

Section 21 Response – July 2018 in respect of Dowans

Part A - Background

The information contained within this report is based on an investigation of the organisation's records between 1930 and present day. The records reviewed include the minutes of meetings of the organisation's governing body and relevant management committees; HR records so far as these are available during this period (please note that HR records are not generally retained for longer than seven years); Financial records in so far as these are available and individual case records of residential service users have also been examined where specific allegations or complaints of abuse involving those service users have been made.

The organisation has access to extensive records within its archives, including individual child records. It is likely to be possible to locate and review individual child records if specific allegations are raised.

1. DOWANS

1.1 Any information, whether in children's files or in any other record (such as a log or punishment book, a report or correspondence), relating to the care and treatment of the individuals listed in Appendix 2, all of whom are believed to have been former residents in the establishment during said period and who have made allegations of abuse, including any record showing (a) the circumstances in which they came to be admitted and the steps, if any, taken to prepare them for admission (b) the persons (such as house parents and the like) within the establishment with direct responsibility for their care, welfare and safety (c) their daily routine whilst in care at the establishment (d) the nature and frequency of the punishment or disciplinary measures they were subjected to (e) any concerns and/or complaints raised them or on their behalf about their treatment and/or the treatment of other residents whilst they are residents at the establishment (f) the extent of contact between the said individuals and their family, friends, professional and official visitors (g) the extent and content of any communications about them whilst they were in care between the organisation or anyone acting on its behalf and external bodies or persons such as local authorities, child welfare officers, social worker, inspectors, parents and other family members (h) the medical and dental care they received whilst they were in care at the establishment, including any treatment for, and the cause or causes of, any injuries suffered by them during their period in care (i) any decisions taken, whether as part of a process or review or otherwise, about their continued residence at the establishment and the reasons for such decisions (j) the circumstances in which they came to be discharged and the steps, if any, taken to prepare them for their discharge (k) the extent of continuing contact between them and the organisation in the period immediately following their discharge and the reasons for such continuing contact;

See Appendix 1.

- 1.2** Aberlour have been granted an Extension to submit information in relation to 1.2 by 6th September 2018.
- 1.3** Aberlour have been granted an Extension to submit information in relation to 1.3 by 6th September 2018.
- 1.4** Aberlour have been granted an Extension to submit information in relation to 1.4 by 6th September 2018.

However, we may find reference to the organisation's past policies and procedures in our review of organisational minute books and anything we do find will be submitted to the Inquiry by 6th September 2018.

- 1.5 As regards staff and/or volunteers working at the establishment during said period or any part thereof (a) what qualifications (if any) staff or volunteers acting as residential care workers required to possess (b) how they were recruited, trained and managed (including guided, advised and instructed, supervised, monitored and supported);**

- (a) What qualifications were staff or volunteers acting in residential care required to have?**

There is limited information about the experience/qualifications of staff working within the establishment, but the following key points can be extrapolated from the organisation's historic records.

Statutory and regulatory requirements and guidance on experience and qualifications during this period were limited, if not non-existent. It was not until 2009 that statutory and regulatory requirements on qualification levels came into place.

The organisation did not have set requirements as to experience and qualifications but the standard expected of the individuals undertaking these roles is evident in governance and management discussions about this issue.

In terms of experience, the organisation generally sought staff with some form of experience in the work they would be undertaking for the organisation, for example, the Lady Superintendent was expected to have past experience overseeing a large residential child care establishment and houseparents were expected to have past experience working in residential child care.

In terms of qualifications, historic records suggest that, although it was not a requirement, many of the houseparents employed by the organisation had some form of qualification in social work or child care. The organisation often employed

social work students to carry out vacation work with the organisation with the aim of retaining these students as staff if they were suitable.

Staff were encouraged to undertake further training and qualifications and the organisation often sent staff to undertake courses.

(b) How were staff recruited, trained, guided, advised, instructed, supervised, monitored and supported?

The establishment was managed on a day-to-day basis by the houseparents employed at the establishment.

The warden had overall managerial and leadership responsibility for all of the organisation's establishments.

Employment records were also not ordinarily retained for longer than seven years.

The houseparents were responsible for managing the establishment and any assistant houseparents and domestic staff employed there. The houseparents were directly accountable to the warden (later known as the principal) who had overall management, oversight and supervision responsibility for the establishment and all staff employed there.

There is limited information about the particular operations at the establishment but during the establishment's operational period the warden was involved in all practical aspects of the organisation's establishments' and was in regular contact with the establishment staff, particularly the houseparents. The warden would also have made regular announced and unannounced visits to the establishment. The minute books also note visits by the Governors in relation to general standards in the establishment and details of visits following concerns being raised into standards of care.

1.6 Information regarding any complaints made about staff, volunteers, and/or visitors to the establishment in relation to the care or treatment of any child residing at the establishment;

None.

1.7 (A) How the establishment and the care of children residing at the establishment were funded during said period and (b) the expenditure annually during said period by the organisation and/or the establishment on training and professional development of residential care workers employed at the establishment and on child care courses and qualifications for staff working with, and caring for, children residing at the establishment;

Group Homes/Organisation

Included in the files attached are extracts from historic minute books in relation to the Finance information for the period 1969 to 2002 inclusive. From the group home period onwards, Aberlour Finance information is for the organisation as a whole, rather than for one building/location. Some detail on the split/consolidation of accounts is included, however from this period onwards, it becomes more difficult to identify individual income and spend at each home from the records still available to us.

The following are years in which there was no information found:

- 1990
- 1996

See Appendix 2 – Financial Information

2. An Inventory of all documents falling within Paragraph 1 above.

Appendix 1

CW File

Appendix 2

Financial Information 1953 to 1970

3. Any record or document indicating, showing or describing the whereabouts of any record or document falling within Paragraph 1 above where such record of document is out with the possession and/or control of the organisation.

None.

4. Failing principals, copies, electronic copies, digital or other medium copies, draft or duplicates of the above or any of them.

Appendix 2

The Dowans Report – the Dowans Complaints