Senate Community Affairs References Committee
Inquiry into Child Migration

Supplementary Responses from the Catholic Church’s Joint Liaison Group on Child Migration
(cf. Hansard CA 482 – 510)

1. Educational Issues

(a) On CA492, Br. Shanahan refers to a document that illustrates that it was well known to the government authorities that working on the construction of buildings at Bindoon was an integral part of the education and training of the boys there. The specific reference is to the fact that a Commonwealth Building Grant was adjusted to allow for the fact that trainee boys were working on the building instead of adult labourers and tradesmen. The relevant document enclosed is a Minute paper by Mr. G. Bartley, dated 3/9/1952 (Appendix A). Further to this, we enclose a copy of another note by Mr. Bartley concerning a visit to Bindoon in August 1952 (also in Appendix A). We also enclose copies of two newspaper items from 1950 which refer to the attempts being made to gain accreditation for boys leaving Bindoon in respect of their trades training and work experience while at the institution (Appendix B). Two State Education Inspector’s Reports on Bindoon, from 1951 and 1952 are also enclosed (Appendix C).

We also enclose a range of other documents relative to the education of boys at Bindoon, the most criticised of the Christian Brothers’ institutions in W.A. (Appendix D). The excerpts are from the schools reports compiled by the Brothers’ own internal inspectors, who were members of the Province Administration based in Melbourne. It was a normal practice for a member of the Province Administration to visit each of the schools and institutions each year, usually spending one to two weeks there, interviewing the Brothers, inspecting classes and reviewing the administration of the institution.

Our contention is that these documents do not square with the claim that formal education of boys at Bindoon (and in other institutions) was neglected and was not a matter of concern to the Brothers or other relevant authorities such as the Education Department or Child Welfare Department.

(b) On CA506, Senator Crowley asks whether we “could provide any further evidence about the educational status for the people teaching and assessing within the Orders”. It has not been possible to make such a check across all of the Orders and institutions involved in caring for child migrants in Australia, but Br. Shanahan has done an archival check for the Brothers who taught classes at the four Christian Brothers’ institutions in W.A. Of the 44 Brothers who taught classes in the four institutions in W.A. between 1947 and the mid-1960’s, all except four certainly went through the usual teaching training given to the
Brothers at that time. All taught in mainstream schools either before or after being stationed in childcare institutions. The other four appear to have left the Brothers in their 20's, and we can only presume that they did their normal teacher training before being posted to the institutions, but we have no way of confirming this from the records available to us. In other words, the overwhelming majority of the Brothers teaching classes in the institutions had the same sort of preparation for teaching as Brothers in other mainstream day schools and boarding schools.

In regard to the educational assessment of children, we have sighted a detailed report from December 1949 on the educational attainment of 238 migrant children in Catholic institutions in W.A. It was prepared by Mr. J. McCall, the Superintendent of the Guidance Branch of the Education Department in W.A. It covers reading, "fundamental Arithmetic" and "General Intelligence". It was sent to the Director of Education, who in turn passed it to the Minister for Education and the Under Secretary of Lands & Immigration, the legal guardian of all migrant children.

Although this document is copyright, we have been given verbal permission by the W.A. State Records office to enclose a copy (Appendix E) with this supplementary response. However, because this document is subject to copyright restrictions, it is only for the use of the Senate Committee and must not be made available to any other parties.

We quote from the report's summary:

"In general intelligence the group contains an unduly high proportion of feeble minded, borderline and dull children and a correspondingly low proportion of average and above average children.

In basic educational attainment, the children are generally retarded – many by three and four years ...... ".

Inter alia, the report recommended:

- "that the selection of child migrants in their home country be such as to ensure that groups contain at least the usual distribution of intelligence"

- "that the Education Department offer to lend a skilled remedial teacher to each institution for a period of six months to assist and train the staff in remedial teaching technique" (we do not know if this was implemented).

We are also enclosing (Appendix E) correspondence from 1950 between the Department of Immigration, The Commonwealth Office of Education and the W.A. Education Department regarding the selection procedures in Britain, and the educational standards of children being migrated.

In other words, the educational outcomes for the child migrants were not only a function of the standard of schooling provided by individual institutions. The educational status of many children on arrival in Australia was already problematic, and institutions often didn’t have the specialist personnel to address the acute educational needs of many of the children, needs that had not been anticipated before the children’s arrival.
(c) It is worth making a comment on some of the terminology used in the school reports. Terms such as "retarded" are used and are subject to misunderstanding by former child migrants who later had access to their files. Although such terms sound harsh and insensitive to our ears, they usually seem to be used in a descriptive sense in regard to the educational status of the children.

2. Inspections of the Institutions

On CA499-500 a question was raised about inspection reports relating to the institutions and what aspects of institutional life the authorities were attending to and aware of. We enclose a few limited samples out of the mass of documentation that is available in regard to the Western Australian institutions. One is a Child Welfare Department Report dating from November 1947, shortly after the arrival of the first group of post-War child migrants (Appendix F). There is also a report from Dr. Stang after a medical inspection of Bindoon in 1953, and a general report on the Bindoon school, also from 1953 (Appendix G). We also enclose some excerpts from State and Commonwealth inspections of Tardun, Bindoon and Clontarf, relating to the children's clothing and other matters (Appendix H). Several things can be noted even from these brief examples:

- It wasn't just buildings and physical facilities that were being inspected. Note was taken of the children's clothing, cleanliness, demeanor and health.
- There is a reference to an unannounced visit by one inspector (see the pages relating to clothing, under Clontarf, June 1950). In other words, not all visits were announced beforehand, so that institutions were not always able to make special preparations for an inspection.


The enquiries made by us with Br. Coldrey's Province Leader in Melbourne indicate that Br. Coldrey himself kept the Vatican representative in Australia, the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Canalini, regularly informed about his work, including the work he posted on the Internet. He also circulates his material to a number of bishops and other parties. How the work was drawn to the attention of Vatican officials is unknown by us. It appears that an official from one of the Vatican departments contacted Br. Edmund Garvey, the current Congregational Leader of the Christian Brothers in Rome, to clarify Br. Coldrey's authority to publish the work. It was made clear that it was a private publication, not a Congregational one. Br. Garvey spoke to Br. Michael Godfrey, who is the Province Leader of St. Patrick's Province, of which Br. Coldrey is a member. The Vatican's request that Br. Coldrey withdraw the work was communicated to him by both Br. Garvey and Br. Godfrey. We are not aware of what reasons, if any, were given for this action.

4. Note re "Br. Garvey"

On CA486 in the transcript, Senator Murray is recorded as having asked Br. Shanahan about "Br. Garvey". Br. Shanahan replied, quite correctly, that a Br. Garvey had been the Provincial Superior of the Christian Brothers in the southern States of Australia during the 1950's and 1960's. Since the Hearing, it has occurred
to Br. Shanahan that the Br. Garvey being enquired after may have been Br. Edmund Garvey, an Irishman who is the current leader of the Christian Brothers Congregation, and who is based in Rome. 'We apologise for any confusion that may have been created by Br. Shanahan's response. At this point we are still unsure which Br. Garvey was being asked about.

5. **Institutional Life in the 1940's, 1950's and 1960's.**

On CA509 Br. Shanahan referred to the Report of the Forde Inquiry in Queensland. We take the liberty of offering some excerpts from the Forde Report that we believe are relevant to understanding child migration issues in the historical context of institutional care at that time *(Appendix I).*

Attachments

23 April 2001
JOINT LIAISON GROUP ON CHILD MIGRATION
SUPPLEMENTARY RESPONSES
APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

Excerpts from Identification Project Report V 0001 00 557 held at the National Agency of Quebec, North office

"Children - and their main destinations - St. Joseph Catholic Home - government social assistance"
The pages attached to this sheet have been copied from:

Series: K 403/3/6
Item: W 59/87
Title: Children - child - youth organisations - Roman Catholic Home - government financial assistance

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East Victoria Park
The Commonwealth Migration Officer.

The Under Secretary for Lands and Immigration requests that this Department arrange the services of a representative of the Commonwealth Department of Works to travel with a State Works Officer to Bindoon.

2. The object of this visit is to assess the work carried out on the central building since the last valuation made by Messrs. Ballinger (Commonwealth) and Green (State).

3. As a result of their valuation the Governments agreed to make a joint loan of £30,944 towards the amount of £46,416 undertaken to be expended by the Association.

4. Canberra agreed on the 15th October, 1951, after having been advised of the method of construction, the type of labour being used and the manner in which materials were being obtained.

5. However, because of the fact that trainee boys were being employed it was agreed that the Governments would each contribute 1/3rd of 50% of the labour costs. The loan was made subject to a final certificate that work to the value of £61,890 had been completed satisfactorily (excluding Trades Building). The loan provides for the completion of the Laundry and Bakery, Attendants' Living Quarters, Dormitories and Bathroom Block.

6. It is the dormitories and bathroom block that is at present under construction.

7. As you know, it was necessary to adopt this method of valuation as Brother Keaney was unable to produce satisfactory records relating to the buildings upon which a value could be assessed.

8. Plans and specifications that were available were most unsatisfactory and the opinion was expressed by Mr. H.E. Smith and agreed by this Department, that it would take months to prepare suitable plans and specifications for the incomplete portion of the buildings. Then again it was highly probable that a contractor would not be found to complete the project.

9. A progress payment against the Governmental grant cannot be made until a recommendation and certificate are forwarded to the Secretary by the State Authorities. This certificate must indicate that work to a certain value has been completed.
10. It is usual for an application for a progress payment to be supported by vouchers.

11. In view of the fact that Bindoon has been constructed under most unusual circumstances (also known to the Secretary) and that until the present time proper books of account have not been maintained, I would like to submit that suitable Officers of the Commonwealth and State Works Departments visit Bindoon to make an assessment of the progress made to date on the Dormitories and Bathroom Block.

12. I would recommend that the Director, Catholic Episcopal Migration and Welfare Assoc., be asked to ensure that a competent person be made responsible for the accounts of the Bindoon Building project receiving Commonwealth and State aid.

13. This home operates completely for the benefit of British migrant children and many of the buildings have been erected without Commonwealth or State aid.

[Signature]
G. Bartley
C.I.O. British & Child Migration Section
3/9/1952

Rt. Rev.
Agent assistance from Dept. of Works

Dr. Lucas, Dr. of Works

Dr. Lucas rang Dr. H. B. Shilling, arrangements for one of his officers to do the inspection should be made with Dr. H. B. Shilling, Senior Architect, Dept. of Works.

Relayed to the Office for Lucas & Shilling (1st October 1952) and advise him that it will be necessary for the State Officer who is to make the inspection to contact the State Architect, 27th September 1952.

Dr. H. B. Smith added the following above: this was the
The Commonwealth Migration Officer.

L. Alexander (State) and M.Y. Brown (Commonwealth) on an inspection of St. Joseph's Farm School, Bindoon.

2. This inspection was necessary as neither Commonwealth nor State Emigration Officers had visited this home since the visit of Dr. John Moss, C.B.E., early in December 1951. It was also desirable that the Departments should observe:

(a) Building progress and likely completion date.

