

Youth Justice News



Issue 4 November 2004

Special Schools (Children Detention Centres)

WELCOME TO THE FOURTH ISSUE OF YOUTH JUSTICE NEWS. THIS ISSUE IS DEVOTED TO SPECIAL SCHOOLS. OFFICERS WORKING WITH UNDER 18S REGULARLY HAVE CONTACT WITH THESE CENTRES. THE AIM OF THIS ISSUE IS TO GIVE YOU A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF EACH OF THESE CENTRES. WE HOPE YOU FIND IT HELPFUL.

Legislative Context

The legal basis for detaining a young person is currently provided in the Children Act 1908. However, this legislation will be replaced by the Children Act 2001, when the relevant sections are commenced. At present there are 5 State run special schools for young offenders, under the auspices of the Minister for Education & Science.

1. Finglas Child & Adolescent Centre

(a) **The National Assessment & Remand Unit** (Previously St. Michael's) is certified as a place of detention.

Offender Profile: Boys under 16 years are remanded by the Courts for assessment.

Assessment: During this time they attend school and undertake a comprehensive set of care, educational, medical and psychological assessments. Boys may also be sent on a remand only basis.

Duration of Stay: 3 weeks.

No of Places: 6

(b) **National Care & Education Unit** (previously St. Lawrence's) is certified as an industrial school and boys are committed by the Courts.

Offender Profile: Boys aged 12-15 years on admission.

Duration of Stay: The committal period is generally 1 year and boys attend school, which spans 2nd class primary to Junior Certificate standard. Boys remain there until their 16th birthday or the legal expiry of their detention order.

No of Places: 6

Contact Details:

Donal O'Sullivan, SPWO Ph: 01-817-3622

Or

Lisa Kearney, PWO Ph: 01-843-1404/3422

2. Oberstown Boys Centre

Oberstown Boys Centre is a certified reformatory school and a registered place of detention.

Offender Profile: On remand a boy can be up to 16 years and on committal have not yet reached his 16th birthday.

Assessment: Committal on a detention order is usually preceded by an assessment in the Finglas Child & Adolescent Centre, but this may not be absolutely necessary if there has been a recent relevant assessment done by an appropriate agency (e.g. health board).

Duration of Stay: A boy can be sentenced to a minimum of 2 years and a maximum of 4 years detention by the Circuit Court and 2 years by the District Court.

No of Places: 20 places available (8 remand places and 12 detention/committal places).

Contact Details:

Donal O'Sullivan, SPWO Ph: 01-817-3622

Or

Sarah Milne, PWO Ph: 01-843-8600

3. Oberstown Girls School

Oberstown Girls School is an open centre comprising a detention unit and a reformatory school catering for girls. The place of detention provides remand and remand for assessment.

Offender Profile: The reformatory school provides long term care, educational and containment for girls aged 12-16 years, prior to admission.

Assessment: A psychological, psychiatric, family, social & education assessment is normally carried out over a 3 week period.

Duration of Stay: A girl may be sentenced to a minimum of 2 years and a maximum of 4 years by the Circuit Court and for 2 years by the District Court.

No of Places: 8 places in the remand and assessment unit, and 7 places in the detention unit.

Contact Details:

Donal O'Sullivan, SPWO Ph: 01-817-3622

Or

Sarah Milne, PWO Ph: 01-843-8960

4. Trinity House School

Trinity House School is certified as a reformatory for boys.

Offender Profile: It is a secure unit for boys in the age range 12-16 years, at the more serious end of the scale. Secure remand beds and remand for assessment are provided here.

Duration of Stay: A boy may be sentenced to a minimum of 2 years and a maximum of 4 years by the Circuit Court and for 2 years by the District Court.

No of places: There is a total bed capacity of 27, including 5 remand places and 3 in the step-down unit.

Contact Details:

Donal O'Sullivan, SPWO Ph: 01-817-3622

Or

Lisa Kearney, PWO Ph: 01-843-7811

5. St. Joseph's

St. Joseph's is a certified industrial school and takes referrals from both the Courts and the health boards (mainly the latter).

Offender Profile: Boys in the 9-12½ years age range.

No of Places: 40

Contact Details:

John Murphy, SPWO Ph: 052-23880

Or

Liz Lynam, PWO Ph: 052-24633

Feedback

Youth Justice would welcome any feedback from Probation & Welfare Service staff. Please contact **Jennifer Geoghegan, EO, Youth Justice, Probation & Welfare Service, Smithfield Chambers, Smithfield, Dublin 7.**

Ph: (01) 817-6505

Email: jkgeoghegan@pws.gov.ie

Or yjustice@pws.gov.ie