

Chapter 11

St Joseph's Industrial School, Glin, Co Limerick ('Glin'), 1872–1966

Introduction

- 11.01** The inquiry into St Joseph's Industrial School, Glin consisted of an analysis of the documentary material from various sources, namely the Christian Brothers, the Department of Education and Science, and the Bishop of Limerick.
- 11.02** The Congregation supplied extra material between March 2007 and June 2008, pursuant to a decision to waive legal privilege that would, if it was applicable to the documents, have protected them from disclosure. Two reports on Glin gave information on the management and structure, and they have been used in compiling this report, particularly with respect to historical data and statistics. Mr Bernard Dunleavy BL was asked to report on the archival material on Glin that was in the Provincial House, Cluain Mhuire, and he asked Brothers who had been in Glin to write memoirs of their experiences there. Following this report, Br John McCormack also researched the documentation and spoke to Brothers who were in Glin when it operated as an industrial school. The McCormack report was made available to the Committee in March 2007, and the Dunleavy report in June 2008.
- 11.03** St Joseph's Industrial School began in a large purpose-built block in Sexton Street, Limerick, in 1872. It was established under the Industrial Schools Act (Ireland), 1868, to care for and educate neglected, orphaned and abandoned Roman Catholic boys who were at risk of becoming delinquents and entering a life of crime. The underlying philosophy was that giving such boys a basic education and a trade would make them useful citizens by preparing them for work in industry or farming.
- 11.04** The School remained on this site until 1928 when it transferred to the former Glin District School in west County Limerick, where the School continued until it closed in 1966.

The move to Glin

- 11.05** In 1894, Bishop Dwyer of Limerick proposed to the Local Government Board that children currently residing in workhouses of Counties Limerick and north Kerry should be gathered into a District School under the management of the Christian Brothers and the Sisters of Mercy. This District School was housed in the old workhouse buildings at Glin. In 1920, workhouses throughout Ireland closed and, in 1924, the Board of Health decided to close Glin District School. By 1926, the School ceased to exist.
- 11.06** The Christian Brothers petitioned the Department of Education that St Joseph's Industrial School be transferred to this site from the now-overcrowded building in Sexton Street. The Minister for Education recommended the transfer to Glin, subject to a satisfactory report by the Inspector of Schools on the suitability of the buildings, and provided certain alterations and improvements were

made to the existing buildings. Renovation and improvement works costing £15,000 were carried out. It involved the installation of a new hot water heating system, dining hall, infirmary, chapel, new floors in the dormitories, new windows and doors, new steam presses and new cookers.

11.07 In June 1928, the staff and boys of St Joseph's Industrial School moved to their new premises at Glin, some 50 kilometres from Limerick City. Despite the alterations, it was never a suitable building for a boys' residential school. A letter from the Brother Provincial on 14th November 1961 suggested it did not become the property of the Christian Brothers. He wrote, 'Glin was the only workhouse that was handed over to us and hence the only Industrial School for which we are paying rent to the Department of Health'. Correspondence with the Christian Brothers confirmed that Glin never became the property of the Christian Brothers, but was leased at a yearly rent of £40 from Limerick Health Authority. In 1970, the premises were returned to the Authority.

11.08 The majority of boys who were committed to Glin through the courts came from impoverished and dysfunctional backgrounds. Some were committed for criminal offences. Court orders and School registers retained by the Christian Brothers show that, during the period 1940 to 1966, a total of 759 boys, of whom 131 were illegitimate, were committed to the School.

11.09 The number of children in Glin grew during the 1930s and 1940s, reaching a peak of 212 in 1949 and 1950. There was a steady decline in numbers during the 1950s and 1960s, and the School was closed in 1966, at which stage there were 48 boys in residence. The following table sets out the numbers of boys in the School:

Year	Number under detention
1937	172
1938	154
1939	158
1940	158
1941	187
1942	200
1943	208
1944	200
1945	206
1946	208
1947	211
1948	211
1949	212
1950	212
1951	203
1952	187
1953	182
1954	190
1955	160
1956	142
1957	133
1958	123
1959	120
1960	103
1961	91
1962	90
1963	82
1964	80
1965	68
1966	48

11.10 The average age of boys committed to Glin was nine years and 10 months, and the average stay of these boys was five years and eight months.

11.11 Mr Dunleavy BL, in his report on Glin Industrial School, examined the reasons for boys being admitted. During the period 1940 to 1947, he tabulated his findings as follows:

Reason for admission	Number
Destitution	111
Larceny	62
Not attending school	61
Wandering	49
Having a parent not a proper guardian	38
Parents unable to control child	12
Receiving alms	10
Being under the care of a parent with criminal habits	6
Homelessness	5
Fraudulent conversion	2
Housebreaking	2
Assault	2
Malicious damage	2
Total	362

11.12 His examination of the data revealed that, apart from one 12-year-old boy who was sentenced for a period of one and a half years, ‘not one of the boys above was committed for less than the maximum period allowed by law’. In short, no boy was to leave the School before the age of 16.

11.13 He went on to note:

Even if crimes such as larceny, truancy and housebreaking, which may well have been motivated by poverty are excluded from the list of offences directly attributable to poverty – it is clear that over 48% of the boys were committed to Glin as a direct consequence of their impoverished backgrounds.

11.14 Mr Dunleavy stated that, between 1947 and 1966, the reasons for admissions were as follows:

Reason for admission	Number
Having a parent not a proper guardian	218
Destitution	95
Larceny	35
Not attending school	12
Housebreaking	7
Wandering	6
Homelessness	4
Parents unable to control child	3
Receiving Alms	2
Parent unable to support child	2
Fraud	1
Being under the care of a parent with criminal habits	1
Total	386

Management in Glin

11.15 The Industrial Schools Act (Ireland), 1868 had envisaged that each school be under the control of a Manager and Management Committee, with the day-to-day running of the school under the supervision of a Resident Manager. In Glin, however, as in all Christian Brothers’ industrial

schools, the role of Resident Manager was assumed by the local Superior of the Community. The House Council, consisting of the Superior, Sub-Superior, and one or more Councillors, served as a form of Management Committee.

- 11.16** The numbers in the primary school in Glin varied from a maximum of 212 boys, in the late 1940s, to 48 when the School closed in 1966. The average number of teachers who served on the staff was five.

The role of Resident Manager

- 11.17** The Resident Manager was responsible for the overall management of Glin on a day-to-day basis. The duties of the Resident Manager included the health and welfare of the boys, admission and discharge, staff, management of buildings and property, and interaction with Government Departments and other agencies. He was also the Superior of the Community and Manager of the Primary School. In this role the Resident Manager had the responsibilities now carried out by a Board of Management. The Resident Manager had responsibility for the educational life of the School, the lay teachers and the finance.

- 11.18** From 1936 until 1966, Glin had eight Resident Managers, three of whom served terms of six years.

- 11.19** Br Jules¹ was appointed Resident Manager in the early 1950s. He abolished the separate post of Disciplinarian and assumed the duties himself. In an internal Christian Brothers interview that he gave, he recalled in relation to discipline:

There were no written rules. There was a general understanding of rules, passed on from year to year. I never saw the “Rules and Regulations for the Industrial Schools”.

- 11.20** Br Coyan,² speaking about his experiences in Glin, recalled Br Jules and his attitude to corporal punishment in the School:

Well we had strict and firm orders from Br Jules, he was the boss and the principal. We were not to punish a young fella, if any young fella became troublesome, he was to be sent to him. I remember that occasion when I had the run in with [a boy], it was reported to him and he met me the next morning and he ate me for dead and I said sorry I lost my temper and that's that.

- 11.21** In 1955, the Visitor remarked, ‘There is a homely spirit prevailing in our Glin Industrial School that could hardly be attained in a very large school’. The post of Disciplinarian was never reinstated in Glin, and subsequent Resident Managers continued with this regime. Br Hugues³ replaced Br Jules as Resident Manager in the late 1950s and was considered kind and considerate towards the boys. A Visitor’s Report stated:

when the Superior came last Summer a number of boys took to running away although they had been kindly treated. It appears that this phase is rather common at change of Superior. Now all have settled down again ... The Superior is kind and considerate towards the boys and the boys respond well and seem to be quite happy and friendly. The Superior is not a believer in rigorous discipline.

¹ This is a pseudonym.

² This is a pseudonym.

³ This is a pseudonym.