(b) View the last Maltese child migrant on "Asturias" 22nd December, 1952, and ascertain how they were settling in.

(c) Check the children as regards students, trainee workers etc.

(d) Estimate total capacity.

(e) Discuss any problems that Brother Keeney might raise.

3. As we approached Bindoon it was immediately apparent that, since my last visit to Bindoon with Dr. John Moss, great progress had been made on the new central building.

4. This building when completed will contain four dormitories of 30 children, adequate ablutions, lavatories and a staff section.

5. The building has advanced to the stage that the roof has now been pitched above the staff section.

6. Building construction is being carried out by Brothers Keeney, O'Neill, Tursell, Degry, Roberts and Dow, with the assistance of three Italian tradesmen and approximately twenty of the trainee boys. Construction is under the architectural supervision of Father Urbano of New Norcia, a Qualified Architect. Brother O'Neill was a Master Builder.

7. Brother Keeney is of the opinion that this building will be completed by the New Year.

8. Looking at the structure it appears that there is still much to be done, and I feel that Brother Keeney's estimate is rather optimistic. However, Brother Keeney's experience is infinitely greater than mine.
9. Trained boys engaged on the building and
the type of work in which employed are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Trade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T. Allen</td>
<td>Carpentry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. J. Butler</td>
<td>Plastering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Cullen</td>
<td>Modelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. De Bono</td>
<td>Bricklaying</td>
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<tr>
<td>G. De Bono</td>
<td>Bricklaying</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. Enrikes</td>
<td>Bricklaying</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Harper</td>
<td>Bricklaying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. J. Heressey</td>
<td>Modelling</td>
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<tr>
<td>T. Humphreys</td>
<td>Plastering</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. J. Hamb</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
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<tr>
<td>F. Keating</td>
<td>Bricklaying</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. King</td>
<td>Plastering</td>
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<tr>
<td>N. Madigan</td>
<td>Modelling</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. Magro</td>
<td>Plastering</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. O. Miller</td>
<td>Bricklaying</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Moorey</td>
<td>Bricklaying</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. S. McLliciton</td>
<td>Plastering</td>
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<tr>
<td>G. McWilliams</td>
<td>Bricklaying</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. O'Hara</td>
<td>Plastering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. O'Hara</td>
<td>Plastering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Scheehri</td>
<td>Modelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Yeates</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Many of these boys are approaching the age
when they must leave Hindon and it is urgent necessity
that the Review Committee visit Hindon to discuss with these
their future.

11. I understand that this Committee should have
visited Hindon during June.

12. With the transfer of the Minister's delegation
under discussion for some time, some delay may have been caused
because of this.

13. Other lads working at the School are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Trade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Hargadon</td>
<td>Farming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Legan</td>
<td>DAIRYING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. McFadon</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Searle</td>
<td>Truck Driver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. Smith</td>
<td>Fitter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. Smith</td>
<td>Fencing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Taylor</td>
<td>Truck Driver</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. An olive grove, comprising several thousand
trees, has been planted. Many of the trees are now three
years old.

15. I don't know if Mr. Alexander discussed the
matter of pay for the lads, both on the building and the
farm work.

16. Hindon is considered at present to be able
to accommodate 150 boys. With a further three dormitories of
30 available upon the completion of the present program,
(one dormitory making the 4th is already occupied) the home
accommodation will be increased to 250 lads.

17. The Kitchen which is large and roomy, appears
to be capable and could be used separately; also
suitable room is available within the main sanitary block
for dining facilities for 250 boys.

18. The technical block installations have not yet
been completed. When operating, it will address itself,

Carpentry, Fitting and Turning, Wood Classing, Science and Drawing.

19. Brother Kenney has many "irons in the fire" and it will be some time before his many projects are completed. However, every move forward is one which will in the future, be of great benefit to the boys passing through Bindoon.

20. Unfortunately, it was not possible, within the short time at our disposal, to meet the last contingent of Maltese lads. We did discuss them with Brother Kenney and other Brothers, and we were assured that they were all doing well. It will be noted that several of the older Maltese lads are engaged on the building project.

21. Bindoon, has to date, received one progress payment of approximately £8,000. This payment was made against work completed and assessed by Commonwealth and State Architects.

22. I understand that the matter is in hand for a further application to the State Authorities for a progress payment on work completed.

23. As you know, Brother Kenney's methods are to say the least unorthodox, and I feel that great difficulty will be experienced by him to produce receipts for much of the material used.

24. However, C. M. & A. L. through whose all applications of this nature must be made, are going to prepare the necessary submission (advice from Sir Frederick 21st April).

25. As Father Slattery is due in Bindoon for the purpose of stimulating child migration and accelerating the selection of these children, I would suggest that a further inspection be made in December or early in the New Year for the purpose of observing building progress.

26. During our tour of the home we spoke to many of the boys. They all appeared friendly, well mannered, fit and entirely happy.

(Rev. Bartley)
APPENDIX B

Photocopies of newspaper articles:


Bindoon School Wants Boys' Work Recognised

School authorities of St. Joseph's Farm School, Bindoon, this week suggested to union representatives that work done by the boys should be recognised as part of a trade apprenticeship term.

The suggestion was made to union leaders and employees' representative T. G. Davies of the State Arbitration Court when they visited the farm this week.

Union representatives said today that there were difficulties in the way of the adoption but they intended to consider the proposals.

General president H. Hyde of the WA Amalgamated Society of Railway Employees said he considered the school an excellent recruitment ground for apprentices.

Of about 100 boys at the school some were engaged in agriculture but a smaller number was of an age for absorption into industry.
LABOUR MAN'S VIEWS ON APPRENTICE SHORTAGE

Boys who were receiving training at the trade school at Randoom and other similar institutions should be given an opportunity of entering the skilled trades to help overcome the shortage of apprentices in Australia, the State secretary of the Australian Labour Party (Mr. F. E. Chamberlain) said yesterday.

He was commenting on an announcement by the Minister for Labour (Mr. Holt) that young British migrants who had completed part of their apprenticeships in the United Kingdom might be used by the Commonwealth Government to overcome the apprentice shortage caused by the Australian industrial expansion.

Mr. Chamberlain said that boys in the institutions represented a pool of local labour that the Government might be overlooking. If it was the intention of the Government to finance an overseas apprenticeship scheme, he wanted a similar scheme to begin first in Australia.

While attending a meeting of the interstate executive of the Australian Council of Trade Unions in Melbourne next week, he intended to make full particulars about the Government's proposal.

RATES OF PAY.

Mr. Chamberlain said that although the expansion of industry was undoubtedly a contributing factor in creating the skilled apprentice positions in the skilled trades, it was idle for the Minister to assert that apprenticeship rates were not less attractive now than before the war. The remuneration paid to apprentices was so low that the boy up to his third year was a charge upon his parents.

A standard clause governing the payment of wages to apprentices, Mr. Chamberlain said, provided for 20 per cent of the basic wage in the first six months, 25 per cent in the second six months, 33 per cent in the second year, and 55 per cent in the third year.

A boy between the ages of 16 and 17 years, assuming he commenced an apprenticeship at the age of 15 years, would receive £2/10/ a week. Up to his 18th birthday he would be paid £3/11/1. It was quite an easy matter for a youth of 18 years to obtain unskilled employment at the basic wage rate of £2/10/ a week.

Mr. Chamberlain said that if young British migrants were to be brought to Australia to complete their apprenticeships they would be paid at the current award rates. Unless these rates were supplemented by the Government subsidy or some other means, migrant apprentices would not be able to pay for board and lodging at the rates that would be required by some persons, and in addition clothe themselves and meet other incidental expenses.
APPENDIX C

Extracts from Bindoon Annals, held at Christian Brothers Holy Spirit Province Archives, Westcourt

State Education Inspector's Reports for 1950 and 1951
EXTERNAL INSPECTIONS OF BINDOON

BINDOON ANNUAL EXTRACTS

The following extracts are quotes from the Annual entries.

p.56 - 1948
The State Examiner put the lads through a test in December - the test showed that the majority are below the average of Australian boys of the same ages both in attainment and ability. Consequently much carefully planned remedial teaching is needed; in Arithmetic especially revision and consolidation of fundamental processes must be emphasised before progress can be achieved. The general deportment of the boys was most commendable. They are keen and anxious to cooperate, their courtesy and willingness was most marked.
C. Radburn 13-12-48

p.60 - 1949
Mr H Jeanes (State Inspector) examined the classes in July. Grade V 6, IVA 9, IVB 12, III 5. Total 32. Geography. A Group showed a good knowledge of the work covered to date. Civics. Pupils showed interest in the form of Australian Government & its leaders. Literature. Several poems have been learned. "I was much impressed by the happiness of the children, their willingness, courteousness and obvious good health. There is a complete absence of restraint. Composition confined largely to letter writing and I concur in this procedure." Arithmetic. In Group A work to level of Class IV with some added mensuration is being attempted and progress is noted.

p.75-8 - 1950
Examiners School Report

Inspection 1 ½ days. 3rd 4th July. H Jeanes Inspector. Boys on roll 64. Br Wexted 24 Br McDonnell with M Melia as Assistant remainder. Timetables approved. Average age high (unavoidable). Rolls in order. Tidiness of room very good. Accommodation adequate - a very fine school awaiting completion. Numbers in school have increased principally through the admission of 19 Maltese lads, most of whom show intelligence superior to that of the average migrant from the British Isles now in residence. Previous inspections have directed attention to the unusual number of below average pupils. Suggestions have been made for remedial treatment of them. This year's examination shows that whereas average pupils have made reasonable progress, instruction breaks down in the handling of the special problem of retardation. The class in Rev Br McDonnell's care bristles with problems, abilities on the skills range from poor in Class I performance to that of good.

Class VI The older Maltese boys. There is also the language difficulty with the younger Maltese. Orthodox methods are useless here and the staffing authority of the School should take the matter in hand. It should be possible to reorganise on a more efficient basis with greater emphasis being
placed on the needs of the problem boys – I understand that it may be possible to procure
the services of a lady teacher formerly in the Education Dept who has had experience in low
primary class. If this could be arranged it would be of material benefit on the scholastic side
and would also prove a valuable womenly contact which would be good for these children.

During my visit I observed the special night classes for boys of 14 plus who are engaged in
outside duties during the day. The background of the pupils are decidedly limited so that
marked progress is not possible. The carft work of these boys as seen in the building and on
the farms is most commendable. A most pleasing feature noted during the visit was the
obvious broadening of outlook and the greater degree of self reliance among the migrant
lads. There is very little reticence in their conversation and they are very happy in their
surroundings. The recognition of their craft training is part of apprenticeship and the
eagerness with which various firms have sought to employ the lads indicate a valuable
contribution to the schools.

Rev Br McDonnell's class
This is a difficult class, it contains very many backward pupils in classes nominally from III
to IV but several have not the reading ability of 6-7 years. Also it includes 19 recently
admitted Maltese lads. The eldest of these are very bright but among the younger boys
there is a language problem – a third teacher appears necessary to take over the problem
types fitting the curriculum to its abilities.

