, to revise and update the standards against which the inspection of Oberstown is undertaken to take better account of international children's rights standards.
- A process of co-ordinated review (After Incident Review) is now in place to ensure all incidents are reviewed in a timely manner and follow up put in place.

7.4 Communication

Steps have been taken to improve internal and external communications as follows:

- Significant investment has been made in new IT systems for the Campus, including a HR support system and a case management system. The former is supporting the rostering and management of attendance cross Campus recording training, annual leave, sick leave, assault and injury leave and more.
- The Case Management System, launched in June 2017, incorporates the bed management system and the 'Journey through Care' for young people remanded to the Campus. Phase 2 of the Case Management System is under development and is expected to be complete by the end of 2017.
- Steps have been taken to improve communication with staff with the prioritisation of face-to-face communication.
- The website has been reviewed and populated with a variety of resources and news items. It will continue to be populated with all relevant information to Oberstown at www.oberstown.com
- Oberstown continues to improve and support public visibility and scrutiny of what we do, with external parties working on site and public events to showcase our work.
- Data on young people and our services is being collated, analysed and made public on our website.
- Oberstown has commissioned external support for its public relations functions.

7.5 Accountability

Steps are underway to enhance accountability at all levels of the organisation including in the Board, management and among staff including the following:

- The Board has established two sub-committees addressing matters of Finance, Risk and Audit, and Governance. It issues bulletins to staff following every meeting.
- A system of continuous review and performance is being embedded through the organisation at individual and collective levels, through enhanced line management approaches.
- A comprehensive system of quality improvement via regular audits, reviews and investigations with co-ordinated follow-up.
- A strategic plan for the next three years 2017-2020 is being developed in consultation with staff and other stakeholders. As well as setting out the vision and mission for Oberstown, it will detail the actions necessary to sustain the progress already achieved towards that vision and mission.

8. Next Steps

Following a period of intense scrutiny and review, work in Oberstown is now focusing on the implementation of the recommendations of all of these reviews. Designed to enhance the level of care provided to young people and to ensure that Oberstown is a safe place to work, the implementation process is complex, costly and resource-intensive. Aided by the work of the Review Implementation Group and supported by the strategic planning process, it is important this work is co-ordinated and systematic and brings to a close the expert input of all reviewers in order to ensure that the young people in Oberstown have the best possible care and education, as part of their experience of the wider youth justice system.