- 11.22** Br Hugues continued to be viewed as a successful Resident Manager in Glin and, in 1961, the Visitor reported that he was:
- a man of happy disposition, gentle, kind and self-sacrificing and not easily perturbed. He seems to possess the qualities which contribute to the efficient running of the school and the happiness of the Brothers and boys.
- 11.23** The Visitor in 1962 remarked that the Superior was:
- very highly appreciated by each and every member of the community for his evenness of disposition, his sense of fairness to the boys and to the Brothers ... He is very kind to the boys and they appreciate this as shown by the good spirit in the place.
- 11.24** In 1964, the Visitor singled out Br Hugues for his 'efficiency, self-sacrifice, kindness to all and devotedness to duty ...'.
- 11.25** It would appear that from the early 1950s the regime was less strict in Glin than in some other Christian Brothers' schools, and the influence of a kinder and more efficient Resident Manager had a lasting effect on the ethos of the School. However, the accommodation of the School in a former Victorian workhouse meant that what improvements were effected were offset by the unsuitability of the building for its purpose.
- 11.26** The personnel created the management system and, while that had the advantage of the system changing with the style and personality of the man assigned the role of Resident Manager, it also meant an inefficient Manager could seriously affect the working conditions and quality of life in the School.
- 11.27** Mr Dunleavy in his report on Glin stated:
- I encountered very little evidence of what one might term proper systems and methods in Glin Industrial School. There is no indication either in the archives or from the memoirs of Christian Brothers who formerly worked at Glin that any proper staff or community meetings were held in the school.
- 11.28** He also added:
- While the Brother Superior was ultimately obliged to take responsibility for the pupils at Glin, there is no evidence of any formal management structures at the School.

Finance

- 11.29** In his report on Glin, Br McCormack stated that from the mid-1960s the grant paid by the State was insufficient to meet the needs of the Institution. He concluded:
- That this was the state of the School's finances in the last two years of its existence speaks volumes for the inadequacy of Government funding over the years.
- 11.30** By 1963, numbers in Glin had fallen dramatically: in 1966 when it closed, there were only 48 boys in residence. Because State grants were paid on a per capita basis, a fall in numbers had an inevitable impact on finances, and the Brothers were left with no alternative but to close down schools once they became uneconomical to run.
- 11.31** Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, however, numbers were sufficiently high to ensure an adequate income for the Institution, and this was particularly so after 1944 when the State grants were made payable on the accommodation limit of the School rather than the certified limit. For Glin, this meant an increase of per capita payments from 140 to 214. During this period,

conditions for the boys in Glin were poor and in no respect reflected the funding that was available to the Institution.

- 11.32** The Visitation Reports for the period were not consistent in respect of financial information. The 1941 Report recorded a payment of £330 to the Manager, £200 to the Sub-Manager, and £120 to each of the five other Brothers working in the School. This represented approximately 25% of the State funding, which amounted to £5,014. It reflected a pattern seen in other industrial schools, where substantial sums were paid to the Community account for the maintenance of Brothers and of the Congregation. The figures for 1940 were unusually high and there is no explanation as to why. Subsequent Visitation Reports recorded sums paid into the Building Fund and, by the time the School closed, it had £7,000 invested in the Building Fund and a credit balance of £2,427 in the bank. The sums invested in the Building Fund were 'excess funds' from the Institution.

Physical abuse

- 11.33** The basic stance of the Christian Brothers is that their institutions were not abusive and provided a positive experience for the boys who lived in them. They concede that, at certain times, some Brothers may have overstepped the mark and used excessive corporal punishment but, in the main, they contend that rules and regulations were complied with..
- 11.34** The Christian Brothers also contend that, where serious breaches of the rules occurred, the matter was dealt with promptly and appropriately by the authorities.
- 11.35** There are eight cases, within the documentation provided, where excessive corporal punishment was used. Not all of the Brothers mentioned below were working in Glin at the time the allegation against them was made. They are considered in detail below.
- 11.36** As in all the institutions run by the Christian Brothers, no punishment book was maintained. Without a written record of the nature of the punishments given, and the reasons for giving them, it is impossible to write about the extent of its use. The records that do exist are about clear excesses.
- 11.37** As set out in the General Chapter on the Christian Brothers, there were two sets of regulations governing the use of corporal punishment: the Department of Education regulations and the Rules and Acts of General Chapter.
- 11.38** With regard to the Rules and Acts of General Chapter, Mr Dunleavy found that 'none of the Brothers who wrote a memoir have any recollection of the existence of such rules'. There were no written rules on the use of corporal punishment available to the Brothers within the School. They learnt how and when to punish from older, more experienced Brothers, who told them or showed them what to do.
- 11.39** By contrast, Br Gaston,⁴ when interviewed by Br McCormack for his report, stated, 'There was no written code of discipline, but all were familiar with the rules laid down in the Acts of Chapter and the injunctions of the Directory concerning punishment of pupils'.
- 11.40** This informal approach to the regulation of corporal punishment increased the risk of abuses occurring.

⁴ This is a pseudonym.

The Blake case (1945)

- 11.41** This case concerned a boy Paul Blake,⁵ who escaped from Glin following a severe punishment and went home to his mother. The story is recounted in a letter from a local councillor to the Minister for Education and the Minister for Justice:

It is my distasteful duty to draw your attention to what I consider is a matter of paramount public importance. [A boy's mother] called upon me on Wednesday last the 1st instant together with her son ... whom she stated was committed to Glin Industrial School. She further stated that the boy had escaped from the institution on the previous day, Tuesday 31st ultimo. She stated that he had received a flogging on Monday the 30th ultimo. She invited me to examine her son's back which bore numerous dark stripes. There were also sores visible on the boy's back.

I issued a dispensary ticket to [a doctor] to have the youth examined at William Street Garda Station, Limerick, on the evening of Wednesday the 1st instant, three days after the alleged flogging had taken place. He (the doctor) informed me that the boy's back bore evidence of having received a flogging.

On questioning the boy, prior to his agreeing to surrender himself to the Garda authorities, he informed me that, as a result of his having not returned to the Industrial School at the end of the holiday period he was stripped of his clothes and flogged with a whip which had a number of leather thongs attached thereto.

1. Will you please state:- If a form of punishment so described by this boy is prescribed by law in certain cases in Industrial Schools and Borstal Institutions.
2. If the recipient of such treatment is compelled to be stripped or partly stripped of his clothing.
3. If it is compulsory for the Superior or other authorized person of an Industrial School or Borstal Institution to inflict such treatment in certain circumstances.
4. If the use of a whip with a number of leather thongs is prescribed and permitted.
5. If the report from Glin Industrial School agrees with the statement made to me by [the boy].
6. If it does not in what respect does it differ.

I may mention in conclusion that on Wednesday night this boy who handed himself over to the Garda authorities, later escaped from the members of the Glin Institution who had been sent to collect him at Limerick.

- 11.42** He received an acknowledgement on 8th August. On 25th August he sent a copy of the medical report which read:

[The boy] was examined by me at William St. Barracks on August 1st 1945. Examination revealed on posterior surface of right upper arm, on right forearm and on back – wheals – about 2 to 3" long. The wheals were not tender or sore and was such as would be produced by a leather thong.

- 11.43** This medical report showed that the boy was severely beaten in a way that was against the regulations at that time.

- 11.44** Six weeks later, on 19th September, the Councillor had not received a reply from the Minister so he wrote again. He wrote, 'As this matter is now long outstanding I would like to have a full reply to my letter. Will you kindly facilitate me in this connection at your earliest convenience'.

⁵ This is a pseudonym.

11.45 The Councillor was sent a brief note from the Secretary of the Department of Education dated 29th September 1945. The note said:

I am directed by the Minister for Education to say that he has had full enquiries made into the circumstances of the case and has taken appropriate action in connection therewith.

11.46 The Councillor immediately wrote back on 1st October to demand answers to his questions, and to ask what 'appropriate action' had been taken. He wrote:

In view of the grave public importance of the case before us I would ask you to kindly answer the questions as enumerated in my communication of August 3rd. I would also want to be informed under what law and the date thereof that a youth could be submitted to punishment so described in my communication.

I would further want to know what appropriate action has been taken in this case at the direction of the Minister of Education.

11.47 This time he did receive a prompt reply, designed to put him in his place:

the Minister for Education desires me to inform you that he does not feel called upon to give you the information you have asked for in the matter unless he is supplied with evidence as to your right to obtain that information and is given an assurance as to the purpose for which it is required.

11.48 The Councillor asserted his right to be answered. He wrote:

my position as a Public representative entitles me to the information requested ... for the purpose of confirming the allegations made to me which if correct should be ventilated in the interests of the public.

11.49 He finally received a reply on 5th January 1946, but it was on condition that it should not be made known to anyone else. He inserted the following note into his file of correspondence:

Letter of 5th January 1946 withheld from this file as the contents were given to me at the direction of the Minister for Education for my confidential information.

11.50 The letter has never been found.

11.51 On 15th April 1946 he wrote again to the Minister. He asked for a general inquiry to be set up into the running of industrial schools, and for a specific inquiry into this case. He wrote:

I am now fully convinced that nothing short of a sworn inquiry into this case will satisfy the public conscience, and I suggest to the Minister, that early steps be taken to set the necessary machinery in motion towards this end. I further suggest that the time is now opportune for an inquiry into the entire Industrial School and Borstal Institution system, and under these circumstances I would ask that consideration be given to extending this enquiry to cover every aspect of these institutions.

I shall deem it my duty to lay the relevant information in my possession before a Tribunal set up by the Minister to inquire into the matters referred to herein.

11.52 On 26th April he received a reply from the Secretary of the Department:

The Minister is satisfied ... that he is in possession of all the facts concerning the punishment inflicted, and in these circumstances he considers that a sworn inquiry as suggested by you is unnecessary and would serve no useful purpose.

