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SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT
 YOUTH WELFARE DIVISION

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STRICTLY CONFIDENTIALTHE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

11th May 1971

Comments on Report of 6th May 1971

1. Mrs. Gaffney's lack of knowledge of the girls and of their parents and their circumstances is confirmed by the Supervisor of Classification and Treatment, Supervisor of After-Care and female social workers who comprise the Classification and Review Committees. Mrs. Gaffney's reports can be shown to be superficial and based on second-hand knowledge of girls. She has no procedures to enable her to have regular contact with girls, e.g. no weekly assemblies with staff and girls, no regular commitments for visits to sections either day or evening. This is regular practice in other Centres and Mrs. Gaffney has been given both advice and instructions which she has constantly ignored.
2. Attempts to contact Mrs. Gaffney by phone are often unsuccessful and the receptionist can only report that Mrs. Gaffney is out. The Deputy Superintendent is almost always uninformed of her movements during these absences. This experience is confirmed by Mr. Green and myself. It was also the experience of former Supervisor, Classification and Treatment, Mr. Cox. Planned visits to sections during the evening for the purpose of assessing the state of sections for counselling of staff for both individual and group counselling of girls is part of the normal duties of a Superintendent. Mrs. Gaffney does not attend to these duties. Meetings with parents in the company of trainees or various groups for counselling purposes at weekends are a requirement and Mrs. Gaffney has only given token attention to these duties. Her lack of understanding and ability to handle these meetings and the counselling required may be the real problem.
3. Her unsatisfactory handling of staff may be illustrated by reference to the cases of -

Mrs. Summersett (Former Deputy Superintendent - resigned)
 Miss P. Gunn (Deputy Superintendent)
 Mr. W. Batt (Secretary)
 Mrs. Hillman (Receptionist - resigned)
 Sr. Van Dinter (Nursing Sister - resigned)

Details of these cases are available if they are needed. It is emphasized that the relationships between the Superintendent and the Deputy Superintendent are so strained that a stage has been reached where the administration is prejudiced if both parties remain in their present positions. The position of the Secretary may also be untenable.
4. This paragraph is self-explanatory but before any decision is made to confirm Mrs. Gaffney's appointment it is essential and fair to give Miss Gunn an opportunity to state her experience at Winlaton.

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5. Mrs. Gaffney has held staff meetings on the direction of this office. The Supervisor, Classification and Treatment reports that they have been confined to discussion of procedural matters and have not been used to develop skills or explore new treatment theories and their application which is the most important purpose of staff training. Mrs. Gaffney's reports of staff meetings held, illustrate the inadequacy of her understanding of the requirements.
6. Classification Meetings are held fortnightly at Winlaton to consider all new girls in custody and those who have been returned for a second or further time. These meetings require an assessment of the girl and her family and must decide on her placement and a treatment plan for the future. Mrs. Gaffney does not present any evidence indicating interviews with either girls or parents and this work devolves on the Deputy Superintendent. Mrs. Gaffney offers no evidence of having personally re-assessed the situation of recidivists and this is a particular responsibility of the Superintendent. The institutional reports submitted by the Superintendent are very poor by comparison with such reports presented to the boys' Classification Committee at Turana. These can be compared. Mrs. Gaffney can only make superficial contributions and the Chairman of the Committee states that her presence is of little value to the Committee. The Chairman of the Review Committee reports in identical vein.

A new experiment on assessment of trainees based on Californian material was commenced six months ago at Winlaton on the initiative of this office and the Deputy Superintendent. The Superintendent was invited to be present and familiarise herself with the new concepts and she has attended approximately half of the meetings. It is maintained that she does not grasp the significance of this experiment and that she is not capable of conducting this work.

7. Periodical disturbances at Winlaton have occurred during the last ten years and in spite of increased staff and greatly improved facilities, together with the introduction of substantial social work services. Too many disturbances are still occurring. It is only our special precautions relative to procedures that have prevented much adverse publicity. The disturbances are related to the maintenance of traditional methods and the failure to initiate adequate treatment programmes on a conceptual and planned basis. It is the duty of the Deputy Superintendent to implement these programmes in the sections but the Superintendent has neither planned adequate programmes nor advised the Deputy Superintendent on their implementation. The Deputy would explain that ideas of her own have been rejected by the Superintendent and that she is obstructed in her attempts to implement programmes herself. Mrs. Gaffney has not anticipated disturbances by carrying out preventive work through intensive counselling of trainees and staff. The frequency of disturbances at Winlaton is in sharp contrast to the male centres and in particular to Turana which is a far more complex and difficult Institution carrying many more problem cases than Winlaton.
8. Relationships with specialist staff, e.g. Social Workers, psychiatrists, welfare officers, have been unsatisfactory at particular periods. The comments of the present psychiatrist are referred to in the covering memo. Relationships with present After-Care staff are harmonious but unproductive.

9. The Administration Officer and the Secretary of Winlaton draw attention to the Superintendent's lack of basic knowledge about the requirement for recording and documentation of stores and supply requirements. The Secretary's main point of concern is lack of consultation and of prior checking with him on correct procedure. He points to the use of confirmatory purchase orders to regularise purchases made by the Superintendent at a departmental store without consultation with the Secretary and in contravention of the instruction issued by the Director-General. A further problem is Mrs. Gaffney's direct communication with the Director-General on matters of administration and the subsequent issue of instruction by the Director-General without consultation. In general there is a lack of cohesion which is due to the absence of adequate liaison between the Superintendent and the Secretary.
10. Knowledge of and correct administration of certain vital regulations and procedures relating to young persons' legal rights, young persons on remand, bail, appeals and legal aid is absolutely essential. The Superintendent should have a full awareness of these regulations and should be able to instruct staff in their application. Mrs. Gaffney does not have this knowledge and cannot offer adequate instruction.



B. A. Keddie
Director of Youth Welfare