

Bulletin on the Board of Management Meeting held on 25th March 2021

The following is a summary of the Board of Management of Oberstown Children Detention Campus meeting that took place on Thursday 25th March 2021.

Ref	Subject	Summary
1.	Introduction	The Chair and the Board welcomed Damien Hernon to his first meeting as Director of Oberstown, following his appointment on 15th March 2021.
2.	Board Membership	<p>The Chair advised that Noreen Leahy is moving to a new role within the Department and will be resigning her position on the Board as a result. The Chair thanked Noreen for her support and commitment both while on the Board and in her role within the Department. The Board wished Noreen well in her new role.</p> <p>The Chair advised that the Minister had confirmed the appointment of Donal McCormack to the Board of Management as the Tusla Representative.</p>
3.	Board Committees	<p>Audit & Risk Committee</p> <p>The Audit & Risk Committee presented the Board with the draft Financial Statements and Statement of Internal Control for the year ended 31st December 2020. These were considered and then approved for submission to the C&AG.</p> <p>The Board welcomed the Audit and Risk Committee Assurance Report. This document aims to support the Board's process of reviewing the effectiveness of the systems of internal control established by management for finance, operations, compliance and risk management. The Board thanked the Committee and the Oberstown finance team for the significant work undertaken under significant time pressure.</p>
4.	COVID 19	<p>Aoife Rafferty, CPO, provided a detailed, chronological account of the COVID-19 outbreak on Campus from 1st March to the current situation. She outlined that 72 staff were impacted, with 53 Residential Social Care Workers unable to attend work due to either testing positive for COVID-19 or a requirement to restrict movements as a close contact. Two young people tested positive, with sixteen close contacts. This resulted in a very grave situation with serious concerns arising around keep the Campus safe and providing care to young people. The step-by-step process of managing the risks was set out for the Board and an update was provided on all staff and young people who tested positive.</p> <p>The Board thanked the Director, CPO and the Senior Management Team for their leadership during this crisis and unanimously expressed confidence in the Director and his team at this time. They paid tribute to all staff who continued to work during these most difficult circumstances and requested that this be acknowledged.</p>
5.	Restrictive Practices	There were 32 incidents of single separation involving 15 young people in February 2021. The Board welcomed the 27% reduction in single separations since January 2021. There was a reduction in the length of single separations for more than 3 hours, credited to both staff, Head of Residential and Deputy Director of Operations challenging and resolving single separations issues within a reasonable timeframe.

6.	Visit of Minister Roderic O’Gorman	<p>Roderic O’Gorman, Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, joined the meeting at 12.00 pm.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed the Minister to his first meeting of the Board, thanked him for taking the time to attend and introduced him to Board members.</p> <p>The Minister thanked everyone for their work and dedication. He outlined the ongoing efforts to address Oberstown’s access to the vaccination programme, noted with concern the impact of the COVID 19 outbreak on staff and young people and asked for an update on the current situation. There were contributions from all Board members and the Director in response.</p> <p>The Minister commended the work of the Board, the care provided to young people, and the important focus on putting a recovery plan in place. He saluted the huge efforts of staff during the COVID crisis.</p> <p>The Minister advised that he would stay in touch with the Chairperson about the matters discussed and expressed interest in engaging with the Board on broader issues on a future occasion.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Minister for attending.</p>
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Professor Ursula Kilkelly
Chairperson