In regard to your further suggestion for an inquiry into the Industrial School system and the Borstal Institution system I am to point out that the Industrial and Reformatory School system was the subject of an exhaustive inquiry in the years 1934 to 1936 by a

commission appointed by the Minister for Education ... This report is now out of print, but you may be able to see a copy in a Public Library.

11.53 On 9th May the Councillor replied, giving vent to his anger at the secrecy about the case:

In my opinion, the useful purpose of an enquiry would be to put the public in the possession of the facts which the Minister and his officials and a few others only now possess.

As the Minister refuses to give the necessary publicity, I am compelled to take other steps so that it may be procured.

In your letter of the 5th January you extended to me, under the direction of the Minister, an explanation for my confidential information. As the contents of this letter were conveyed to me in substance through other sources than that of the Minister, I feel that under the circumstances I would not be justified in with-holding the information contained in this letter from the public or their representatives.

11.54 The Councillor wrote to the manager of the Theatre Royal in Dublin, who had contact with Fr Flanagan⁶ of Boys Town in the USA. He told him:

You have knowledge of this case, and I recall you saying to me some time ago, that you were approached by a prominent public man, who asked you to use your influence with me to drop this case. To your credit you used no such influence with me.

11.55 The case, he said, was 'this most degrading reflection on our system of detention of juveniles ... These conditions will exist as long as Industrial Schools ... remain closed boroughs to the public'.

11.56 He apparently handed all the documents, except the confidential letter sent on 5th January, to the manager of the Theatre Royal for forwarding to Fr Flanagan. They were found in Fr Flanagan's archives, and are the sole remaining record of the case. No record of this case was found in the files of the Department of Education.

11.57 While this correspondence was going on, there were other developments. On 12th October 1945, the boy's mother received a letter saying:

The Minister for Education has informed me that he has granted the discharge of your son ... Hoping he will be a success and give you complete satisfaction.

11.58 He was discharged, despite being still only 15. In 1946, the Resident Manager was transferred to Salthill, again as Resident Manager. Br McCormack's research paper noted:

However it is also open to the interpretation that, following the publicity of October 1946, during Fr Flanagan's visit to Ireland, the Provincial was using the first available opportunity to remove Br Delaine⁷ from Glin. This would have been at the New Year, a time when changes were common and would not attract gossip.

11.59 Commenting on this case in a recent communication the Christian Brothers wrote:

Without contemporary evidence other than the [the councillor] /Department correspondence it is difficult to piece together the full story of this incident. There is no doubt that a serious breach of regulations did take place but the identity of the Brother mentioned in the account of the beating is not clear. The account mentions the "Head Brother" but since no name is given...Boys in industrial schools could confuse the

⁶ Fr Flanagan was an Irish priest who lived and worked in the United States. He opened his first boys' home in 1917, which later moved to another location and became known as 'Boys Town'. He became an acknowledged expert in the field of childcare. He visited Ireland in 1946.

⁷ This is a pseudonym.

functions of responsible staff such as Resident Manager (a rather aloof figure), the Disciplinary, who was in charge of general discipline, and the Principal, who was in charge of the primary school and classroom discipline.

Fr Flanagan's intervention

11.60 Fr Flanagan made no mention of the Blake case while he was in Ireland, although his attacks against the punishment regime in Irish penal institutions which received widespread publicity. In a public lecture in Cork's Savoy Cinema he told his audience, 'You are the people who permit your children and the children of your communities to go into these institutions of punishment. You can do something about it'. He called Ireland's penal institutions 'a disgrace to the nation' and then issued a public statement saying 'I do not believe that a child can be reformed by lock and key and bars, or that fear can ever develop a child's character'.⁸ His resolute and vociferous stand against the corporal punishment of children led him to speak out against the Glin case when he received a letter from one of his contacts in Ireland, Walter Mahon Smith.⁹ It stated, 'As regards the Glin case none of the Daily papers would investigate or publish this for me'.

11.61 When he got back to America, Fr Flanagan spoke about it to the American Press. The matter was raised in the Dáil in a debate on 23rd July 1946.

11.62 Mr Seán Brady TD asked the Minister for Justice, Mr Boland:

whether his attention has been drawn to criticisms of the prison and Borstal systems in this country reported to have been made by Monsignor Flanagan during his recent visit and published in the Irish newspapers, and to similar criticisms made on his return to the United States which were published in the New York Press on the 17th July, 1946 and whether he has any statement to make.

11.63 Mr Boland replied:

My attention has been drawn to the criticisms referred to. During his recent stay in this country Monsignor Flanagan did not see and did not ask to see any of the prisons or the Borstal institutions. I am surprised that in these circumstances an ecclesiastic of his standing should have thought it proper to describe in such offensive and intemperate language conditions about which he has no firsthand knowledge.

11.64 Mr Flanagan TD asked if the Minister was '... aware of the fact that Monsignor Flanagan did not make these statements without very good foundation and very good reason for them'.

11.65 Mr Brady TD asked 'if his attention has been drawn to a statement made by Monsignor Flanagan and published in the American Press, that physical punishment, including the cat o' nine tails, the rod, and the fist, is used in reform schools both here and in Northern Ireland'.

11.66 The Minister replied:

I have a cutting from a paper which contains a statement to that effect. I was not disposed to take any notice of what Monsignor Flanagan said while he was in this country, because his statements were so exaggerated that I did not think people would attach any importance to them. When, however, on his return to America he continues to make use of statements of this kind, I feel it is time that somebody should reply ...

11.67 After an interruption, he continued:

⁸ For a full discussion of Father Flanagan's visit to Ireland see Dáire Keogh 'There's no such thing as a bad boy': Fr Flanagan's visit to Ireland, 1946, *History IRELAND*, 12, 1 (Spring 2004) 29-32 and the discussion of his article by Eoin O'Sullivan and Mary Raftery in the letters section of *History IRELAND* 12,4 (Winter 2004)

⁹ Fr Flanagan was influenced by Walter Mahon-Smith's book, *I did penal servitude*, published anonymously.

All I have got to say is that these schools are under the management of religious Orders, who are self-effacing people, and who do not require any commendation from me.

- 11.68** • **The Minister chose to attack the man who had attacked the system. His support for the religious Orders closed the debate.**

Br Serge¹⁰

- 11.69** Br Serge was sent to Glin in the mid-1940s and spent two years in total there, with a break in service to complete his teacher training. A letter was apparently sent to Dr McCabe, the Medical Inspector of Industrial Schools,¹¹ complaining about the punishments he had inflicted on the boys. The Visitation Report of May 1947 goes into the affair in some detail. The Visitor wrote:

For some time back certain members of the Limerick Corporation have been seeking interviews with boys from the school to provide information for certain members of the Dáil whose ambition seem to be the providing of trouble for the Government. The reaction of the situation on the boys of the school gave serious trouble to the Brothers in the execution of their duty. A letter was sent to Dr McCabe, medical inspector of Industrial Schools, giving information on punishments inflicted on some of the boys recently. She came along and held an inquiry which was strictly confined to the boys; she interviewed no member of the staff in connection with the matter. It is the unbiased opinion of three senior members of the community that from the information they got from boys interviewed by Dr McCabe the information supplied to her in the above letter was substantially true. The Brother implicated in these charges was Br Serge, who is due to make Final Vows next Christmas. His method of punishment as far as I can make out varied, once at least, from the recognised use of the strap. He had no discretion as to the number of slaps that should be apportioned to offences. Br Serge has also been charged with acting as the leader of the troubles in the Training College towards the close of last year. I have met several Brothers who were there at the time and all are agreed as to his guilt ... I would not resent Dr McCabe's attitude because if she succeeds in securing information from the boys the work of the politicians will be short circuited and danger of publicity eliminated.

- 11.70** The letter of complaint to Dr McCabe has not been discovered. Nor is there a report on her visit to the School, even though her interviews with the boys apparently uncovered allegations of serious physical abuse.

- 11.71** The Visitation Report cited above made several criticisms of a serious nature. It alleged, first, that Br Serge had punished 'some of the boys' excessively. Second, it alleged that Br Serge could give an excessive number of slaps, and he could do so even if the offence did not merit a severe punishment. Thirdly, it alleged his method of punishment 'varied once at least from the recognised use of the strap'. The recognised use was usually a slap on the hand with a leather and, clearly, Br Serge had departed from these guidelines.

- 11.72** The Visitor sent his report to the Provincial, who responded that:

It is a pity that the school has not a better reputation for kindness and consideration for the poor boys. Nothing should be left undone to secure kinder treatment of the boys and a happier and brighter feeling among them. This is not only possible but easy to secure if the Brothers have the correct feeling for them.

- 11.73** This reply was significant. The Provincial regretted that the School had not a better reputation 'for kindness and consideration' for the boys in its care. He did not only criticise Br Serge, but all the

¹⁰ This is a pseudonym.

¹¹ Dr Anna McCabe was the Department of Education Inspector for most of the relevant period. See Department of Education chapter for a discussion of her role and performance.

Brothers for not having ‘the correct feeling’ for the children. It expressed unease about how boys in general were treated in Glin.

