

FAMILY WELFARE DIVISION

WRH:LF

Plans for the re-definition of the
function of Box Hill Boys' Home.

Following your request of 19.7.1966, I have now discussed with Mrs. Jaggs her thoughts about the re-definition of the function of the Box Hill Boys' Home and would submit these for your consideration.

From discussion and visits to Box Hill it has been found that Major Broadstock is finding it difficult to care for the large number of educationally retarded boys with a history of offences and/or behaviour problems which he is now receiving from "Turana". He also dislikes the short placements which are appropriate to this type of youngster because of the difficulty caused by housing these indiscriminately among the settled long term boys.

Basically he wants both the maintenance which comes with full beds and a supply of "good lads" - a combination which current trends observable in newly admitted boys renders simply impossible.

There is need for an increasing number of wards from "Turana" to be placed in a remedial education setting - something analogous to, though not the same as, the English Approved School. Such an Institution is needed to give accommodation and training to the ever increasing number of boys, who are not sufficiently mature delinquents to profit from placement at Bayswater no. 2 or Tally Ho Boys' Village, but whose gross educational deficiencies, together with their tendencies towards difficult behaviour and their delinquent experience, makes them unsuitably placed in boys' homes geared towards the academically normal and conforming boy.

From Placement Meeting experience of late the former are increasing whilst the latter are decreasing rapidly and therefore there is need for a greater number of placements of the educationally retarded boy with consequent change of function in some of the Children's Homes.

The building arrangements of Box Hill are about the most suitable in the metropolitan area for this kind of Institution, having as it does several separate living sections and an already established special school of the education Department within the grounds. Setting up an Institution of this type would involve changes in policy and general outlook both in the school and the home, but little financial outlay would be involved other than some minor structural alterations and perhaps a small increase in care staff to give closer supervision out of school hours.

Should such a plan be acceptable by the Salvation Army Authorities, one means of implementing it could be as follows:-

After the usual large number of home releases are made at Christmas 1966, one section, I suggest the older one across from the school, be emptied completely and its long term inmates be transferred to the remaining two sections. This section could then be used for the type of lad I have described in paragraph four. All boys from this Section would attend only the internal special school and do remedial work. Of the remaining inmates, older boys would go, as they do now, to outside Technical and High Schools, bright younger boys could go to outside state schools while duller ones

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continue to attend the internal school until they can graduate to outside state schools.

There would of course by some difficulties connected with running two virtually separate Institutions in the one area but these should not prove insuperable and the problem of mixing the two groups of boys in the internal school should also be capable of satisfactory arrangement. This would enable a big gap in facilities to be filled with the minimum expense and the dispensing with complicated individual discussions between "Turana" and Box Hill.

You will remember that in October, 1964 I discussed the change of function in Box Hill Boys and East Kew Girls' Home with Colonel Darlow whereby Family Group Homes would be introduced at Box Hill and, should this plan continue, I do not see that this present suggestion would conflict in any way as there seems to be plenty of room at Box Hill and with Colonel Darlow's plan of having a large fully equipped oval this would act as an excellent division between the types of child care at Box Hill.

It is of interest to note that the sale of East Kew Girls' Home has been withdrawn despite an offer by Carey Grammar School. I do not know whether this was because the Army considered that Carey's offer was not great enough or whether they have changed their plans previously discussed.

Possibly ^{after} if you have perused these plans you would wish to have further discussion with the Army authorities but I feel that something along this pattern should be introduced as soon as possible as the number of boys requiring remedial education is rapidly increasing and the placements available are non existent in many cases.



(W.R. Hughes)
O/C Children's Homes
29.8.66.

The Director