Reading. Class VI Maltese showed good fluency. Others do not show much ability. Several
are attempting to read books beyond their capabilities.

Writing. A great variety of styles. The work of the Maltese is particularly well done. It is
advisable that the younger children should have definite writing lessons in special
transcription books.

Spelling. Follows largely the pattern of reading ability. There is very little appreciation of
phonics.

Arithmetic. Class VI (Maltese) has a very good understanding of its work but most of
others show lack of background. I noted several referring to table books. Class III very
weak in its work.

English. Formal work should be reduced to a minimum except for the very bright section.
Sentence structure needs emphasis. Specialise on simple letter writing.

Geography. The Class has a very limited background. Try to develop a better
understanding of land and water masses – zones etc.

History. The Maltese present a problem here but of the others only a section showed very
fair understanding.

Drawing. More should be done.

Singing. The voices are tuneful.

General. Where the intelligence is normal the pupils have progressed by the methods in use
but the greater number are problem cases needing a totally different technique. The
assistance which can be given by the Monitor now employed is almost negligible. Would it
be possible to have a teaching sister?

H Jeanes 4.7.50

Br Wexted
Number on roll 24. Examined 24

Reading. A good variety of material available. Most making good use of it.

English. Work books show good average

Composition. Shows a wide range of ability. Some are good.
Spelling. This is not a strong subject and modified test. 9 measured good or v. good. 4 Fair. 10 v. weak.
Writing. No set books used – many styles – routine work carefully done.
Mental. With exception a few the class has a very fair grasp of tables etc.
Arithmetic. V. weak indeed. Types are taught but pupils have very little real understanding of what it is about.
Geography. Response on Australia was brisk.
History. A third showed good interest
Speech. A wide variety of dialect, but the boys have developed in power of oral expression since last year. They are building up a good fund of general knowledge. The literature course includes the study of two novels which lads were able to discuss. Several Australian poems have been studied and memory work is known.
Drawing. Rather formal – should contain creative exercises, work is careful.
General. I note a broadening outlook with these boys and several have made good progress. The present methods in use do not prove successful with the mentally backward. There is attempt to build on a foundation that does not exist. The Curriculum should be modified to requirements.

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p. 99 - 1951

Annual State Inspection of Classes
July 16-17th 1951. H. Jeanes Inspector
Br Wexted Class VI 5 Class V – 15 average age 14.5
Br Ackary Class III 17 aged 12.9
21 aged 10.8
Br Ryan Class II 7 aged 10.1
Total attendance 65

[See Bindoon School Administration Extracts, p. 5 of this document, for balance of report]

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p. 244 - 1952

School Report 1952 H Jeanes 26.6.52

It is most pleasing to report this year that in the Senior room where the average age is 13.2 years and the attainments at Class IV-V level, the brothers in charge have done very well. They have organised on ability lines and the lads have responded by much improved standards of performance and neatness. The interest is keen.

The Junior Room does not follow the same pattern. Here the age is 11 years whilst the attainment ranges in subjects from infants to Class III levels without that organization necessary to effect good improvement. The course is narrow and uninteresting being confined almost entirely to the 3R’s. To judge the school merely by its academic attainments would be wrong. In the last few years I have been privilege to observe the working and the domestic side and from contact with the pupils and instructions outside the school hours I have observed a most pleasing development among the lads in their physical well being in character and self reliance, that must acquit them well for future citizenship.
Boys Town is developing its surrounding land to provide for present and future needs on scientific lines. Lads above 15 years assist the supervising brothers in forestry, agriculture, animal husbandry, fruit growing etc. Each department by cooperation with the State Agricultural Department receive regular advisory visits by a specialist officer. The lads trained under these conditions are eagerly sought for employment in their various fields. An ambitious building scheme has been in progress for some years. Here the lads under capable craftsmen in the workshop and on the buildings have reached advanced levels in their work and have accepted responsibilities beyond the requirement of a first year’s apprentice. I understand however that under the present machinery these lads cannot be credited with the time they serve - which is unfortunate.

A fine trades school has been erected and partly equipped. Technical work is out of my province but it appears to me that with the facilities available some scheme could be evolved by the school authorities to use the situation to the advantage of the lads who without parents could not afford to accept apprenticeship at the existing wages. Such arrangements would of course have to fulfill the requirements of the State Act. It seems a pity that such potentialities are not fully exploited.

In conclusion I wish to congratulate Br Keaney and his staff on the happy co-operative spirit of the school. It reflects most creditably upon the training which is being given.

General

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BINDOON ADMINISTRATION FILE [Bindoon School – Box 1]

State Inspector’s Report on Bindoon 1951

Examined on 16th & 17th July 1951. No. examined 65


Class sheets indicate the condition of the various subject of instruction.

Previous reports have stressed the extraordinary retardation – a great deal of it natural – which exists among the British Migrants children enrolled since 1948. Reports again show that organization and teaching at the lower levels fails to make appreciable impression.

This is due chiefly to staffing difficulties and unfamiliarity of the teaching brothers with the special techniques needed to handle the situation. It have no doubt at all concerning the sincerity of their efforts. The present brother in charge of a most difficult backward group has for some years been engaged in technical teaching at a much higher level. His class really needs the attention of two teachers preferably of recent training to handle the situation.

This year conditions have been aggravated by the addition of a very immature class direct from Castledare. Another feature needing attention is the tendency to concentrate too closely on the 3Rs.

In the senior group under Br Wexted I note an encouraging forward movement. The courses are much wider and more easily adapted to individual abilities. He has worked very solidly to attain this improvement from such a weak background.

Boys’ Town is something more than a primary school and no report would be complete without referring to the valuable practical training that is given to the older boys especially those between 15 & 16 years of age. These lads are receiving instruction at the apprentice level in building trades and in farm activities. In the last 2 years many lads have been advantageously placed with master builders and other trades which have been possible solely because of their education at Bindoon. Several lads showing very low IQ’s under testing are doing well at their trades. Br Keaney is to be congratulated for his success in that direction. The lads are happy, enjoy a great deal of freedom and show a marked improvement in physical condition over the period of my association with the school. My chief concern is to direct the creation of an equally healthy organization which will permit a full development of the mental abilities in the lower school.

Br. Wexted’s Class

Previous inspections and psychologists’ reports have established that despite the high average ages, the classwork should not be assessed on normal standards. Test material used ranged in difficulty from the level of Class IV to Class VI.

Reading: A good course is being followed and the boys were able to discuss their books.

Library reading is extending.

Writing: Copy books are used and the standard in them is very fair to good.

Dictation: Although the test piece was not a difficult one, the results were gratifying as they indicated a pleasing advance on last year’s position. Ten made no errors – 5 were good – 3 Fair or V. Fair, 6 are weak but have improved.

Mental. On a test including types from IV to VI twelve measured good or very good, 7 fair or very fair.
Arithmetic. Tested in 2 divisions: Class V 3 good 4 Fair or V Fair 3 weak. Class VI Twelve good or v. good, 1 Fair (Yeates), should work with Grade V. The results represent good improvement.

Geography. Has been taken on good general lines and the boys are interested.

History. V Fair

Recitation. Several Australian selections known.

Drawing: Very good work, some of it outstanding.

Commercial subjects: The boys have covered a very useful course which should be valuable.

General: I am pleased with the work Br Wexted has done with his group. Ages are high and much of the work is modified but the present improvement has been the result of much hard work on material well below average. Special commendation is given for the progress of the Maltese lad Julian Farrugia. This forward movement of the boys should be encouraged towards further development.

Harold Jeanes Inspector 18/7/51

Br Ryan

This small class consists of 7 boys transferred direct from Castledare. At present it is without a teacher and with both other teachers fully occupied it is not receiving adequate attention. Average age 10.1 but in its skills its level would approximate that of a normal 7-8 year old.

Curriculum includes very little outside the 3 R's.

Reading: Phonic background is negligible.

Spelling: Little or no appreciation of phonics.

Number: On a purely number test at Class II standard 2 were good, others ranged from VF to V weak.

General: Given continuous teaching these children should progress from this level, but the course if very restricted and much more could be done outside the teaching of the mere skills.

Previous inspections and psychologists’ reports will indicate that very few of these lads should be assessed on normal age standards under the best of conditions. The position this year has been aggravated by staff difficulties. To do justice to the educational needs of these lads and to permit the required individual attention the classes should be kept as small as possible. Br Ackary who has been in charge for only a fortnight has 2 grades totalling 38 and is at present supervising a small group of 7 whose teacher is absent. Other features affecting all sound efficiency are

1) Br Ackary is a Technical instruction with decidedly limited experience in the work he is now handling

2) He has inherited a class restlessness from previous conditions against which he has to fight constantly

3) A group of boys from Castledare was transferred to Bindoon instead of to Clontarf at a much more immature educational level, even than that prevailing.

Average ages are Grade IV attempting skills of about Class III level. 12.9 Years: Group III at about Class I and II level. 10.8 years (Castledare group). The courses being followed are limited very largely to the teaching of the 3R's. This is of course insufficient and the narrowness probably contributes to the restlessness which has developed.

Arithmetic: Grade IV. This year the subject has been more correctly graded to the lads’ abilities and the tests show a very satisfactory grasp of processes to 9 or 10 years of age requirements. This is hopeful for continued progress.
Writing: No special transcription book is used which is unfortunate as it is difficult to judge development from the working lads.

Spelling: Again I note an improvement from a lower classification. Phonic understanding has never been developed with these children and this is indicated in a marked fashion in Reading.

Reading: The subject suffers from an inherited meagre background and inexperienced attempts to build on an unsatisfactory foundation. Phonic understanding is negligible as that almost every word has to be recognized from memory.

Geography & History: Very little attempted. The class has not been conditioned for the subject. The geography test is for NSW schools and does not treat this State on which there should be definite emphasis.

Drawing: Fair - good

Recitation: Ragged - very little attempted.

General: The urgent need for this group is a teacher experienced in the needs and techniques of the school at the level of its class. Courses are uninteresting and need much wider development.

As the work in the skills is largely remedial and therefore implies individual attention the grades should be separated if at all possible. 

H Jeanes Inspector 17-7-51
INTERNAL INSPECTIONS OF CHRISTIAN BROTHERS' INSTITUTIONS

SCHOOL REPORTS

1948
Clontarf
Some subjects identified as weak and requiring attention. Secondary education appears to have become established since or during the transmigration north during the war period, so less teaching applied to primary. Second Grade will require special coaching in essential subjects, and arithmetic and spelling are altogether too weak in most classes. Primary school not in a satisfactory condition at present. (Inspector – Br I S Tevlin)

Tardun
2 passed Junior in 1947. Classification of classes had been difficult because pupils only in Australia a few months. "They are, on the average, more retarded than unintelligent. The conditions under which they spent their infancy and what would have been their early school years, are necessarily abnormal owing to the war atmosphere and the lack of a fully nourishing diet in the years preceding migration." Spelling and arithmetic are weak. "The children are, on the average, quite teachable, though behind in grading." (Inspector – Br I S Tevlin)

1949
Castledare
Problem with Infants Class – might need a trained Post Kindergarten teacher. Type of teaching required out of range of the average Brothers. Classes I and II are good. Class III shows steep decline – teaching not of a close, consistent order. Written work slovenly. (Inspector Br S L Carroll)

Clontarf
Need emphasis on reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic – not strong, and some individual show serious weakness. General rate of intelligence seems the average quality. "Earnest, consistent efforts should be made to assist those retarded in their earlier stages to ensure that they have a sound foundation in the basic subjects." Need evening classes for out-of-school boys, some of whom are practically illiterate. (Inspector – Br S L Carroll)

Tardun
1 boy doing Intermediate in Geraldton, and 3 boys doing Leaving in Geraldton. 2 2nd Year passes at University. Arithmetic extremely weak in Grade 5 and 1st Year. Boys have dislike of arithmetic because have been set work beyond them. "These boys are thirteen and fourteen years of age and unless the retardation is remedied, they will finish school ignorant in an essential part of their education. On the whole they show average intelligence, their memories are good and their readiness to learn quite satisfactory." (Inspector – Br S L Carroll).