- 11.74** Five Brothers referred to Br Serge in internal Christian Brothers interviews. Their comments on him were illuminating. One Brother, (Br Cohan) who went to Glin in the early 1950s and who was clearly referring to Br Serge, said:

... there was one there before I went there and he was very cruel. He left the Brothers. There was a big inquisition from either the Department or the Health Board his name won't come to me just now. He was sent out of Glin and the kids were complaining about them continually and you daren't mention his name. They hated the thought of him but he was sent down to the Brothers and he was sent down to the place but we followed his career afterwards, he became a principal outside and a parish priest was in trouble but that's the only case and that was before my time.

- 11.75** He then added:

I have often heard it from the lads themselves about this man. He could be dead by now for all I know, he was a bastard as they say and the kids hated the sight of him and he was a man who should never have been sent to Glin. To be sent to a place like that you have to have great rapport with the kids like. You are living with them as much as you would if you were in a family at home and you have to coax them along ... You are the only one that they can rely on ...

- 11.76** Br Hardouin,¹² who was in Glin in the 1940s, also recalled the man:

I can recall when the Department Inspector called to Glin to investigate a complaint made by a retired Brother against a member of the teaching staff who was accused of being too severe. The Brother accused was removed to a day school and the following Christmas was expelled from the Order. I imagine that the complaint may have been a contributory factor in his expulsion although he had previous problems during second year training.

- 11.77** Br Zacharie,¹³ who replaced Br Serge, said:

I came there from Monaghan to replace a Brother who had been moved out because he was over severe ... I was advised to be nice to the kids and not to worry about examination results.

- 11.78** Br Gaston, who was resident in Glin during the 1950s, recalled talk about this Brother being investigated. He said:

I cannot recall any situation where a formal complaint against the school was investigated by an outside group or individual, though I believe that there was such a situation in the School within three or four years prior to my coming.

- 11.79** A contemporary of Br Serge, Br Amaury,¹⁴ gave more details:

The procedure for dealing with complaints would be that if any staff member or child in the school had a complaint he could bring that problem to the Superior/Manager, the sub superior, the school principal, the disciplinarian, or to the provincial or any one of his council. One such complaint was made during my year in Glin. It was made against one of the Brothers on the school staff. I do not know to what outside group or individual the complaint was made but the nature of it was that the man in question was over severe in

¹² This is a pseudonym.

¹³ This is a pseudonym.

¹⁴ This is a pseudonym.

having recourse to corporal punishment. None of the details of this complaint were made available to the community or staff in Glin. The boy who was named as the one who made the complaint was personally known to me and my impression of him was that he was a boy who would be very unlikely to do anything serious enough to merit severe corporal punishment. He was known to have been a close friend – a “masters pet” – one of the men who regularly did supervision in the school yard during recreation time. This does add more than a little likelihood to an opinion circulating at the time; that it was the “master” and not really the “pet” who caused the complaint to be made.

11.80 There are no grounds to suggest these recollections are unreliable. They all recall similar details and they provide an important illustration of how a violent man was dealt with by the management of the Congregation in the 1940s.

11.81 First, there did not seem to be a standard reporting procedure for either boys or Brothers when violent or abusive behaviour did occur. Br Hardouin summed up the situation as he saw it:

Generally speaking there was no redress for any child who had a complaint against a staff member. Again as a younger brother, I certainly was not fully informed of problems that were the responsibility of management.

11.82 The procedure referred to by Br Amaury, ‘that if any staff member or child in the school had a complaint he could bring that problem to the Superior/Manager, the sub-superior, the school principal, the disciplinarian, or to the provincial or any one of his council’, was not used in this case of extreme violence. Instead, a letter of complaint was sent to an outsider, the School Inspector. There was no explanation in the documentation as to why this route was taken, but it was clearly deemed necessary or politic to avoid the Congregation’s management structures.

11.83 Br Serge was removed promptly during the Visitation, and was sent to a day school. Some of the Brothers in Glin informally kept an eye on his later career. As stated above, one of them believed that he had got into trouble elsewhere. He said, ‘we followed his career afterwards, he became a principal outside and a parish priest was in trouble’, but no details are available about such an episode. Given the seriousness of his behaviour, and the excessive violence he was known to have used, this simple expedient of removing him to a day school could not have guaranteed the protection of other children. Br Serge’s career continued as a national school teacher in a number of schools. He left the Christian Brothers in the late 1940s. He subsequently spent many years as a principal of a national school.

Br Amaury

11.84 Br Amaury worked in St Joseph’s School for Deaf Boys, Cabra before moving to Glin where he spent a year during the 1940s. He made a bad impression during his brief period in Glin. During an annual Visitation, the Visitor was very critical of Br Amaury and recommended his transfer. Br Amaury was moved a few months later to a day school and did not teach in a residential school again. The Visitor made insightful observations on the vulnerability of boys in residential care:

With the exception of Br Amaury all the other members of staff are capable and reliable. In punishing boys he sometimes loses control of himself. I would recommend his change in view of circumstances in the school. It would be better if Br Amaury was sent to a day school where boys would have a parent or relative to interpose between themselves and a cruel teacher. The industrial school boy has no redress but suffer on.

- 11.85** The fact that two Brothers in one year were accused of excessive violence. There is evidence that Br Jules, who subsequently became Resident Manager, made efforts to change attitudes in the School. But it is not clear if he was able to eliminate abuses by Brothers during his period of management. Br Coyan, who was there at that time, remembered the rules laid down by him.

Br Jesper¹⁵

- 11.86** Br Jesper spent over 11 years in Glin from the late 1940s. He held the position of Councillor for his first seven years, before taking over as Sub-Superior in the mid-1950s. The Visitation Reports reveal that he could be a difficult person to get along with and was acknowledged as being odd. The Visitor noted that relations between him and a number of Brothers were bad and, when questioned on the matter, his colleagues accused him of having a very bad temper. The Visitor subsequently remarked that Br Jesper was 'not quite normal'. He was suspicious and aloof. By the late 1950s, his doctors recommended that he be transferred from Glin immediately, because he was in danger of having a nervous breakdown if he had to stay there.

- 11.87** There were reservations about Br Jesper from his early days in the Congregation. The Superior General wrote to him in the mid-1930s and drew his attention to a trait that cast doubt on his suitability to take perpetual vows. He reprimanded him for being:

altogether too strict and harsh in your dealings with your pupils. It would appear that you are subject to moods, being at the one time rather depressed and gloomy and at others jubilant and vivacious ... Possibly in class these variations are manifested by a want of uniformity in your dealings with the boys, treating them indulgently at one time and again with great severity ... Harshness towards pupils is out of date. A good educator is never severe towards those he is training. Severity alienates the sympathy of the pupils with their teacher and loses to him their cooperation, the most powerful means he has for success.

- 11.88** Nevertheless, Br Jesper took his final vows shortly after this reprimand.

- 11.89** Br Jesper completed an internal Christian Brothers' questionnaire in 2001 regarding life in Glin. He stated that there was 'strong discipline' in the School but that it was not as tough as discipline in day schools, 'It certainly was not hard'. He denied that the boys were beaten regularly and 'it would have been an exception arising out of a grave infringement of the rules that they would be in any way chastised'. He conceded that the leather was used, but asserted that he had dispensed with its use shortly after his arrival in Glin. He denied any allegations of physical abuse made against him, and indicated that he would be surprised if similar allegations against his colleagues were true.

Br Jeannot¹⁶

- 11.90** Br Jeannot was sent to Glin as a young Brother in the late 1940s where he remained for more than five years. In the early 1950s, the mother of two boys resident in Glin made a complaint regarding severe punishments her sons had received at the hands of Br Jeannot. There was no proper investigation.

- 11.91** The two brothers had been committed to Glin a number of years previously, following the separation of their parents. The older of the two, described by the Superior as 'a big hefty fellow', was regarded as troublesome. On one occasion when his mother came to visit, he complained to her that he had been punished excessively by Br Jeannot. He alleged that he had been beaten with a stick and kicked by him. The mother demanded that her boys be released into her care,

¹⁵ This is a pseudonym.

¹⁶ This is a pseudonym.

alleging that both had been ill-treated by Br Jeannot. The Superior explained to her that the Minister for Education would have to make an order for their release. She then wrote to the Superior General, perhaps thinking that he could direct the releases, and the Provincial Council therefore became aware of the matter. The Provincial wrote to the Superior of Glin, seeking information on the incident.

11.92 The Superior responded by letter and explained that, one evening, Br Jeannot was in charge and reprimanded the boy for misconduct but he still continued to be impertinent. Br Jeannot then called him into the play hall and struck him on the cheek before administering the leather. The Superior was convinced, as a result of his investigation, that Br Jeannot had not beaten the boy with a stick or kicked him. He was also satisfied that the younger brother of the boy had never been punished by Br Jeannot. He chastised Br Jeannot for not bringing the boy to him to be dealt with. The Superior was suspicious that the mother had exaggerated the incident so that she could secure the release of her sons. The Provincial was satisfied, as a result of the information provided by the Superior of Glin, that 'it is quite clear the chief difficulty in the case concerns the home circumstances of the children. It is well however that the Brothers gave no serious reason for complaint in connection with their treatment of the boy'.

11.93 It would appear that he reached this conclusion without the parents or boys being interviewed, and was quite happy to accept at face value the version proffered by Br Jeannot and the Superior.

