

## **JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

### **SECURE CARE PLACES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN SCOTLAND**

#### **SUBMISSION FROM KIBBLE EDUCATION AND CARE CENTRE**

##### **What is the current provision of secure accommodation in Scotland?**

Kibble Safe Centre is one of 5 secure accommodation centres currently operating in Scotland. Alongside Good Shepherd, Rossie, St Mary's, and the local authority-controlled Edinburgh Secure Services, a total of 84 beds are available across the country. We currently provide 18 beds split into three 6 bedded care houses at our campus in Paisley. An additional 19th placement is available for emergencies.

Kibble Safe Centre provides a secure and supportive environment to help young people aged 12-18 at risk of harming themselves or others. We use a trauma informed approach throughout the Safe Centre in line with the Scottish Government's strategy: 'Mental Health in Scotland – a 10-year vision'. We are part of the Scotland Excel national framework for secure care services and advertise vacancies using the Secure Accommodation Network Scotland website ([www.sanscotland.org](http://www.sanscotland.org)).

##### **What is the current level of cross-border placements in secure care units?**

In Summer 2018, the Senior Leadership and Board of Directors at Kibble reviewed cross-border placements. The agreed decision was to prioritise placements from Scottish local authorities and that we would only consider cross border placements when there is more than one vacancy and no other Scottish placements anticipated.

Out of the 18 young people in our care, there is currently one young person from cross border (correct as of 17/05/19). We regularly receive requests for accommodation from other parts of the UK with 26 requests since 1st January 2019. None of these have been accepted.

In the previous two years, we have declined just 2 Scottish placements when there have been vacancies. Careful consideration was given to both cases. In one case we were unable to meet the extensive care needs of the individual, and the other case would have seen an accused perpetrator accommodated on the same campus as their victim and was therefore deemed inappropriate.

There continues to be instances when we are unable to facilitate requests for a placement from Scottish local authorities because we are at capacity. Since 1st January 2019, we have accepted 29.2% of these requests and declined 70.8% due to issues of capacity.

##### **What are your views on the structure, funding and sustainability of the secure care units in Scotland?**

Kibble is of the opinion that the structure of secure care services in Scotland offers value for money to the public sector whilst at the same time providing specialist integrated services to young people.

Providers are either independent charities or local authority controlled. Unlike in other jurisdictions, Scotland has never allowed private companies to deliver secure care services meaning that there is no profit motive in the sector and any surplus generated is reinvested into providing services for young people. This allows collaborative working across different organisations to help achieve better outcomes for young people.

The national framework in which Kibble participates are negotiated on behalf of Scotland's local authorities by Scotland Excel. In our opinion, this arrangement has worked well however we are always happy to explore new ways of commissioning that ensures sustainability in the sector going forward.

We are open minded about the principle of block booking to ensure availability for Scottish placements. This could apply to not just local authorities but partners in Scottish Government and NHS.

We would have deep concerns about any moves to include private sector providers into the framework in Scotland. This has been proven to not work in England and has failed to provide high quality care and value for money.

In the longer term, we wish to see a reduction in the demand for secure care placements due to earlier interventions, a better understanding of the needs of young people and greater options around alternatives to secure care.

**What are your views on the development of services and training at HMP&YOI Polmont?**

Staff at Kibble Safe Centre report positive experiences when working with colleagues from HMYOI Polmont. We would welcome the opportunity to improve this relationship to ensure a consistency of knowledge and practice with colleagues in the SPS.

Any development of services or training that promotes a deeper understanding of the work of secure care services in Scotland for SPS staff would be in our opinion a constructive move. Kibble are happy to share our extensive experience and best practice with colleagues across the secure care sector and SPS to inform any new policies or training courses which HMYOI Polmont are considering developing.

**How does HMP&YOI Polmont interact with secure care units in Scotland in terms of the transfer of young people in custody?**

On the occasions when there has been a transfer of a young person leaving the care of Kibble and going into HMYOI Polmont, this occurs on the day before their 18th birthday. In the lead up to the transfer, SPS staff have visited a young person in anticipation of the move. Kibble staff and SPS take this opportunity to share issues, concerns or any other

information that will help the young person receive continuous care throughout the transition. Because a young person may have been with Kibble for many months and the date of their transfer is known, we can properly plan in advance. Where possible, young people with experience of Polmont will visit their peers in Kibble as they prepare for a transfer to share their own experiences.

When a young person is transferring from HMYOI Polmont to Kibble, it is likely that there will be less of an opportunity to plan for a seamless transition. This is often due to the young person being placed in Polmont as a last resort since no secure accommodation is available. When space does become available, the transfer occurs as quickly as possible to ensure that the young person is most appropriately cared for. Whilst it can be difficult to plan for these situations, we would welcome any work exploring how to make these transfers easier for young people.

**How has the NHS/Scottish Prison Service developed youth mental health and wellbeing strategy in secure care units or in prison custody?**

The provision of mental health services is still, to some extent, reliant upon the location and capacity of the local NHS to provide that service.