1950
Bindoon
Teaching power scarcely adequate considering the number of retarded boys. Maltese boys between 7 and 14 – good grasp of arithmetical processes, and making good progress in English. "They are mostly of a higher grade of intelligence than the British boys and should make rapid progress when they have overcome initial difficulties of language".
Boys classified as Grades 5 & 6 but well below this in attainments. “Migrants from the British Isles these boys are a war time product and most are two or three years retarded. There are a few who can scarcely read. Their IQs calculated by Department officers show them to be well below average intelligence and with their history they cannot be expected to reach average standards.” Physically progressing and show good intelligence on outside work. “Ordinary class work would seem not to be suited to some of them – certainly boys of 13+ who cannot read require special attention and it is important that they should get it that they may avoid the stigma of absolute illiteracy and the school avoid the inevitable reproach.” (Inspector - Br C C Marlow)

Castledare
Boys in Grade 1 really a preparatory class. Excellent work being done in Grade 2 – really a Grade 1 and 2 combined. Some boys promoted to Grade 3 who should not have been. (Inspector – Br C C Marlow)

Clontarf
On the whole boys bright and eager but “too many backward boys in most classes”. Third Grade – many retarded boys – 8 who are 12 and 8 who are 11. “Some special effort should be made to solve the problem of the retarded boy. Simple readers would help and some encouragement of silent reading of simple stories...” (Inspector – Br C C Marlow)

Tardun
Intelligence – Average – very few bright boys amongst English. Maltese somewhat higher grade with some very bright boys.
1 boy doing Leaving Certificate at Geraldton
“Some of the English boys are greatly retarded. Spelling, especially, is very weak…” (Inspector – Br C C Marlow)

1951

Bindoon
Br Albeus Ryan takes Grade 2 (7 boys) – “Excellent foundation work done here”
“A new approach should be made to the problem of teaching children who are in some cases retarded and in other cases suffer from language difficulty.”
Arithmetic should emphasis basic transactions connected with farm life. English – stress self-expression. Geography – centre on Bindoon and work out to rest of Australia.
“At present boys are struggling with advanced work and are getting nowhere...The boys are a fine lot, self-respecting, self-reliant, easily disciplined and appearing supremely content in their daily work.” (Inspector – Br S R Young)

Castledare
Boys in all classes superior to what is found in junior grades in other schools in the way of prepared knowledge. Conduct in test faultless. “The discipline commands respect without emphasising the fear element. They can be – especially the migrants – wayward and childishly stubborn, but generally they are most amenable to the directions...” (Inspector – Br S R Young)

Clontarf
“It so happened that State Inspector, Mr James, was making his annual visit during part of my stay...I agree with the suggestion raised by the Inspector that because of retardation special
syllabuses are necessary in Institutions, at all events for some of the Primary Classes.” (Inspector – Br S R Young)

Tardun
“The whole question of classification and the most suitable course for the boys is brimful of difficulties. I don’t think the present approach, which is really as old as Tardun itself, will ever meet with success.” Migrants will predominantly not be British. Need to forget syllabuses set up for normal Australian conditions. Getting nowhere in secondary courses followed. “For the majority of boys it would be best to build a system of work all revolving about or at least based on farm observation, activity and calculation.” (Inspector – Br S R Young)

1952
Bindoon
“The secular subjects have very recently been examined by the State inspector. He expressed satisfaction: a copy of his report is to be forward to me on receipt. The work boys were taken for instruction and questioning at two sessions.” (Inspector – Br Tevlin??)

1953
Bindoon
Teaching power not sufficient for special circumstances. “Out of school boys have had some teaching at night – not enough however. Some are very backward.”

“The school numbers more than doubled with the intake of British and Maltese migrants during the year. Classification and satisfactory teaching are extremely difficult with the wide range in attainment. The younger groups are much more capable than the older ones. The chief problem lies with retarded boys in Grades III, IV…Grade VI is fairly competent. All read well and a foundation in the chief subjects is being well laid.” (Inspector – Br S L Carroll).

Castledare
Teaching power – a specialist needed for smallest boys
Grade 1 class really infants. About half can read simplest sentences and do some addition, but the others hardly recognise letters. Grade II rather better – can read a little, some really well. Grade III some retarded boys, among them youngsters of ten at the Institution for 5 years. (Inspector – Br S L Carroll)

Clontarf
Teaching power – insufficient for large numbers and wide disparity.
“The heavy intake of migrant boys during the year made classification and as a consequence effective teaching extremely difficult. There was no addition to the staff to meet the increase in numbers…Nonetheless good work is being done in all classes though the standard of attainment is not up to the usual for the respective grades…It was pleasing to note few if any cases of real retardation. The youngest boys should be at Castledare. They cannot possibly receive the close attention necessary when the teacher already has another class on his hands.” (Inspector – Br S L Carroll)
1954
Bindoon
Teaching power – not sufficient
Good work being done in all classes. Fully agree with the State School Inspector’s report of 1954. “As most of the boys are migrant ... and arrive in groups at different times during the year, the classification and class teaching are difficult. A special effort should be made to help the weaker boys in English, Reading & Arithmetic.” Need to brighten class rooms, paint, posters, and a good library for each room. (Inspector - ?Garvey?)

Castledare
“The same weakness persists, namely weak foundations. Only a fully trained teacher for the beginners will remedy this. The trouble not only at Castledare but at Clontarf and Bindoon as well can be traced to this lack. The difficulty is accentuated with the irregular arrival of boys from Britain and Malta...About one third of each class are up to standard and may be fit for promotion next year.” Arithmetic best, spelling and reading most uncertain. Two rooms without aids – serious lack – need maps, charts etc. (Inspector - Br S L Carroll).

Clontarf
"Special difficulty attends the teaching of all institution boys arising from lack of background, narrow range of experience and heavy incidence of early retardation. In Castledare and Clontarf this difficulty is more pronounced with the migrant boys. A trained teacher for beginners and backward boys is the only solution. The position in the Junior room is really grave. It is unfair to both teacher and pupils. About half of the classes are capable of reaching the standard named. For the remainder special provision with a diluted curriculum should be made. Aids are of great importance with all boys but particularly so in Clontarf. They are conspicuously absent. And the lack should not be allowed to continue....The best boys, those who qualify for secondary work, are well provided for...The boys are friendly, courteous and respectful. They are well treated and great credit is due to the small staff who do so much for them.” (Inspector – Br S L Carroll).

Tardun
Boys are classified according to their standard and their grip on the English language. Classification and teaching difficult because the boys are migrants and arrived at different times during the year. “Under the circumstances the Brothers are doing excellent work for the boys.” “I agree with the departmental inspector that, as many of these boys are backward on arrival, reading and number work should get extra time.” (Inspector - Br Garvey).
1955

Bindoon
Very good work has been done in all grades in spite of the difficulties of classification and teaching in an institution. The post primary group are quite impressive. They read well and have an intelligent grasp of the subject matter. (Inspector Br Tevlin?)

Castledare
NB A lay teacher, Mrs Taylor, in charge of Infants and Grade 1.
"With the appointment of an excellent Kindergarten teacher, a new era for Castledare may be said to have begun. The Brothers will now be able to build on a proper and solid foundation. Next year it may be possible to have the Infants separated from the pupils of Grade 1, and a better classification adopted. However, this year's effort of achieving partial classification deserves commendation. The irregular arrival of migrants is an obstacle to an excellent classification. Reading, Spelling and Numbers are receiving adequate attention...Great obstacles are being overcome by all teachers with skills, patience and much self-sacrifice. One cannot but appreciate their work." (Inspector - Br F J Levander)

Clontarf
Teaching Power - Sufficient to cope with most of the problems presented by a wide range of intelligence except that not all retarded boys are able to be helped.
"An effort was made at the beginning of the year to adopt a more rigid classification than in former years. It has succeeded in part. Weak boys were not promoted and the very weak (slow learners) were formed into a class called "Four Blue". These boys spend the day Reading and Spelling (Br Cyril), Writing (Br Salesius) Number and Tables (Br Superior [Doyle]). One could easily form, with advantage to the boys, another Group of weak boys from Grades 5 and 6. The employment of a teacher, skilled in teaching "slow learners" would probably solve the problem. It can be taken for granted that Institutions, such as Clontarf, will always have a fair number of retarded boys. The problem of helping these satisfactorily should be faced. Further effort is certainly needed, as a heavy task still confronts the Primary Teachers. The Secondary School with its technical bias, functions excellently...The out-of-school boys need some help to improve themselves spiritually and mentally." (Inspector - Br F J Levander)

Tardun
"The problem of classification and teaching remains the same." Most from Malta - definite language difficulty. Migrants arrive at varying times in year and in small group. "The State inspector in his last report reads'...The Brothers are to be highly commended for their zeal and efficiency on behalf of their charges."
(Inspector - ?Garvey?)

1956

Bindoon
"Generally the boys are retarded for their age, due no doubt to their unfortunate backgrounds, but in each class there is a higher section in which work was of very good quality."
Class libraries used to maximum, reading of good standard. (Inspector - Br J L Carey)

Castledare
Progress evident following adoption of more purposeful approach to classification. In all grades reading done in classified group - each boy graduates to higher reader as competence attained. Suggest each class has some manual art activity, as in Victoria. (Inspector - Br J L Carey)
Clontarf
Slow learners group taught by Miss Smith. Could introduce handcrafts into Primary Grades. (Inspector - Br J L Carey)

Tardun
“There are 43 boys doing regular class-work and although the numbers are small the task of the Brothers is an exacting and trying one. The varying standards and ability quotients of the boys in each grade necessitates subdivision into classified groups. The top group in each case presented good work, but the lower sections were generally slow and retarded. All were well beyond the average age for their grade.”
Writing poor in higher grade – no regular time or separate book allotted. Speech – lack of training and carelessness.
“It is a pity that an almost complete lack of modern teaching aids renders the work of the Brothers unnecessarily difficult. Maps, charts, show-boards, graded readers, radio and visual aids (film strips etc) are urgently needed.” (Inspector - Br J L Carey)

1957
Bindoon
Appreciable improvement in standards. Better grading. “The answering of the boys was generally intelligent, although limited experience and retardation in earlier years handicaps them in some subject areas.”
Suitable libraries provided. Senior and working boys have own room for evening reading. Great improvement in reading since last examination. (Inspector - Br J L Carey)

Castledare
Classification more effective, classes more even. “However there are still some retarded in each room and these tend to impede the progress of the others. There seems to be no simple solution to the problem. Spelling was weak in all grades…” (Inspector - Br J L Carey)
Note: No lay teacher in early grade.