Complaint by Mr Dubois,¹⁷ night watchman

11.94 Mr Dubois was employed as a night watchman in Glin in the early 1950s. He held the position for six months and stated that he left for health reasons. He wrote to the Department of Education shortly after leaving Glin, setting out a number of serious concerns he had for the boys resident there:

Dear Sir,

May I respectfully direct your kind attention "in Confidence" to the following and I am confident that by doing so that I shall be doing a great work of charity.

For the past six months, I was employed as "night-watch man" at St Joseph's Industrial School Glin Co Limerick, and having had close contact with the "Boys" and with the running of the school in general, I am in the position to be able to make the enclosed observations and respectfully request that the Inspectors of this department see after the matter and do their best to remedy the state of affairs existing there.

The Boys are discontented with the existing state of things due to the following defects.

Poor food and clothing. The cook in Boys Kitchen has no knowledge of cooking being an ex pupil working for 15/- per week and has never got any training for this work.

Everyone employed at this school are free to have a smack at the Boys including the Brothers who appear to be indifferent to all this. The Boys beds and sleeping quarters are very poor and during the cold winter months are never heated, neither do the Boys get any kind of winter clothing to keep them warm. The Boys shirts are very poor quality and very badly washed the whole place and system is very-very bad.

The Infirmary is just the same. The nurse goes off duty pretty often and the children are left to the mercy of one of the boys. I know the Brothers can scrape out of any difficulty but I write from personal experience. and if you could arrange surprise visits. night and day. you could see for yourself. I could never have believed that such could exist in a Catholic Country. I know there is a good deal of window dressing to deceive the eye of

¹⁷ This is a pseudonym.

the visiting official but I learn that the Boys are warned not to complain May God help the poor children.

There are only two trades men in this school, a shoe maker and a tailor, no carpenter employed. How can we expect such Boys to become an asset to the state. They shall treat the state as the state treats them. Pay a surprise visit to this school some cold night and see for yourself. The former night watch man a common farm labourer. carried a heavy leather when on duty and beat up the poor children as he pleased. please Sir remedy this. and you will have the blessing of God and the prayers of the poor children God bless you.

Yours respectfully

Mr Dubois

In confidence

- 11.95** The Inspector of Industrial and Reformatory Schools, Mr Sugrue,¹⁸ requested Dr Anna McCabe to investigate the serious complaints contained in the letter, which he specified as food, clothing, bedding, laundering of clothes and heating of the School in winter. Dr McCabe visited Glin for this purpose, and she also took the opportunity to carry out a General Inspection. Her brief report on the complaints stated:

Mr Sugrue,

I visited Glin Industrial School and had a long talk with the Manager. I told him about the letter we had received and which it was my duty to investigate.

I really could find no ground for complaint in the school. It is well run and the boys appear well and happy.

I asked the manager if there could be any spiteful reason why the letter should have been written and he told me that the man had been dismissed for insubordination and had vowed to injure the school ... Apparently he thought that writing this note he would cast reflection on the school.

Many improvements have been made in this school and in my opinion there are no grounds for complaint against the management.

- 11.96** Given the very specific complaints made in the letter, this investigation was cursory and the report vague and unsatisfactory.

- 11.97** Dr McCabe's visit was not only to investigate the complaint. She carried out a General Inspection on the same day, and her report gave little indication of the serious problems that she was investigating, and which were acknowledged by her superiors in the Department as needing special investigation.

- 11.98** Mr Dubois then wrote a letter to the Minister for Justice, elaborating on the contents of his letter to the Department of Education:

Dear Sir,

May I respectfully direct your kind attention "in confidence" to the following hoping that you Sir will do something to help the poor unfortunate children concerned.

For a period of six months, I took up a position of night watchman in one of our Industrial Schools "for Boys" namely, St Joseph's School Glin Co Limerick and I may tell you Sir,

¹⁸ This is the English version of Mr O Siocfhhradha

that I never expected to find in a Catholic Country like ours, the awful bad conditions in so far as the poor Boys were concerned, only that I had spent six months and seen for myself I never could have believed that such conditions could exist especially as this Institution is under the care of our Irish Christian Brothers who are so reputed for teaching etc.

When I took up employment there last March, I found the poor children in a very nervous state, due to harsh treatment at the hands of the former night man (a local labourer) rough and cruel, who was allowed a free hand to beat up the children as he pleased, and was permitted to carry a heavy leather for this purpose. The children were called out of their sleep every hour to use the W.C. and any poor child who had the misfortune to wet his bed, was very roughly treated by this night-man, who also reported the matter to the Brothers in the morning, and a further punishment was then administered to the poor child by the Brothers concerned. The children have no redress whatsoever and are just like convicts.

With regards the food its very-very poor and the person in charge of the cooking is a young boy aged about 17 years an ex-pupil of the school, who at the age of 16 years was discharged, and sent to a job ... but did not get on well and was sent back to the school, and the Superior ... appointed him boys cook, but he knows nothing whatever about cooking and what he cooks for the poor children isn't fit for pigs to eat and I often felt sorry for the poor children especially the young and helpless ones. The Children gets very little butter. their bread is served almost dry they are allowed 2 slices of bread each with a little scraping of butter or marge, and an extra slice dry the tea, or cocoa is very light and badly made. The Bro. who is supposed to supervise the Kitchen (Br Warrane¹⁹) never bothers to do so, as he is a jack of all trades and never has much time to look after any job properly apart from the motor car which he drives. This Br Warrane is a sour kind of person and never speaks a kind word to any of the children, and is very severe with the leather which he is very fond of using. All the employees are allowed to beat the children especially the plough-man (Mr Prewitt) is very hard on the children working on the farm and very fond of using the boot, and his fist.

The children are very badly clothed. They are not supplied with any winter under clothing, neither are the sleeping quarters heated in winter and the poor children told me that they felt very cold at night and if they complained the Brothers would only laugh at them. I have experienced some cold nights at the school and what must it be in the winter!

I respectfully beg to hope Sir that you will look into the matter. I sent a confidential report to the Dept of Education but not enough to cover all I have observed during my six months at the School. The Infirmary part of the school needs overhaul and the present nurse is very fond of been away as she is local. She appears to have no love or sympathy for the children and the children will suffer much before they report sick as they don't like the nurse. In my humble opinion Sir the whole school needs a good honest overhaul and a few night surprise visits, There appears to be a good deal of window dressing and outward appearances. No one has seen the meals served out to the poor children but I have Sir and all I have to say Sir, is may God help the poor little ones, they are a pity.

The position of night man in such schools is a very important one, and I respectfully suggest Sir that you should interest yourself in the type of person employed, and draw up rules and regulations to fit the job. The children are at the mercy of the night man during the night and it's important that such a man should be a sober man and have patience and charity in his dealings with the children, and Glin school can tell some queer tales

¹⁹ This is a pseudonym.

about night-men. One thing I found most lacking in St Joseph' Glin was charity. The only place I've seen real charity was with the Good Brothers of St John of God in St Augustine's Blackrock Dublin, and what a pity these fine men cannot have charge of our Industrial Schools for they have at heart the real love of God, and in the poor children they see Christ Himself.

I feel now Sir, that I can feel at ease as I was worried when I had to leave the children as my health would not permit me to continue the work, as I never smoke or drink I suited the job and I had the full confidence of the boys, who regretted my leaving and I promised them I would look after their interests. Do your best Sir, and look out for window dressing and bear in mind that the children are afraid to complain to any visiting official and you cannot expect much help from them.

God bless you Sir,

Your obedient Servant

Mr Dubois

Confidently

11.99 The Minister for Justice wrote to the Minister for Education commenting that Mr Dubois appeared to be an intelligent, well-meaning person and, if what he said was true, it revealed a very serious state of affairs. He asked to be kept informed of the results of any investigation.

11.100 Mr Sugrue of the Department of Education visited Glin and wrote a memorandum in Irish recording what happened. A translation is as follows:

Glin School

I visited this school ... and had a long conversation with the Resident Manager about the complaint made by Mr Dubois in relation to school matters. I read the letters written by Mr Dubois to certain boys in the school, to a maid in the school and to men employed in the school. The Resident Manager had all these letters. According to the letters, it would appear that Mr Dubois took a keen interest in the care of the boys at the school in the matter of food, clothes, etc. The Resident Manager told me that Mr Dubois was wont to come downstairs at night and carry bread from the Brothers' refectory to the boys in the dormitories. From their appearance it would seem that the school shows great kindness and consideration to the boys.

11.101 Despite the fact that Mr Sugrue had previously drawn Dr McCabe's attention to the specifics of the complaints made in Mr Dubois's letter to the Department of Education, and that more detail had been furnished in the letter to the Department of Justice that preceded his visit to the School, no detail is provided as to the quality of care given to the boys.

11.102 When a reminder was sent from the Minister's secretary, asking whether a report was yet available, the matter was taken in hand by a senior official, who reported to the Secretary of the Department:

Runai,

Glin Industrial School.

Complaint from Mr Dubois, ex-night watchman there, to Minister and to Minister for Justice, re treatment of boys.

The charges made by Mr Dubois may be listed as follows: —

(1) The boys are poorly clothed, and have no winter underwear.