There is a high demand for mental health services in secure care and this is often alongside equal or higher demand from residential and similar provision that are linked to a secure centre. This can result in an inequality of service.

Over the last ten years the service to our Safe Centre has improved in part due to an increased partnership with NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde Health Board. In the last 12-24 months we have received a higher, consistent and more proportional level of service. This is very welcome, and it is hoped that it is sustainable.

The demand for mental health services in secure care has resulted in many in-house services being implemented and developed in these sites. Our experience is that these two services can work well, collaborate and add something unique that may not be possible if the services were not connected.

If the NHS was to provide such a level of service that the in-house services were redundant, it would be essential for this NHS service to be highly integrated and 'part' of how the centre runs. For a mental health service to be effective in secure care it needs to be relational, flexible and responsive to the young people and staff who live there.

**How are Scotland's international human rights obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child being met in relation secure care units and HMP&YOI Polmont?**

Children's Rights conventions and legislation represent an important international consensus on what must be done to safeguard and promote the best interests of children and young people. For Kibble, this means we aim to secure the best possible outcomes

from our work, for each individual child. This key aim is representative of Kibble's core values regardless of what services the young person accesses.

Within the secure environment all young people are given a welcome pack which contains, amongst other things, the Scottish Governments Children's Rights easy read booklet, a copy of the SCYPS 7 Golden Rules and details of how to become a member of Who Cares? Scotland.

Central to Kibble's approach to the rights of our young people is our partnership with Who Cares? Scotland. Through this, all young people have access to an independent advocate that ensures their voice is heard within both Kibble and multi-agency meetings. As part of this our Who Cares? Scotland team independently chair all School Council Meetings and provide a review of young people's concerns on a quarterly basis. In addition, the young people are fully aware of their rights to legal representation as and when required.

The UNCRC is embedded in Kibble's ethos, including the right to be consulted and participate under Article 12. We achieve this through School Council Meetings, monthly Participation Groups with WC?S, participation in organisation and national level consultations, Complaints & Feedback, and young people's house meetings.

In addition to Article 12, Articles 14 and 17 give children and young people the right to hold their own opinions and to access information. Within the secure environment all young people are given an information leaflet explaining what information is held on them and their rights to access this.

Article 3 states that parties should ensure that the child is afforded such protection and care as is necessary for his or her wellbeing, considering the rights and duties of parents and those with parental responsibility. To support this, regular communication is made with guardians (and key people) of all young people accessing the service. This includes ensuring the young people (where safe and risk assessed) are given the opportunity to regularly communicate with the people most important to them.

### **What are your views on the work of the expert review of mental health and wellbeing for younger people in custody?**

Kibble welcomes the work of the expert review into mental health and wellbeing for young people in custody. The review comes at a time when Kibble are actively exploring new ways to help young people in need of intensive levels of support.

Whilst secure care is often the safest place available for young people in crisis, we have identified a cohort where an alternative specialist setting would be more appropriate. This hybrid model would consider environmental factors that can have an impact on the healing, trauma and emotional factors associated with loss of liberty.

We have conducted extensive research into the benefits of an alternative approach and are encouraged about its potential to achieve better outcomes for young people whilst in the longer term reducing the need for secure care across Scotland.

**Any other issues you may wish to comment on in relation to mental health care provision and secure care and HMP&YOI Polmont?**

At Kibble we support children, young people and young adults (aged 5 – 26) with complex social, emotional, behavioural and educational needs, many of whom have experienced significant trauma in their lives. Our experience and research to date suggests that there is a need within the UK to provide alternative provision for young people who pose a significant risk to themselves.

As previously stated, many young people are placed in secure care as there is currently no provision that can optimally meet their needs. We are developing a new service that will be specifically designed to help young people who:

- have complex mental health needs
- are receiving medication and require constant care
- present a risk to themselves (suicidal and significant self-harming)
- seek intensive medical care including general hospital admission
- demonstrate high-risk behaviours that require large multi-agency responses
- have had major rejections from systems and a history of multiple placement breakdowns

Although medical intervention is important, at Kibble we focus on a holistic approach which recognises the parity between mental and physical health. Our team of psychologists, care and education staff work across a range of disciplines to provide assessment and therapeutic input for young people and their families.

Data tracked within Kibble over the last 18 months has identified up to 20% of young people placed within our services would have been better served by a purpose-built provision. Furthermore, accommodating these young people within the secure sector has a significant impact on this system, the staff and the other young people.

Kibble are in the process of developing a bespoke service to support young people with complex mental health needs are not being met within current provision. This open setting will offer 24/7 intensive therapeutic input in a nurturing and incorporating Kibble's Therapeutic Trauma Informed care model. We believe that this purpose-built service is required to meet the needs of these young people with a focus on keeping them safe without the need for a secure environment.

It is our belief that there are currently no existing alternatives and it is the right time to address this for Scotland's young people. Kibble is grateful for the opportunity to respond to the committee's inquiry and we would welcome the opportunity to discuss any aspect of our response with Members.