Clontarf
Intelligence – Fair to average. A good proportion of weak boys in each Grade. Retarded boys catered for in lowest Grade.
School functioning smoothly. Grand work being done for retarded boys by Br Camille Mohen. (Inspector - Br J L Carey)

Tardun
“The arrival of the contingent of boys (12) from Castledare at the beginning of the year has had a stabilizing effect on numbers, but the classification problem remains. The Sub-Superior, particularly, is set a difficult task with the juniors whose capabilities and standards vary widely…There is a general weakness in all classes in Arithmetic, English and Composition and in Grade VII the boys are given little guidance in the manner of presenting their work.” (Inspector - Br J L Carey)
1958
Bindoon
"In basic subjects the range is very wide within the classes though the numbers are small. This constitutes the particular difficulty in the teaching in the Institution that such wide disparity exists in capacity, attainment and application. In the classes named, about half would approximate the standard, the remainder call for very patient handling, even remedial work. Emphasis is laid on reading, which is to be commended. Only a few are fluent -- most are still ‘literal’ and ‘finger pointers’ below VI. There is a good supply of retarded readers... Arithmetic shows uncertainty in basic operations especially where money is involved... In difficult circumstances the Bros. are deserving of praise for their sustained efforts. Boys in VI C are almost special cases.” (Inspector - Br S L Carroll)

Castledare
Grade IV is about Grade III in standard – they should not go up.
"The formal teaching poses special problems for which it is doubtful if we are equipped. The conventional classroom methods will not meet the case in many instances either because the boys are too young or more generally because of lack of mental power... About half of V are fit to go on. The rest in all classes should remain whether they are to continue the effort at skill in reading and number work.”
Note: No lay teacher in early grades.
(Inspector – Br S L Carroll)

Clontarf
Boys are mostly ‘triers’. Improvement in performance since last visit.
"Except for a depressed group of a dozen approx. the primary classes show a standard comparable to that of other schools, and in some respects better, notably in their readiness to think when confronted with the challenge of a problem... Bookwork was only fair - writing generally without form or definition. Biros and pencils ought not to be used.” (Inspector – Br S L Carroll)

Tardun
Teaching power – sufficient for numbers – but better provision should be made for sub-standard boys.
Tribute paid to behaviour of boys, not timid or repressed, have readiness to speak in front of class. Congenial setting – bright rooms, displays on walls.
"Unfortunately a large section – about one third – are well below the standard named. These are boys almost incapable of learning in the abstract. They must find knowledge through the concrete and ways and means of doing so were indicated to the teachers concerned. This applies to the basic subjects – arithmetic, spelling, composition – all of which were defective.” (Inspector – Br S L Carroll)
EXTRACTS FROM VISITATION REPORTS – BINDOON

Note: The following extracts are quotes from the Visitation Reports.

July 29th – Aug 18th, '49. Visitor – S L Carroll

School. Thirty two are in school all day under Brs Regis and Malachy, each room having two small classes. Recent intelligence test given by Govt. experts make most of them out to be backward to the point of deficiency. The stock comment on report sheets is 'poor', 'very poor', 'below average'. There are a few very backward boys. School work has not been carried on with a steady consistency. Interruptions on various pretexts have been too common, so that the disposition to study seriously has not been developed. The school bell is irregular. Nominally it should be rung at 9 o'clock but charges have not been completed then nor matters of toilet attended to. School hours have been fixed for 9.30 till 3.30 and Br Regis has undertaken the charge of timekeeper and bellringer. There are evening classes for the working boys three days a week under Brs Declan and Marcian, the subjects being reading, spelling and arithmetic. A syllabus embracing these as being the most essential and including other subjects like letter writing, local geography and civics has been suggested with a view to equipping them to fit into Australian life and conditions.


There are 72 boys at St Joseph's, all immigrants; 59 from British isles and 13 (recently arrived) from Malta. Other migrant groups are about to arrive. 27 are engaged during the day in trades or farm work and attend night classes on 4 nights in the week. 32 British boys under the age of 16 attend school daily divided into two classes classified as Grades 5 & 6 although their attainments mostly fall below their classification. Reading and spelling are well below standard. Actually 2 or 3 boys well on in years can scarcely read at all. I think it is important that these be persevered with even at considerable inconvenience as the handicap of being unable to read is a serious one to carry through life and the stigma on the school may have serious consequences. However it is evident that very good work is being done by the Brothers in the class rooms with boys whose intelligence is below average and whose early history was calamitous. The 13 Maltese boys vary in age from 9 to 14 years. Language is the great difficulty with them all although some of them read quite well. They are intelligent and for the most part, well advanced in arithmetic for their years.

Technical Training. St Joseph's is described as a trades school but except for the few boys actually engaged on the building no training in trades is given. Technical classes, as such, do not exist. There is some equipment for wood-work, none for metal work.

Boys over 16 years of age should be paid award wage for their work. There is no record of any payments to these boys. It is important that regular payments be made into their accounts. This would not only assure that justice be done to the boys but would also give them a sense of security and avoid the awkwardness that might arise from a Departmental enquiry.

School: The Institution has 143 inmates of whom 124 are in school. There are 91 British migrants, 48 Maltese and only 4 Australians. Br O Robinson has two junior classes with 68 boys all told ranging from the merest beginners to boys capable of Grade 3 work. Br S Dwyer has the next two with 40 boys in classes called more for convenience than anything else, Grades 4,5. Most of them are very weak. Br A Ryan has 12 in Grade 6. They are of fair standard. More than half of the school population came to the Institution during the year and much improvisation was necessary in school work. The general standard of attainment was low for their ages, boys in Grade 3 for instance being of the average age of ten and in Grade 4 thirteen. And they were not by any means up to the usual standard in these classes. However in spite of difficulties school work is going on more consistently and successfully than has been the case previously in Bindoon. The 19 out-of-school boys have not been entirely neglected as far as their studies go. The Sup. Takes them occasionally at night for lessons. Nevertheless there are some cases of near-illiteracy among them. A man to take charge of these boys is needed, one who will not only direct their outside activities but teach and train them in the evening also.

October 1st, 1956. Visitor - J I. Carey

Very good work is being done by the Brothers in all grades and the spirit of co-operation amongst the boys is pleasing. Generally the classes are retarded and the boys are well beyond the normal age for their grades, but in each group there are individual lads whose work is of excellent standard.

...Reading is of a good standard and class libraries are used effectively. Most were able to manage simple arithmetical problems, but the more involved processes were beyond all but the brightest. The boys in First Year are keen and obviously appreciative of the work being done for them by Br Albeus.

The technical department has made an impressive start with a well-appointed metal-work room. Woodwork is to be introduced almost immediately and other subjects will be added when the time is opportune.

It is recommended that suitable talks on religious and social topics be arranged for the out-of-school boys to prepare them for their life after leaving the care of the Brothers. Under such a scheme a sound training in correct manners and proper personal habits could be given.

May 29th 1957. Br J I. Carey

Brs Sebastian Dwyer, Louis Conlon and Albeus Ryan are veterans in the Congregation. The first-named is still teaching school but appears to be losing his grip of boys. There is little originality in his classwork and under him school must tend to become a drudgery. Brother Albeus ... still teaches a full day in school and this year is presenting four boys for the Junior Government examination.
...Good work is being done in all the classrooms where it is pleasing to note an appreciable improvement in the standards of the most important subjects. Obviously the boys are better graded and each group is progressing steadily according to the capacity of its members. The answering of the boys was generally intelligent, although limited experience and early retardation handicap them in subjects requiring literary expression. The Brothers are endeavouring to overcome this by providing suitable libraries — each classroom is equipped with an abundance of books, school papers etc. and the boys are encouraged to make use of them. Working boys have their own library for evening periods.

...Reading, a subject of great importance for these boys, has shown considerable improvement since the last inspection. Grade VII is particularly good. Here however English is very weak and better results would be achieved if a regular course were followed. The same comment might be made with regard to Arithmetic and Writing.
APPENDIX E

Extracts from Education Department file at State Records Office of Western Australia

Ref: ACC 1507 Item 77 Year 1950
"Migrant children - intelligence"

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Subject: Education

Dear Sir,

Here is the general report on the intelligence and education of Catholic Migrant children.

I suggest that the duplicate copy be made available to the
headquarters in London, who is the legal guardian.

A further copy should be
sent to the Minister of Catholic Welfare Migration.

Yours truly,

[Signature]
THE HON. MINISTER FOR EDUCATION.

Hereunder please find the report on Migrant children in Catholic institutions.

Although it is not to be expected that these institutional children should conform to the normal distribution of intelligence yet the deviation from the normal is sufficient to cause me concern and calls for some action.

I propose to forward the second copy to the Under Secretary for Lands and Migration, and I feel that a copy should be sent to the Director of Catholic Welfare and Migration.

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION.
SUMMARY:

1. A total of 238 migrant children (139 boys, 99 girls) from the United Kingdom and Ireland were examined in the Roman Catholic schools for General Intelligence, attainment in Reading and in fundamental Arithmetic.

2. In general intelligence the group contains an unduly high proportion of feeble minded, border-line and dull children and a correspondingly low proportion of average and above average children.

3. In basic educational attainment, the children are generally retarded — many by three and four years — educational normality or acceleration is rare in the group.

4. Special educational efforts will be necessary if the group is to recover some of its retardation and to make optimum use of the capacity present in its members.

SUGGESTIONS:

(1) That the selection of child migrants in their home country be such as to ensure that groups contain at least the usual distribution of intelligence.

It is here suggested that Dr. Williams' services be used in the United Kingdom for such work.

(11) That the Education Department offer to lend a skilled remedial teacher to each institution for a period of 6 months to assist and to train the staff in remedial teaching technique.

(111) That the Education Department offer a vacation course in Infant Method to teaching nuns so that the education of the younger migrant boys and girls can be entrusted to women.

(1IV) That maximum opportunity be accorded the migrant children for contact with Australian conditions outside the institutions.
3. **Comments.**

(1) **Specific comparisons in categories.**

The migrant group contains approximately -

(a) three times the usual proportion of feeble minded,

(b) three and a half times the usual proportion of borderline defective,

(c) twice the usual proportion of dull,

(d) three fifths the usual proportion of average,

(e) one sixth the usual proportion of bright normal,

(f) one third the usual proportion of superior,

(g) and no very superior children.

(11) **General Comments.**

(a) Both boys and girls groups, separately and together, must be regarded as a very poor sample of human material.

(b) Whereas no country can expect to receive as migrants the cream of the youth of the parent country, the group here examined contains an undue proportion of the less competent elements.