- (2) The food is meagre, poor and badly cooked.
- (3) The sleeping quarters are ill-equipped and unheated.
- (4) Employees are permitted to beat the children with straps and even to strike and kick them and to treat them otherwise cruelly, and even some of the Brothers are careless or unkind or given to beating the children with small cause.

Dr MacCabe and Mr O Siochfhradha²⁰ have both visited the school and their findings, herewith, may be summed up thus:-

The facts reported under charges (1), (2) and (3) are true in the main of many Industrial Schools, but they are, of course, not matters of deliberate intent and so the light in which they have been put by Mr Dubois is false.

As may be seen from the File, Dr MacCabe has been pressing the Manager on these very matters for some years, and he has made efforts at improvement as far as his resources permit.

With regard to charge (3), viz. that the sleeping quarters are ill-equipped and unheated, Mr O Siochfhradha informs me that it is a moot point among present day experts whether heating of sleeping quarters is desirable. He, for his part, however, is gradually prevailing on the authorities of the Girls' Schools to provide heating for the dormitories, but many Boys' Schools, including Artane, do not provide it.

Mr O Siochfhradha considers the sleeping equipment at Glin fairly good.

The inspectors found no evidence of harshness or cruelty on the part of the staff or employees, and Mr O Siochfhradha has stated to me that he is absolutely satisfied that it would not be in character for Br Warrane or any other of the Brothers to treat the children unkindly.

Dr MacCabe reports that the Manager has informed her that Mr Dubois was dismissed from the post of night watchman in the school for insubordination.

The impression given to me by Mr Dubois's letters and the Inspectors' Reports is

- (1) that Mr Dubois grew to like the boys very much and to resent their being administered an occasional slap or cuff,
- (2) that there may be some slight grounds for a charge of occasional severity, but that as regards clothing, food, etc. Mr Dubois is probably unaware that the sole and entire income of the School was up to the present only 19s. capitation grant per week. Our Inspectors are perfectly satisfied that that sum is stretched to its utter limit, and as far as they could see, the boys are happy and cheerful,
- (3) that Mr Dubois is a confirmed letter writer, as is evidenced by the number of letters he has written to the boys in the School and by the fact that his turn of English is unusual in a night watchman. Incidentally, such phrases as "in the poor children they see Christ himself" seem, to me at least, too glib for their not particularly charitable context.

I would guess that Mr Dubois is a well-meaning person of rather unreserved character, and would advise taking no further notice of any missives he may forward. The Inspectors, however, intend to visit the school for some time more frequently than is customary, and it would seem well to do this.

²⁰ This is the Irish version of Mr Sugrue

11.103 Senior civil servants drafted and approved a letter to be sent by the Minister in reply to his colleague, who had moved in the meantime from the Department of Justice to the Department of Defence. Consideration was given as to whether it was more appropriate for the Minister to write directly to his colleague or for the respective private secretaries to communicate. It is not clear which course was adopted. The draft as prepared said:

that the Minister has had searching inquiries made and can find no convincing evidence to support the accusations made by Mr Dubois.

The fact that the financial resources of our industrial schools are in general rather limited makes it impossible for the authorities to supply other than plain food and clothing or to install equipment of the most up to date quality.

With regard to the charge of harshness, unkindness and ill treatment of the boys, the Minister is assured that it would not be in character for the Brothers to permit such to occur, much less to be guilty of it themselves.

It has been arranged, however, to inspect the school more frequently for some time to come.

11.104 The Christian Brothers' Submissions on this matter comment that the length of the investigation (approximately eight months) and 'the number and seniority of the officers involved indicates that complaints were taken seriously by the State and that final decisions were not made lightly'. They contend that the first letter sent by Mr Dubois 'set in motion a typical investigation by the Department involving unannounced visits by Dr McCabe and the local school inspector'. The letter to the Minister for Justice, they maintain, 'lent urgency to the investigation' which eventually involved the secretary of the Department, the Minister's secretary and the Minister for Education.

11.105 There was nothing to suggest that the visits of Dr McCabe and Mr Sugrue were unannounced. Neither was it correct to say that the investigation was protracted. In the case of each visit, it followed reasonably promptly on the receipt of the letter from Mr Dubois. What was delayed was the response in the form of any action by the senior officials of the Department of Education, which only came about when a reminder was sent from the Minister.

11.106 The Department did not interview Mr Dubois as part of their investigation. They did not investigate further whether Mr Dubois retired due to health reasons, as stated by him, or was dismissed for insubordination, as asserted by the Manager. It does not appear that they conducted any spot checks, as suggested by Mr Dubois. The Department acknowledged internally that Mr Dubois's criticisms of the clothing, food and sleeping accommodation were 'true in the main of many industrial schools'. Mr Dubois's concerns regarding the inexperienced chef and the often absent nurse could quite easily have been addressed and rectified. Neither were enquiries made about Mr Dubois's predecessor who, it was alleged, regularly wielded a heavy leather strap and terrified the boys.

- 11.107**
- **The Department wrote off Mr Dubois's complaints as the outpourings of a man with a personal grievance. As a result, no thorough investigation was carried out.**
 - **A proper investigation of the complaints required that Mr Dubois should have been interviewed. Such an interview was needed, not least because the Resident Manager had suggested a malicious motive for writing the letter and Dr McCabe should have established whether this was the case.**
 - **Even when the Department did make findings, it did not explain where the facts came from. For example, there was no information as to how the Department concluded that 'there may be some slight grounds for a charge of occasional severity' and, similarly, what investigations led them to the conclusion that the boys were administered 'an occasional slap or cuff'.**

- The Department acknowledged internally that three of the four charges he made were ‘true in the main of many industrial schools’ and, by implication, they were true in respect of Glin. In other words, the boys were poorly clothed, and had no winter underwear, the food was meagre, poor and badly cooked, and the sleeping quarters were ill-equipped and unheated. They seemed to believe nothing needed to be done simply because such conditions were not peculiar to Glin but were quite widespread in such schools.
- Despite the cursory nature of their inquiries, the Department was nevertheless prepared to inform another Minister in the Government that the Minister for Education ‘has had searching inquiries made’ and that there was ‘no convincing evidence to support the accusations made by Mr Dubois’.

Br Jules

11.108 Br Jules taught in a number of industrial schools: Carriglea, Artane, Tralee and Glin, where he held the post of Superior for five years during the 1950s.

11.109 At an early stage, Br Jules developed a reputation for being tough on his pupils. In the early 1930s, he came to the attention of the Provincial Council because of his harsh treatment of a pupil in Tralee who had a physical disability. This incident has been dealt with in the Tralee chapter. He was initially rejected from taking his perpetual vows. He was, however, allowed to take his vows the following year by a vote of three to one, notwithstanding a report describing him as:

too exacting in school: little devotedness to study: “troublesome, crossgrained”; has not had good record – doubtful candidate.

11.110 The Superior General, Br Noonan, wrote to Br Jules congratulating him on taking his perpetual vows. In the course of the letter he stated:

You incline to the harsh side in school both in language and in inflicting bodily pain. Pupils hate sarcasm and they have a keen sense of what is just and fair in punishment. If you would secure respect for yourself and for your teaching be kind and just towards your pupils. It is said you are a poor student yourself. Perhaps it is due to your failure to make preparation for your work as a teacher that your pupils are made to suffer doubly.

11.111 During Br Jules’s tenure as Superior of Glin in the 1950s, the visiting Brothers consistently complimented him on his management and dedication to the boys, and Brothers who were interviewed by Br McCormack for his report confirmed that a kinder regime was introduced following his appointment.

11.112 In his questionnaire for the Congregation, completed in 1999, Br Jules stated that, ‘There were no written rules regarding discipline. There was simply a general understanding of rules passed on from year to year’. Despite holding the positions of Superior, School Manager and Disciplinarian, he conceded that he had never seen the Rules and Regulations for Industrial Schools. He had no recollection of pupils being severely beaten. He dealt with absconders by making them feel ashamed of what they had done. He did not punish them.

11.113 He explained how he introduced new boys to the School:

when a new pupil came he would often be very upset. We had to point out to him that he was not wanted at home and convince him that life had not been that good at home; that we had taken him in, that he would be better off here.

11.114 Br Coyan, in an interview with Br McCormack, recalled that Br Jules did punish absconders by giving them a 'baldy haircut and the kids didn't give a damn or they might be deprived of some privilege or other for a week or so'.

Br Marceau²¹

11.115 Br Marceau already had a bad record of violence towards boys when he was assigned to Glin in the early 1960s. He worked there for almost two years, between periods of service in Tralee Industrial School. Investigations have revealed a paper trail of documented cases of physical abuse by Br Marceau in day and residential schools in which he taught. Accounts of Br Marceau's conduct in the other institutions is dealt with in the Tralee chapter.

