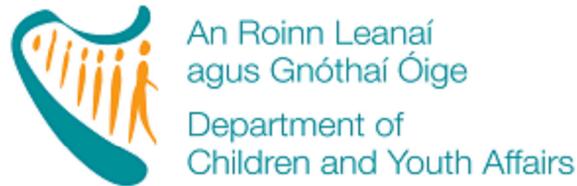


PRESS RELEASE



20th May 2016

Minister Zappone announces appointment of new Board of Management and governance reforms in Oberstown

- Appointment of Professor Ursula Kilkelly as Chairperson of new Oberstown board confirmed
- Remaining Board positions filled in accordance with Children Act 2001 and Guidelines for appointment of State Boards
- Amalgamation of children detention schools to come into effect on 1 June 2016

The Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Katherine Zappone TD, has announced the appointment of the new Oberstown Board of Management for the children detention school campus in Oberstown, Lusk, Co Dublin for a period of three years. The following persons have been appointed to the new board:

Professor Ursula Kilkelly (Chairperson)*

Mr Jim Gibson

Ms Fionnuala Anderson

Ms Sinead O'Herlihy

Mr Fiachra Barrett

Mr Pat Rooney

Ms Elizabeth Howard

Mr Dan Kelleher *

Mr Charles Irwin
Mr Diego Gallagher *
Ms Emer Woodfull
Ms Fiona Murphy
Mr Michael Farrell

*: Professor Kilkelly, Mr Gallagher and Mr Kelleher also served on the last Oberstown board and are being reappointed

Minister Zappone stated:

“I am very grateful to all of the members of the new board for their commitment to assist with the governance of the Oberstown children detention campus for the next 3 years. The new Oberstown Board will have an important role in ensuring the campus continues to provide safe and secure custody for children in detention and in addition, the safest possible working environment for staff. A programme of investment in the Oberstown campus, combined with necessary legal and operational reforms, has been underway in recent years and I want to thank the Oberstown workforce for their continued efforts in meeting the needs of children in custody”.

“In particular, the new Board will oversee the transfer of responsibility for 17 year old boys who are serving a sentence to Oberstown. This will take place on the earliest date possible in 2016, with the addition of a sufficient number of new care staff under a recruitment programme which is ongoing at present”.

The Minister added:

“The appointment of a new Oberstown Board is also a requirement for the amalgamation of the three children detention schools in Oberstown into a single legal entity, as provided for in section 14 of the Children (Amendment) Act 2015. The amalgamation of the children detention schools will complement the initiatives taken in recent years to create a “single campus” ethos in Oberstown, to improve governance and best use of resources and to support the development and expansion of the facilities there”.

“I have now signed the required legal orders giving effect to the amalgamation from 1 June 2016. From this date, there will be just one children detention school in operation in Oberstown, known as the Oberstown Children Detention Campus”.

The Minister noted that the amalgamation of the children detention schools would now be notified to the President of the High Court, the President of the Circuit Court and the President of the District Court, as required by section 14 of the Children (Amendment) Act 2001.

ENDS

20 May 2016

NOTE FOR EDITORS:

Professor Ursula Kilkelly is the Dean of the School of Law, University College Cork. She is recognised as a leading expert in issues relating to the detention of children and has published widely on youth justice issues.

The following members of the board were appointed by the Minister on foot of the requirements of section 167 of the Children Act 2001:

Mr Jim Gibson is interim Chief Operations Officer of Tusla, the Child and Family Agency
Ms Fionnuala Anderson is an Education Officer in Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board

Ms Sinead O'Herlihy is a Night Supervision Officer on the Oberstown campus

Mr Fiachra Barrett is a Residential Social Care Worker on the Oberstown campus

Mr Pat Rooney and Ms Elizabeth Howard are local community residents in the vicinity of the Oberstown campus

Mr Dan Kelleher is a Principal Officer in the Irish Youth Justice Service, Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

The following members of the board were appointed by the Minister on foot of the publication of a notice for expressions of interest on the website www.stateboards.ie in January 2016, under the 2014 Guidelines for appointments to State Boards:

Mr Charles Irwin is an Accountant with the Professional Development Service for Teachers, Dublin

Mr Diego Gallagher is a solicitor with Byrne Wallace Solicitors, Dublin

Ms Emer Woodfull is a practicing barrister at the Law Library, Dublin

Ms Fiona Murphy is a service coordinator with the Extern organisation, Dublin. Extern is a charitable organisation which provides services to children assessed as being high risk requiring intensive community based support.

Mr Michael Farrell is Corporate Secretary in University College Cork

General information on the Children Detention Schools

There are three children detention schools currently in operation, all located on the Oberstown campus at Lusk, Co. Dublin. These are Trinity House School, Oberstown Boys School and Oberstown Girls School.

On foot of progress made in the recent years, the children detention schools are currently authorised to detain all categories of detained children with the exception of boys aged 17 years who are serving a sentence and currently accommodated in Wheatfield Place of Detention. The Government commitment to end the practice of detaining children in adult prison facilities will be fully met on the earliest date possible in 2016, on foot of the addition of a sufficient number of new care staff under a recruitment programme which is ongoing at present.

Significant progress has been made in this area since 2011, as follows:

- Capital funding of some €56m was confirmed for the Oberstown development project in 2012 and this project is largely complete. The project involves an increase in the capacity of the Oberstown campus and replacement of some existing detention buildings.
- The remit of the Ombudsman for Children was extended to children in adult prison facilities in June 2012.
- A new therapeutic intervention service, known as ACTS (assessment, consultation and therapy service) was introduced for children in detention (and also in special care facilities provided by Tusla, the Child and Family Agency) in 2013. This provides psychology, psychiatry, speech and language therapy and referral to addiction services to children with the most challenging needs.
- Responsibility was transferred to Oberstown from the prison system for all 16 year old boys (May 2012) and 17 year old boys who are remanded in custody (March 2015). As a result and given the temporary assignment of responsibility for 17 year old boys who are serving a sentence of detention in Wheatfield Place of Detention since July 2013, there are now no children detained in St Patrick's Institution on most occasions.
- A single Oberstown campus management team, bringing together all 3 children detention schools, was introduced in December 2013 to improve governance and enable more efficient, shared services and common policies to be developed.
- The Children (Amendment) Act 2015 was enacted in July 2015. This Act includes provision for the repeal of all legal options on the statute book which allow for detention of children in adult prison facilities and the amalgamation of the children detention schools. The Act is being commenced in stages and will finally end the practice of detaining children in adult prisons.

Relevant weblinks:

www.dcy.gov.ie

www.iyjs.ie

www.oberstown.com

Department of Children and Youth Affairs

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