(c) Those classed as "feeble minded" will, in general, be a charge upon the state and its institutions for life. Those classed as "border line" defectives, will require specialised education, protection and supervision in ranging degrees throughout life if they are to become economically productive. Those classed as "dull" will not benefit in even an average degree by ordinary education and are likely to show, in the future an unduly high proportion of social misfits and maladjusted persons requiring the assistance of social service agencies and other protective or supervisory organisations.

These comments apply of course to the same elements in any population, but there is lacking in this group a comparable proportion of competent and superior children to carry the burdens of their incompetent fellows.

4. **Educational Attainments of the group.**

In each school, (except Tardun) the basic attainments of each child in Reading and Fundamental Arithmetic (not problems) were measured by the application of standardised tests. The Reading Test used was Schonell's Graded Reading Vocabulary Test, standardised on English children. The Arithmetic was tested against Australian norms in the "four rules" using Australian
Council for Educational Research material.

The test results have been graphed on an Age - Class attainment basis. This permits a ready estimate of the educational retardation, normality or acceleration of the children. Again the most generous interpretation has been placed on the test results of the children. (See graphs.)

The red line on each graph separates retarded children to the left from those of normal or accelerated attainment to the right of the line.

Inspection of the graphs shows the great proportion of children to be retarded - many of them three and four years in both Reading and Basic Number work.

Comments.

This educational retardation is certainly due to a complex of causes: - e.g.

(i) Bombing, evacuation and other war causes.

(ii) Change of educational methods consequent upon evacuation and now on migration.

(iii) Institutionalisation which in general restricts the breadth of experience and so retards the ready development of reading and number interests.

(iv) The generally poor mental competence of the group.

(v) The lack of teaching staff trained to help such slow and retarded children to the maximum degree.

5. Teaching methods.

The officers conducting the tests were in every case themselves trained teachers and have discussed methods with the teachers in charge of the children. These officers felt and wish recorded:

1. That younger children - both boys and girls should be in charge of women trained in modern infant teaching methods.

2. That a programme of remedial teaching in basic subjects be instituted in each school so that these skills be greatly improved. If it were possible the Education Department might send a small number of suitable teachers, or arrange demonstrations of remedial techniques to assist the permanent teachers in the institutions.

3. That a basic curriculum related to every day needs rather than to the academic curriculum, be developed for use with the less competent children.

The progress of the Australianizing process depends upon:

1. The emotional acceptance of the children into their new homes and their awareness of that welcome. The Department's officers are unanimous in their tribute to the sincere sympathy and real affection which teachers and others in the various schools exhibit toward their charges and which is the first necessary requisite to their becoming in fact "new Australians".

2. The frequency of opportunity for the migrant child, to see Australia and to meet his Australian contemporaries. The Department's officers felt that in this aspect great benefit would be derived by very frequent excursions outside the institutions, by weekends spent with suitable local Australian families, by interschool sport, by greater use of films, picture books, nature study etc.

It might also be possible to arrange for migrants to spend weekends on vacations with Catholic families so that longer periods of contact with Australian everyday life were possible.
DISTRIBUTION OF INTELLIGENCE IN
THE MIGRANT CHILDREN.

1. Methods of Assessment.

Tests used. In applying tests to persons outside their habitual environment, there is a danger that differences in culture and language usage may react disadvantageously to the children and their scores will be depressed making them appear less intelligent than in fact they are. To guard against this, three different types of intelligence tests were used, viz: (i) a verbal type group test where the disadvantage referred to might operate; (ii) a non-verbal group test in which language and cultural differences do not operate and (iii) an individual test - the Binet test, Terman and Merrill Revision. This last test was used where discrepancies appeared between scores on (i) and (ii). Tests of these types are commonly used in assessing intelligence in the United Kingdom, though the norms here applied for the group tests are Australian and international for the Binet test.

Finally - so as to offset variable disadvantageous factors, e.g. nervousness, strange officers etc., wherever the scores on the different tests vary, the highest available score has, in every case, been credited to the child.

2. Preparation of Summary.

The scores of individual children in each institution have then been grouped in the commonly accepted "Intelligence Quotient" groups corresponding to very superior, superior, bright normal, average, dull, borderline defective and feeble minded classifications. The numbers of each such category in each school are shown in the separate school summaries. The totals in each category for boys and girls separately and for all the tested migrant children as a grand total are shown below.

The % in each classification has been calculated and can be compared with the % distribution of these classifications in the general population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>% in Totals whole</th>
<th>% in General population</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very superior</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>2.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bright normal</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
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<td>Average or normal</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>32.3</td>
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<td>Dull</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>34.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Borderline defective</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>23.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feeble minded</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Totals:</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>99.9</td>
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The distribution of the classifications in the migrant group is compared graphically with that in the general population in the accompanying histogram.
THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION:

Dear Sir,

Re: Distribution of Intelligence in Catholic Migrant Children.

Supplementary Report.

The Intelligence Scores of an additional 33 boys at Tardun Farm School are now available.

As a group, these are of somewhat better capacity than the group of 238 recently reported upon. Adding the results of the 33 Tardun boys to those of the previous group, gives a distribution of intelligence for the whole 271 boys and girls as shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Totals</th>
<th>% in whole group</th>
<th>% in general population</th>
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<tr>
<td>Very Superior</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>62</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>50.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dull</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>16.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Borderline defective</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feeble minded</td>
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<td><strong>TOTALS:</strong></td>
<td>172</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>271</td>
<td><strong>100.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
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The very slight improvement in the general picture attributable to the inclusion of these additional results, does not call for modification of the comments already made.

A copy of the revised graph is attached.

I suggest that copies of this supplementary report be made available to the Under Secretary for Lands and Migration and to the Director of Catholic Welfare and Migration thru' the Hon. Minister.

Yours faithfully,

[Signature]

SUPERINTENDENT
GUIDANCE BRANCH.
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The Director,
Department of Education,
St. George's Terrace,
PERTH, WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

Dear Sir,

Selection of Migrant Children

Reference is made to the following resolution passed at the Conference of Directors of Education held in Melbourne during April of this year:—

"That this Conference of Directors request the Commonwealth Office of Education to make enquiries concerning the steps being taken by the Immigration Department to prevent the entry into Australia of sub-standard children from institutions in the United Kingdom, and that the Director of the Commonwealth Office of Education be requested to report back to each State Director."

I am enclosing with this letter a copy of a memorandum received from the Immigration Department concerning the selection of migrant children. Would you please regard this report as confidential?

Yours faithfully,

(R.G. Mills)
DIRECTOR
COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

DEPARTMENT OF IMMIGRATION,
CABRAMBA, A.C.T.

19th October, 1950.

MEMORANDUM for:

The Director,
Commonwealth Office of Education,
Box 3879 G.P.O.,
SYDNEY, N.S.W.

I refer again to your memorandnum of 5th June, 1950, reference 45/1/3, 1783, concerning a resolution passed at a Conference of Directors of Education in April last relative to the selection of migrant children.

It has, of course, to be realised that the migrant children introduced by approved voluntary organisations have, in the main, been deprived of a normal home life in the United Kingdom and are not likely to be advanced in their education. Nevertheless, the Commonwealth is concerned to ensure that children who are borderline defectives or in a similar category are not introduced to Australia.

The report which you furnished concerned a number of children in Roman Catholic Institutions in Western Australia, and it is indisputable that there was a high percentage of backward children in the group examined. However, the children who were tested came to Australia towards the end of 1947. They were the first party of child migrants to enter Australia after the commencement of the post-war migration scheme and the examination of the children was not as thorough as it is today. In addition it is probable that in 1947 too great a reliance was placed on the discretion of the recruiting organization as regards the background of the children selected.

It is, I suggest, significant that apart from the first party there has been no serious complaint in regard to the calibre of children introduced by the numerous approved voluntary organisations.

The position is at present that the Chief Migration Officer, Australia House, London, after consultation with the appropriate Medical Officers has definitely stated that the procedure now in use for the selection of child migrants is such that any mental or other backwardness would come to light. The Chief Migration Officer has been instructed to reject such cases outright. Most of the voluntary organisations in England obtain I.C. reports on the children recruited and the Chief Migration Officer is empowered to have intelligence tests carried out at Commonwealth expense, where he thinks it necessary.

I feel confident that the boys and girls now coming to Australia will develop satisfactorily in this country and become worthy Australian citizens.

(Sign.)

(T.H.K. Hayes)
SECRETARY
APPENDIX F


Held in Bindoon Visitation Reports file at Christian Brothers Holy Spirit Province Archives, Westcourt
On the 29th inst. I accompanied yourself and Mr. E. Turnbull, Dental Officer, Public Health Department, to St. Joseph Farm and Trades School, Bindoon, and made an inspection of the premises and migrant boys in residence.

2. I saw each of the 20 migrant boys personally and it seems obvious that they have been specially selected in one group as they appear to be of poorer average mentality than other migrant who arrived in the same party. Although I will have to make some adverse criticism in this report, it must be realised that Brother McGee has a difficult task ahead to train and educate this class of boy.

On the 16th inst. we made a brief visit to this Institution and as a result criticism was made of the general conditions prevailing. It is observed that there is not some improvement, but I consider that the conditions are still not up to the standard required by this Department. The domestic staff reported to have been engaged consists of the Matron, Miss G. Turner, who has been at this Home for some time; her niece, Miss J. Turner, a girl of tender years, who commenced her duties on the 28th inst. and Mrs. Toy. As these women have only recently commenced their duties it may be too early to expect great improvement.

3. The dormitories have improved to a certain extent. Beds and bedding are good and it was noted that they were covered with clean counterpanes. A small oval fibre mat was beside each bed. The dormitories however in general are not attractive. There is no provision whatever for lockers, but Brother McGee stated that 100 wooden lockers were on order to overcome this difficulty. The ablution facilities are in the course of transfer from the original block, to the new building. Hot and cold showers in the bath in terrazo work in the new building are now being used. These facilities are satisfactory for the present, but should be completed before further admissions are accepted. The sanitary conveniences and urinal, which were newly erected, were inspected and found clean and satisfactory.

4. Dining-room: The boys were seen at lunch, which consisted of baked rabbit, cabbage, potatoes, swedes and sweets, with ample bread and milk. The table-cloths and serviettes were not as clean as could be expected. It is noted that the boys apparently do not wash their hands prior to meal-times and in consequence the edges of the table-cloth quickly become dirty. Two three-legged stools have been provided, which I do not think are as satisfactory as a wooden chair with a straight back. It was noted that the boys were inclined to lunch over their meals instead of sitting up straight.
Visitation Report of Jane Doe

as they would in a chair. This aspect was pointed out to Brother McGe, but he maintains that the stools are more serviceable.

5. General Health: It is stated that there has been no case of illness and from my observations the boys are all free from any sore. All were examined by the Dental Officer and, except for minor extractions and scaling, were reported to be above average.

Education: It is Brother McGe's opinion that all boys are retarded by approximately two years, but he prefers to reserve his comments and final statement until the end of the year, when he has had greater opportunity to assess their ability.

The classrooms are dull, dingy and dirty, and appear to lack facilities for teaching. One room is fitted with standard type desks, but no other facilities exist; it is even lacking a blackboard.