11.116 Prior to his time in Glin, Br Marceau worked in Tralee and, before that, in a day school in Clonmel. During his four and a half years in Clonmel, there were four serious allegations of physical abuse against him. Three of the incidents resulted in the parents of the children complaining to the Superior, and the fourth incident was witnessed by another Brother, who was so concerned over what he had seen that he warned the Superior to keep a close eye on Br Marceau. When confronted in respect of complaints, Br Marceau either minimised the seriousness of the incidents or emphatically denied that they had happened. He was issued with a Canonical Warning in the early 1960s. When the Superior of the Community received the fourth complaint from a parent later that year, he wrote that he was simply not prepared to deal with any more irate parents complaining about the ill-treatment of their children at the hands of Br Marceau. He regarded Br Marceau as a danger to the boys and simply unfit to be in charge of them. He begged for Br Marceau to be removed from his school. Br Marceau was transferred to St Joseph's Industrial School, Tralee.

11.117 The first Visitation Report following his transfer to Tralee recorded that this Brother did not seem to be 'quite normal and would appear to be deteriorating mentally'. He was 'lacking in good sense'. The follow-up letter to the Resident Manager noted that he 'may perhaps be inclined to be rather too exacting' and, accordingly, the Manager would have to ensure that his 'zeal' for the children's progress did not get the better of him. The Brother was transferred to Glin later that year, where he remained for approximately two years, after which he was sent back to Tralee.

11.118 In the year following Br Marceau's arrival in Glin, the Visitor remarked that Br Marceau was still upset over the Canonical Warning he had received. Br Marceau was convinced that there was a vendetta against him and had tried to have the Canonical Warning rescinded, but to no avail. The Visitor noted that, in Br Marceau's view, the warning was 'too severe a penalty for faults that were grossly exaggerated by a Superior who was prejudiced against him and in fact was out to get him, as he put it'. He was bolstered in his opinion, having sought the advice of three priests on the matter, who unanimously agreed that the punishment did not fit the crime. The Visitor urged him to accept the situation and concentrate on his work in the School. He surmised that he was 'not a vindictive type of man' and noted that Br Marceau was very well regarded in the Community.

11.119 It was not long before Br Marceau once again came to the attention of the Provincial Council. Almost two years later, the Resident Manager wrote to the Provincial notifying him of an incident that had recently taken place. Br Marceau learned that a pupil had referred to him as 'madman'.

²¹ This is a pseudonym.

He took the pupil to the Superior and the boy admitted the offence. The Superior slapped him on the palm of the hand in punishment.

- 11.120** Later that day, the boy reported to the infirmary with a pain in his jaw. His face was noticeably swollen and, when questioned by the Brother in charge of the infirmary, the boy reluctantly admitted that Br Marceau had struck him on the face before he had brought him before the Superior. Br Marceau denied the allegation. A week later, the swelling had not subsided and the local doctor examined the boy on his weekly visit. He recommended an x-ray as a precautionary measure, and it was discovered that the boy had a fractured jaw. He was detained in hospital for observation.
- 11.121** The Provincial wrote to Br Marceau and requested an account of the incident. He responded the following day with a detailed version of events. He stated that he was aware that he was referred to by the nickname 'madman' by the boys, because he was considered over-vigilant in his supervision of the dormitories, playgrounds and toilets. On the day in question, he was made aware of the fact that a boy had referred to him by this name. He informed the boy's teacher of the matter and the two Brothers questioned the boy. He admitted the allegation and, after being interrogated by Br Marceau, he reluctantly disclosed the names of two other culprits. Br Marceau accompanied him to the Superior's office and back to the classroom where he stated that he 'got him to apologise. Then I gave the boy a few slaps on the hands, but at no time during the incident did I beat him anywhere else'.
- 11.122** The Provincial replied, admonishing Br Marceau on his handling of the whole affair and, in particular, the manner in which he disregarded the Superior's authority. He warned, 'you understand I hope that you have made a very bad mistake and that you are fortunate the consequences have not been more serious. (I am praying they will not be.)'. He informed Br Marceau that he would be transferred immediately to Tralee.
- 11.123** There is no mention in the letter from the Provincial that Br Marceau had a history of serious physical assaults on pupils in other schools, including Tralee, the School to which he was being sent for the second time. Three days after Br Marceau's untimely departure from Glin, a member of the Provincial Council conducted the annual Visitation of Glin. There was only a veiled reference to the incident which resulted in Br Marceau's transfer. The Visitor noted that Br Marceau and another Brother had encouraged tale telling amongst the younger children and this had resulted in 'the recent incident'.
- 11.124** However, that was not the end of the matter. The Christian Brothers were obliged to notify the Department of Education of the fact that a boy had been hospitalised. A routine enquiry issued, requesting information on the manner in which the injury was sustained. The reply stated 'facial injury accidentally caused in the administration of punishment'. The Resident Manager feared that the enquiry was the result of a Dáil question, and he asked a member of the Provincial Council to meet with a Department official. Br Moynihan met Mr MacUaid of the Department to discuss 'the affair in Glin', and Mr MacUaid made a note that, 'Brother Moynihan was not sure whether the injury was a result of a blow from the strap or from collision during punishment, as the Consultor, whom he had sent down to investigate the matter, was vague on this point'.²² He declined to divulge the name of the Brother, only revealing that he had been transferred elsewhere. Mr MacUaid noted that:

The Resident Manager of Glin is a kindly man and I understand that there is a good atmosphere in the school. Yet, there is the possibility that the coincidence of the official

²² Note there is no indication from the correspondence dealing with the matter that anyone was sent down to investigate the matter. The discovery indicates that the matter was dealt with entirely by correspondence.

query and the Bundoran inquiry may have flushed a bird which otherwise might have lain concealed.

11.125 The Department was somehow informed of the identity of the perpetrator, as the next letter was from Br Marceau to the Department, in which he referred to a recent interview in Tralee with a Department official. He was outraged that such an allegation could have been made and stated:

I emphatically deny that I struck this boy on the face for a very insulting remark he made about me.

I fail to understand how this false charge has been made against me.

Therefore I have nothing to add to our recent conversation in St Joseph's Tralee ...

11.126 Despite the gaps in the documents it is clear that:

- (1) The Department was aware that a boy in Glin was injured so severely that his jaw was fractured and he was hospitalised.
- (2) Br Marceau was the most likely perpetrator of the injury, despite his denial.
- (3) The Provincial Council saw fit to have him transferred from the School as a result of the incident to another residential school.
- (4) Br Marceau's violence was documented in Congregation records.
- (5) The Congregation was in dereliction of its duty of care by sending Br Marceau to Glin, and then transferring him back to Tralee, despite his violent treatment of boys.
- (6) The Department was also in dereliction of duty, as it did not voice any concerns regarding the incident and was content to let the matter lie.

11.127 The Congregation asked surviving Brothers who had worked in residential institutions to complete questionnaires in relation to their views of life in industrial schools. Br Marceau completed one such questionnaire in 1999. In it, he stated that it was more difficult to mould industrial schoolboys because they lacked character. There was no written code of discipline; there was instead a code of practice which was passed from one Brother to another. His mentor advised him not to become too friendly with the boys. Each Brother was expected to handle his own discipline problems. He stated that he was humane in his treatment of the boys, but accepted that he also used the 'lamh laidir'.²³ In addition, he used competition between the boys and a rewards system to maintain control.

11.128 In his view, most of the allegations of abuse made against Brothers were false. He thought that there were too many Brothers accused for the matter to make sense. He denied all allegations of abuse made against him.

- 1. Glin had a severe, systemic regime of corporal punishment.**
- 2. Brothers with a known propensity for physically abusive behaviour were sent to Glin.**

Sexual abuse

Br Buiron²⁴

11.129 Br Buiron spent almost seven years in Glin in the early 1940s. Prior to this, while resident in Artane, he confessed to the Superior that he had sexually abused a boy in the infirmary, where he was working. It appears from minutes of a General Council Meeting held at that time that there

²³ 'Strong hand' in Irish.

²⁴ This is a pseudonym.

was a number of incidents. Br Buiron was called before the Superior General and admitted the offences. The Superior General wrote to the Provincial:

I sent for Br B today and told him of the risk we ran in retaining him in the Congregation and gave him until tomorrow morning at ten o'clock to consider if he would apply for a dispensation or stand trial. I will let you know the result. He is a great danger to us. Two Brothers were hanged in Canada within the past two years for murder of their victims after such offence. A Brother of a community in charge of an industrial school in Rome awaits his trial for the murder of a boy in the school who told of his offence to his Superior. The school is closed and the community disbanded.

- 11.130** Br Buiron refused to apply for a dispensation and appeared before the General Council. A vote was taken but, instead of sending him for trial as predicted by the Superior General, it was unanimously agreed that Br Buiron should be retained in the Congregation. He was given '... the first canonical warning, threatened with expulsion and given a penance. The daily recital of the Miserere'. The Superior General wrote to the Provincial informing him of the outcome of the vote, which was taken 'after very mature deliberation'. He continued:

I told him that you would send him the official warning when writing to him and giving him his location (which will be very difficult I fear.) He shows signs of the greatest repentance. He told us he was not sure [of the boy's name] and that he told him after the first offence that he (Br B) would now have to leave the Brothers.

- 11.131** Br Buiron was immediately moved to Cork, where he remained until he was transferred to Glin.