6. Trainee Boys: The following boys have left school and are engaged in duties on the property -

Cecil McLaughlin - Learning tractor driving and general duties. He is stated to be dull and not showing great aptitude.

Anthony Butchings - Employed in the dairy shed. Although backward is reported to be showing well and with proper training may become an efficient rural worker.

Arthur Gibson - Employed on dairy work and in the wool-shed. Progress very good and shows much aptitude.

Lawrence Humphreys - A dairy and general hand. Work good and normal progress. I pointed out that on the nominal roll he is stated to be 13 years of age, but Brother McGe informed me that he has now turned 14.

John Coniff - John was making no progress whatsoever at school and is now engaged in general house duties. He does not show any aptitude whatsoever for farm work.

7. Generally I was not impressed in any way with the appearance of these boys. Personal cleanliness was not good and their hair was unruly. Clothing was very poor, and, in most instances, dirty. Footwear was noticeable for the variety of shoes, sandals and sandals, all in extremely bad condition and apparently beyond repair. Except for the fact that stone bruising is prevalent owing to the nature of the country, I would suggest that these boys would be better off without shoes. It is obvious that these boys lack personal supervision in respect of their clothing and hygiene. I pointed out these matters to Brother McGe, but he seemed to consider that the present standard was satisfactory. He points out that it is difficult to keep these boys clean, particularly in the winter months when the grounds are inclined to be muddy. I would suggest that they be suitably clothed during their school hours and in their leisure hours be permitted to change into play-clothes.
Visitation Report of...

A new dairy is in the course of erection and it is Brod. B. McGee's ambition to have this completed and in use at the earliest possible date. There is no doubt that the design and workmanship of this building are good and it will be an extremely valuable addition to the property, but I think this aspect should pend until such time as the domestic arrangements and facilities are functioning satisfactorily.

8. In view of these conditions I cannot recommend that any more boys be admitted to this Institution until such time as an improvement is made in the general standard of clothing and cleanliness and better facilities for education provided.

(Sgd) R G Marriott

Institution Officer

Covering Letter: From H T Molina (Sec) to Mr P. R. Jackson, Secreto the Archbishop of Perth:

Dear Mr Jackson,

I forward you herewith a copy of a report made by Mr R G Marriott, my Institution Officer, on the conditions prevailing at St. Joseph's Farm School, Bindoon.

I may say that I am in full accord with the report submitted to me by Mr Marriott. The conditions at Bindoon are not good. As a matter of fact, the educational facilities provided for the boys are most inadequate and I fail to see how they can receive proper schooling. Furthermore, the conditions generally do in no way conform to those at other Institutions, or for that matter the provisions of the Child Welfare Act.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd) H T Molina

Secretary
APPENDIX G

Transcript of inspections of Bindeen by Senior Medical Officer Dr Stang and by Education Department Superintendent Mr Trotman in 1953

Held in Bindeen Visitation Reports file at Christian Brothers Holy Spirit Province Archives, Westcourt
ACCOMODATION AND STAFFING.- Class room accommodation is of a temporary nature. At present classes are held in what will ultimately be the Institution's dining rooms. These are rather badly lighted for class rooms. It seems a pity also, that playing fields which are a necessity in an institution such as this are inadequate. At present they are water logged. I note that tennis courts are being constructed. An excellent move.

I understand from the Principal that a fourth teacher is to be appointed. This will relieve Bro. A. Robinson, who at the present time is in charge of Classes III & IV - some seventy boys. At present each Brother is giving of his best, but an extra teacher will be a welcome addition.

EFFICIENCY.- It should be noted that a large percentage of the boys are migrant children from Malta. Despite some initial language difficulty these are more than holding their own and generally speaking efficiency is satisfactory. A pleasing feature is the keen degree of working spirit apparent with each group. The boys respond with zest and enjoyment and expression work is particularly strong.

GENERAL.- This is a very fine Institution doing work of national importance. Apart from attempts to build up academic attainment in both skills and cultural subjects, the boys are receiving excellent practical training in farm work. Each child is being given a possible avenue of success. For this the Brothers are to be highly commended, particularly the Principal Bro. Keaney who sets a fine example of positive leadership.

I understand that this is Bro. Keaney's final year at Bindoon, and the Institution will find it difficult to replace him. His record over the years, shows a thorough knowledge of boys, and the ability to attract the highest possible effort from them. This intensive effort of the boys is probably the feature of Bindoon which makes the most marked impression on a visitor.

Signed

A. H. Trotman.

Superintendent.

20/7/53.
MEDICAL INSPECTION OF
C.B.C. BOYS' FARM SCHOOL, BINDOON.

On July 6th and 7th I inspected the children (143) at the Bindoon Farm School.

The children were in a remarkably healthy condition. In fact the most outstanding thing about them was how well-nourished, happy and healthy they were. There were a few under-nourished, probably less than half a dozen, and these were the thin, lean type that possibly nothing on earth would fatten up.

Only 28 children had any medical defects, and most of these were recently arrived immigrants.

The teeth of the children were particularly good and very much above average; this is an outstanding feature. Recently, through friends of Brother Keaney, dentists have been up to Bindoon during the weekends attending to the children's teeth. In this respect the children are very fortunate than the average child attending the State Schools and living in their homes.

Also through other friends of the Brother in Charge, throat specialists have been up recently and attended to a great number of the children for bad tonsils, so this accounts for the fact that so few children, with the exception of the new admissions, were found with bad tonsils.

I was particularly impressed with the happy, healthy and A

This Farm School appears to me to be doing a very wonderful job of work amongst the immigrant children in moulding them into happy, healthy young Australians, and, in addition, teaching them very valuable occupations for their future life. These children are a great credit to the Brothers who have looked after them and trained them, and will be a distinct asset to the State.

Signed E.M. Stang.

SENIOR MEDICAL OFFICER OF SCHOOLS.

9/7/53.
APPENDIX H

Extracts from Immigration Dependent Files held at National Archives of Australia, Perth Office

References as detailed within
CLOTHING

EXTRACTS FROM INSPECTION REPORTS

TARDUN


Report of Inspection of St Mary's Agricultural School, Tardun, by Messrs R G Marriott (Commonwealth Immigration Department), F D Mather (State Immigration Department) and J J Abbott (Child Welfare Department) on Wednesday 23 November, 1949

Ablution Facilities
Tooth and nail brushes for each boy were in evidence.

Education
Two classes were in progress at the time of our arrival. The boys were neatly dressed in clean and well fitting blue shirts and grey trousers.

... [a British child migrant] is attending Christian Brothers' College, Geraldton, having passed the Junior Examination in eight subjects...This boy was privately interviewed at Christian Brothers' College, and declared that he was quite happy at the opportunity extended to him and the general position.

Clothing
As previously stated all boys seen were well outfitted and we were given to understand that each boy is equipped with a school outfit, working outfit, summer suit, winter suit and sports outfit. We are of the opinion that the boys are well equipped in this direction.

BINDOON


[Report dated 22.1.48 signed by R G Marriott (Commonwealth Immigration Department)]

1. On the 19th instant, accompanied by Inspectress F Stewart and Mr R C Osborne of this Department, I visited St Joseph's Farm School, Bindoon for the purpose of inspection. Brother W T McGee, the Manager, was present and accompanied me on a tour of the buildings.

4. The general appearance of the boys was quite reasonable, although some were in a rather grubby state. This can only be expected as the ground is particularly dusty and dry and they must invariably gain a certain amount of dirt in their work and play.

12. Health: Generally good. Six boys show signs of ringworms and one lad,..., is reported by Miss Stewart to have bad ears. In the absence of any medical record accompanying these boys the medical aspect is a difficult one...

1. On the 29th instant I accompanied yourself and Mr E Turnbull, Dental Officer, Public Health Department, to St Joseph Farm and Trades School, Bindoon, and made an inspection of the premises and migrant boys in residence.

2. I saw each of the 20 migrant boys personally...

3. Generally I was not impressed in any way with the appearance of these boys. Personal cleanliness was not good and their hair was unruly. Clothing was very poor, and, in most instances, dirty. Footwear was noticeable for the variety of shoes, sandals and sandshoes, all in extremely bad condition and apparently beyond repair. Except for the fact that stone bruising is prevalent owing to the nature of the country, I would suggest that these boys would be better off without shoes. It is obvious that these boys lack personal supervision in respect of their clothing and hygiene. I pointed out these matters to Brother McGee, but he seemed to consider that the present standard was satisfactory. He points out that it is difficult to keep these boys clean, particularly in the winter months when the grounds are inclined to be muddy. I would suggest that they be suitably clothed during their school hours and in their leisure hours permitted to change into play-clothes.


We saw the school boys going to dinner and they were neatly clothed in khaki.

CLONTARF

NAA File K403/3/6 W59/96. Children – Child & Youth Organisations – Clontarf General Inspections

[Report to the Under Secretary for Lands and Immigration, dated 20th June 1950]

An unannounced visit was paid by Mr Fogarty of the Welfare Department, Mr Denney and myself to St Joseph’s Orphanage Clontarf on Thursday the 15th instant.

School

The children in the 5th and 6th classes were warmly clad in navy blue jerseys and pants whilst those in the 4th class, 17 of whom were ex-Castledare Home wore maroon jerseys and blue pants. The senior class was also dressed warmly and tidily although not uniformly as in the other classes. I understand that the children change into other clothes after school hours.

NAA File PP6/1/98 1949/H/1167. Clontarf St Peter’s Orphanage Victoria Park. Inspection and Progress Reports

[Report of D Fogarty, Institution Officer to the Acting Secretary, dated 22/7/49]

1. On the 11th instant I accompanied Mr Mather of the State Immigration Department on a visit to Clontarf for the purpose of carrying out an inspection.
2. ...From their appearance they looked healthy enough and quite happy. They all seemed warmly clad but as most of the clothing consisted of old military equipment, their general appearance was far from tidy.
SOME EXTRACTS FROM THE FORDE REPORT (QLD), MAY 1999

Please note that this inquiry covered State-run as well as church-run Homes.

The following extracts are intended to provide comparison with the situation as it existed at a similar time in Homes run by the Catholic religious orders in WA.

Lack of funding and overcrowding.

One of the most obvious causes of systems abuse is the lack of funding and resourcing that has beset children's services both in the past and in the present day. Children and young people in care should receive adequate education, vocational training, physical and mental health care, leisure and recreation, contact with the community and family, and a range of programs that prepare them to function independently and risk-free upon discharge. Many children in institutions this century have not received even a basic education, let alone the range of developmental programs that would be desirable.

Resource constraints have been a perennial problem for institutions. Despite this, consecutive government departments continued to place children in institutions without regard to their capacity to provide proper care for the numbers they were receiving. The overcrowding at many denominational orphanages up to the late 1960s meant that it was impossible for children to receive adequate, individual care and attention.

A recognition of the relationship between the Department and the denominations which ran the licensed institutions is essential to an understanding of how institutional care could fail children in so many respects without intervention from the Department. The levels of funding on which almost all of the denominational institutions operated were patently insufficient to allow the provision of proper individual care. Yet the Department continued to place children in those institutions because they provided a cheap means of lodging children for whose care it was responsible...The churches...acquiesced...because of their perceived obligation to provide refuge to homeless children, however inadequate their resources might be. (p. v)

"Orphanage" a misnomer

A system of orphanages and homes for destitute and neglected children was established in the mid-nineteenth to early twentieth centuries. However, the designation 'orphanage' was something of a misnomer. Departmental Annual Reports show clearly that the vast majority of children resident in orphanages from the 1860s were not, in fact, orphans. Figures from the Inspector of Orphanages Annual Report 1887 can be regarded as typical. Of the 107 children admitted to State care, only eight had lost both parents. (p. 31)

1 Correctly called the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Abuse of Children in Queensland institutions.
British child migrants

In fact, very few of these unaccompanied child migrants were orphans. Most had been placed in State care in Britain by a parent for reasons such as marital breakdown, illegitimacy and temporary economic hardship. After World War II the incidence of such factors soared. Many parents - particularly single women - faced raising their child (or children) without adequate financial support and in an atmosphere of social disapproval.

Consequently, large numbers of 'unwanted' children were placed in State care for fostering and adoption...

The children were brought to Australia with the encouragement and financial backing of the British and Australian governments. (p. 32)

Unrepresentative sample

Most of the organisations that ran the institutions concerned have made the valid point that the witnesses coming forward to the Inquiry represent only a very small proportion of the children who actually passed through their doors. The Salvation Army has observed that only eight witnesses came forward in respect of Riverview out of an estimated 350 residents between 1950 and 1978, 13 out of 1,500 boys at Alkira from 1941 to 1979, and seven out of 596 children at Horton between 1950 and 1979. The proportions are slightly higher in respect of Neerkol and St Vincent's, but the point is still well made that the numbers are but a fraction of those who could have spoken. It is also argued that the accounts that have been received are, in the context of the Inquiry, inevitably reflective of adverse experiences, which are not necessarily those of the majority.

...Equally it is acknowledged that there may be former residents with positive experiences who had no strong incentive to approach the Inquiry... (pp 62-63)

Living Conditions - Problems of size

At the outset, some generalisations can be made. Residential facilities for children, until the 1970s, tended to be run as large-scale institutions housing numerous children in dormitory accommodation. The size of those institutions, and the disproportionate staff-child ratios, meant that maintaining order tended to prevail over the needs and wellbeing of individual children. Their size also militated against any integration with the local community, and any semblance of a family structure was virtually impossible. Chronic government under-funding compounded all of these problems. A staff member described the situation where she worked:

There were too many children for anyone to be able to give them care. The buildings were old, huge, there was in, say, the girls' section two dormitories, 60 girls in each dormitory - a little girls' dormitory and big girls. And I slept in a cubicle corner of one of the dormitories with 60 girls. There were not enough resources; the physical structures were not right. I mean there should not have been 60 girls sleeping in one dormitory, however big that dormitory was. It was [an] unnatural life. (p. 63)
Living Conditions - Accommodation

Under-funding and overcrowding were responsible for the relatively harsh physical conditions in which most (but not all) children in both government and church-run homes lived, at least until the 1960s... The dormitory-style environment allowed for little in the way of personal space: there were no doors to the showers, nor were there separate toilet cubicles - children would sit beside each other in a row...

Older children ate in a refectory, seated on forms at large tables, with up to 60 children on each side of the table. The tables were covered with linoleum under which cockroaches thrived; the children drank from enamel mugs, and meals were eaten off chipped enamel plates into which were served, in turn, the main course and dessert...

Living without privacy or space in an impersonal environment was a common experience for institutionalised children. (pp 63-64).

Living Conditions - Food

Complaints about both the quality and quantity of institutional food were common. At best, the diet was unappetising and unvarying; at worst it was entirely inadequate for growing children. Meat and fruit tended to be scarce, and there was...a heavy reliance on porridge (frequently with weevils included) and bread (often stale) with syrup... Some spoke of stealing leftover food from the plates of the nuns or yardmen, while others said they had resorted to local vegetation... Former residents... described supplementing their diet with clover and grass. Other witnesses said they had resorted to retrieving scraps from waste bins. (p. 67)

Living Conditions - Clothing

A witness who had been a sister... in the 1950s explained that the State Children Department provided two outfits to each child who was a ward of the State: one on admission and one on leaving the Home. During their residence there no other clothing was provided by the State, so that if a child arrived at three months of aged and left for service at 14 (as many did), they received a layette and a work outfit and nothing in between. It fell to the institution to provide what clothes it could.

Many former residents of institutions prior to the 1970s raised the issue of ill-fitting, inadequate clothing. A particularly sore point was that in most institutions, presumably pursuant to [Regulation number], children's own clothes were taken from them on admission, removing a link to the outside world... it was common in both church- and State-run institutions for clothing to be held communally, with the 'luck of the draw' determining whether children received garments of their own size to wear.

...In many institutions, shoes were available for wear only on special occasions, and there were numerous recollections of the sore and cracked feet that resulted... (p. 67)
Management of children

Overcrowding, lack of trained staff and lack of resources had profound implications for the management of children...

The problems of over-crowding and under-funding were compounded by physical isolation... (p 91)

Lack of training

The Sisters... were not only untrained but had... followed their vocation from Ireland, where living conditions were tougher than those generally experienced in Australia. They tended to be young, inexperienced women accustomed to the rigorous discipline of living under a Rule. The strictness that lay at the centre of their practice as nuns may have carried over into their ministrations to the children...

Another important factor is that, prior to the mid-1960s, the need for support and individual attention for children who had experienced family upheaval was not well recognised, nor was there any general perception that dealing with children required training of any kind. The Sisters... were largely untrained in childcare work until the late 1960s - a situation common throughout the child welfare sector prior to that date. The lack of specialist training in child care and adequate resources, as reflected in low staffing levels, militated against providing a loving and caring environment for individual children within the orphanage system. (p 92).

Overcrowding

Overcrowding and under-staffing were common problems in a number of Queensland orphanages, at least until the late 1960s. For example, during the 1950s between 10 and 15 nuns cared for between 300 and 400 children... one nun was responsible for the care of 45 boys... while another nun with a single assistant had charge of 94 girls...

Two conclusions were obvious... first, that it was not possible for children there to receive adequate, individual care and attention; and second, that children were inevitably being required to perform an inordinate amount of domestic labour. Notwithstanding this, the Department continued to place children in the institutions... (p. 99)

Josette Mathers
22 October 1999
Mr. Peter Short  
Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee

Dear Mr. Short,

Housing Needs of Former Residents

Thank you for your email of May 4 enquiring about the follow up from the 1998 Needs Survey regarding the accommodation needs of the former residents of Christian Brother child care institutions in W.A.

When received, the Report was discussed at one of the Quarterly Meetings I have with the C-BERSS Management Committee. It was agreed that the Report indicated that it was difficult to quantify precisely the needs in this area and among this particular group of the population. The Report produced no evidence of such a level of need that would make something like a retirement village necessary or feasible. Indeed, there were expressed a number of concerns about the “retirement village” suggestion - would all former child migrants want to live in such a setting with exclusively other former child migrants? Would this be a healthy and constructive way to go?

It was also agreed that there were various resources in the general community relevant to the accommodation needs of older persons with limited economic means. For example, nursing homes are obliged to provide a certain number of beds for “concessional residents”. It was agreed the most realistic way for us to proceed would be for C-BERSS to adopt the role of a referral and information agency that would assist individual men with needs in this area to access accommodation resources in the wider community.

To this end C-BERSS undertook to develop a proposal in regard to developing a role along these lines in regard to accommodation needs. At this time the C-BERSS Management Committee have not tabled with us this further proposal. You might like to seek a further comment on the status of this project with Ms Maria Harries, the Chair of the C-BERSS Management Committee.

As I have indicated, the idea of a retirement village is not under active consideration by us.

I hope that this clarifies the situation for you. Please don’t hesitate to refer to me if I can provide any further information.

Yours sincerely,

Br. Tony Shanahan, cfc
Convenor
Catholic Joint Liaison Group on Child Migration
29 May 2001

Mr. Peter Short
Senate Community Affairs Committee
CANBERRA ACT

Dear Mr. Short,

**Child Migration Inquiry – Request for further information**

In response to the queries you faxed to us today, I have enclosed a File Note from our archivist, Ms Josette Mathers, in which she attempts to explain the discrepancy between the CCWC figures and our figures about the number of British Child Migrants. The other major fact to be considered is the 310 child migrants from Malta who are included in our total, but not in the figures from CCWC. Ms Mathers has indicated to me that, at this stage, it doesn't seem possible to make a final reconciliation between the two totals.

You also asked whether the particular orphanages you listed received child migrants. The only one that we know who received child migrants is St. Vincent's in Westmead which was conducted by the Marist Brothers. We understand that a number of boys originally cared for at the Murray Dwyer Home in Newcastle went on to Westmead. To our knowledge, none of the other homes mentioned received child migrants.

St. Joseph's Kellerberrin was conducted by the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart, sometimes known as the Josephites or the Brown Joeys.

I trust this information is of assistance. Please don't hesitate to refer to me if I can be of any further assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Br. Tony Shanahan, cfc
Convenor – Catholic Church Joint Liaison Group on Child Migration

(AJS003020)

Incorporated in W.A. as Trustees of the Christian Brothers in Western Australia Incorporated.
Incorporated in S.A. as The Christian Brothers Incorporated.

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CONFIRMATION OF FAX
File: CHIC38

FAX: 02 6277 5829
FILE NOTE

RE: Fax from Senate Community Affairs References Committee
DATE: 29 May 2001

I am reasonably confident about the accuracy of our figures which show that:

1045 child migrants came from UK
310 child migrants came from Malta

The discrepancy for UK child migrants is therefore between 1149 according to CCWC figures and 1045 according to ours.

This difference of 100 has been fairly static since we began the project. I have emailed Rosemary Keenan in the past with some details regarding people they previously had as Unknowns, but may not have passed on information on ones that I have “removed” from their original listings.

The primary reasons for the discrepancies are:

• Many of the people on the CCWC list were not child migrants in the sense that we have been accepting, and that the Senate has agreed to. Rather you will see that there are two groups of YCW (Young Christian Workers) totalling 15. There are a number of others who when we checked the Nominal Rolls were shown under occupations such as Junior Farm Worker, Domestic Worker, Nursery Trainee etc. They did not arrive in Australia under the recognised child migrant form LEM3.
• Some people have dates of departure prior to 1938 or after 1957, which was the time frame for child migration from UK.
• Other people were sponsored by the religious orders but actually travelled with families, in some cases the parents were escorts, and are therefore not child migrants.
• There are a number of what we have classed as duplications in the CCWC list.
• In some cases it would appear that the children did not actually travel to Australia after all.
• Changes in destinations for children at the last minute, eg to ensure they went to the same state as siblings

The main difficulty arises because we have not been able to give CCWC a copy of PHIND or receive an updated version of their index because of recent data protection issues, so we have been unable to make an accurate comparison.