Br Pipere²⁵

- 11.132** Br Piperel taught in Glin for six years during the 1940s. He had previously served in Letterfrack and Tralee. Following his time in Glin, he was transferred to Salthill. In Letterfrack, he was the subject of a serious complaint that he was sexually interfering with boys. A full account of the case is contained in the chapter on Letterfrack. An allegation against him was investigated, but only to the extent that he was asked about it by a Visitor, and subsequently gave a lengthy written account by way of letter. The explanation offered by the Brother ought to have given rise to increased unease rather than to have allayed suspicion. He later taught in Cork, where his conduct in relation to young girls caused him to be removed urgently and relocated in retirement in the Midlands.
- 11.133** • **These Brothers were sent to Glin after complaints or suspicions of sexual abuse in other industrial schools. Given the risk of such behaviour being repeated, it was reckless to transfer them to a residential school, where the children were particularly vulnerable as they had no recourse to their families.**

Neglect and emotional abuse

Visitation Reports and Department of Education Inspection Reports

- 11.134** In 1938, the Visitor commented on the boys' appearance:

Nobody can fail to remark the contrast between an Industrial School boy in his everyday rig and the appearance of even the poorest boys attending our Day Schools. The Industrial School boy seems to have no appreciation of personal cleanliness and tidiness of dress.

²⁵ This is a pseudonym.

- 11.135** The following year, the Visitor recorded that the School had received a favourable report from the Department Inspector, but he found the top class weak in arithmetic, handwriting and letter writing. In addition, the Brother in charge of this class had unilaterally decided to abandon the teaching of Irish. The Visitor remarked that he 'ought show more zeal for their welfare'. He noted that one of the other two teaching Brothers was also a poor teacher. The Visitor was critical of the boys' clothing, some of which was simply unfit for use and should be discarded. He complained about the heavy boots the boys wore, which were badly repaired, making them 'unsightly, unwieldy things'. He was pleased to see that the boys now had good shoes for Sunday.
- 11.136** In June 1940, the Visitor said that the yard was surfaced in coarse gravel which made it unsuitable as a play area. He found only one of the teachers, out of a complement of five, satisfactory. He observed, 'the teaching staff here, as in the other industrial schools I visited this year, is weak. The type of boy in the industrial schools needs to have devoted, zealous and self-sacrificing teachers'. The treacherous condition of the schoolyard continued to receive mention in the Visitation Reports and Department Inspection Reports, but it was not until 1955 that the necessary work was undertaken.
- 11.137** The 1941 Visitation Report listed repairs and improvements that were necessary, including the faulty hot water and heating system, the play hall was 'cold, unsightly and dilapidated' and needed to be replaced. The teachers, once again, came in for criticism, with only one of them regarded as satisfactory. Br Young was not impressed by the standard of work in the two trades being taught, namely boot-making and tailoring. The workshops were unsuitable and, in some instances, dangerous.
- 11.138** In 1942, the Visitor approved of the new spacious play hall which had been built for the boys. Water pipes continued to present problems, resulting in an insufficiency of water to the boys' lavatories. The teacher in charge of the two junior classes had 59 pupils in his class, which made it very difficult to teach effectively.
- 11.139** Two years later, the Visitor found that 'the literary side of the boys' education is somewhat over emphasised to the neglect of practical work'. He drew attention to the fact that the only trades taught were tailoring and shoemaking. He noted that the boys' sanitary facilities were 'entirely inadequate' and he was also critical of the laundry which required renovations.
- 11.140** The boys' lavatories came in for criticism once again during the Visitation in 1945. The Visitor noted that the 'Boys lavatories and bathroom are very primitive; there are no cisterns in the lavatories and boys have to carry water three times a day to flush them; I found a bad smell from them, they had not been flushed the morning I saw them; it was about 11am. It would be advisable to attend to both lavatories and bathroom in the near future'. Of the overall population of 214 boys, there were 190 on the School register. The remaining 24 boys were employed for more than six hours each day on the farm or in the workshops. This group received 30 minutes of instruction in religious doctrine daily. He advised:
- It is desirable that an hour a day extra should be afforded these boys to continue their education, especially as some of them had very little at the age of 14 years when they left off school work. Subjects such as English, Private Reading, Arithmetic, etc should interest and be useful to such boys.
- 11.141** In May 1946, the Visitor observed that the premises were badly laid out for the purposes of an industrial school, and that many repairs and alterations were necessary. The boys' bathroom came in for particular criticism, as it was too small and badly fitted. The yards and approaches to the Institution were in very bad condition and posed a hazard. Some of the wire mattresses required overhauling, although he appreciated the difficulty in obtaining wire. He predicted that a

sizeable sum of money would have to be expended on the School before long. The recurring theme of the inadequacy of trades training and education was once again aired. He observed:

It is very difficult to place boys in the trades when they have to go out and many who have been trained to shoemaking or tailoring have to go to farm work. These are much handicapped and are not a success. The trades or farm boys do not receive any education when once they begin their respective trades. This is unfortunate, as they soon forget much of what they have learnt.

11.142 He noted complaints that the School was understaffed, and recommended that a Brother who could undertake some school work would be useful.

11.143 In December 1946, Dr McCabe visited the School and recorded that the premises were clean and in good condition and that the children were well cared for and happy.

11.144 However, she noted a major deficiency which was subsequently set out in a follow-up letter from the Department to the Superior in December:

It is reported, however, that a number of the boys have not gained in weight and that a few have actually lost 2 or 3 lbs during the year. These boys who do not put on weight normally should be specially watched and they should be given such additional or special food as the School Medical Officer may prescribe.

1. Porridge should be served at breakfast. Each boy should be allowed at least a quarter of a pound of meat at each meal at which meat is served.
2. The boys everyday clothing should be improved.
3. The sanitary annexe should be kept in better order.
4. Rubber aprons and wellington boots should be provided for the boys in the laundry.
5. There is need for the provision of a new bathing annexe.
6. The dampness in the walls of the dormitories should be attended to. It is understood that you will arrange to have this matter attended to during the summer of 1947.

11.145 Additional points in her original report were that the dormitory walls had not been re-plastered as promised and remained damp, and there also remained room for improvement in boys' clothing. She noted that the outdoor sanitation annexe was better kept than previously. Overall, she noted a general improvement in all departments.

11.146 In May 1948, the Visitor noted that the damp walls in the boys' dormitories remained untreated, as did the play yard:

The surface of the playground is completely gone and the rough stone foundation revealed and in dirty weather the surface must be something approaching a morass and as in this establishment, owing to the fact that the various sections are completely cut off from one another and that the boys have to go out into the open air when passing from one to the other this mud is carried on their boots into all departments and particularly the chapel.

11.147 He drew attention to a pattern he had noticed from visiting other institutions, which was the lack of facilities for the boys' recreation:

During the recreations there seems to be a universal tendency to just turn the boys loose in the playing field or to herd them into an empty hall and then to let them fend for themselves. A lot of them seemed to just loll around. Obviously such boys should be kept well occupied in an interesting manner. There seems to be a very great need for a much more generous supply of apparatus for games both outdoor and indoor. Very little seems

to be done in the matter of supplying suitable reading material for them. Physical training is only carried out in a rather haphazard manner if at all.

11.148 Although the deteriorating condition of the premises was noted in various reports, the Congregation was reluctant to invest in repairs and renovations when the viability of the School was very much in question.

11.149 Dr McCabe remarked, in Medical Inspection Reports completed during the 1950s, that she was satisfied with improvements to the boys' diet. During an inspection in February 1954, she noted many improvements in the School. A new boiler had been installed, the dormitories painted, a carpenter's shop added, new equipment introduced to the kitchen, and new blankets and bedspreads acquired for the beds. The Visitation Report in May 1954 was not quite so positive. The Report noted that the boys' play hall was small and 'somewhat depressing', but the Superior asserted that the boys had plenty to amuse themselves with during the frequent rainy periods. The Visitor found the shower facilities rather primitive, although the Superior assured him that improvements had been made. He was glad to see that the boys had new boots and sandals 'so that there was none of the heavy clattering of boots that is such an undesirable feature of some of our industrial schools'.

11.150 The Visitor in 1958 expressed concern at the standard of trades training in Glin. Tailoring and shoe mending were still the only trades but, in the previous five years, only one boy had directly benefited from the training he received. Practically all of the boys upon leaving Glin went to work on farms, and many did not have an aptitude for it. He was satisfied with the boys' diet and clothing, although he was critical of their footwear.

11.151 The Visitor made similar findings as regards trades training in his Report the following year. He recorded that, despite the existence of a carpentry shop, that trade was not taught. He believed that machines rather than people were used in the trades in which the boys were instructed and jobs could not be secured for them. Boys tended to work on farms before drifting off to England or into the Army. He supported the Superior's suggestion that a Brother who could teach arts and crafts be drafted onto the staff in order to 'take some of the dullness out of their lives'. He added, 'the evening is long here and occupation for the boys is necessary'.

11.152 In 1959 the Visitor expressed concern at the state of disrepair of the School during his Visitation, although he noted that 'repairs are out of the question owing to falling numbers and meagre government grants'. However he advised that the fire escape, which was in a dangerous condition, be attended to as it presented a danger and 'could scarcely be used in an emergency'. He queried the unusually high level of failure at the Primary Certificate examinations, and noted that the children were weak at arithmetic.

11.153 The Visitor in 1961 made the customary remarks about the state of disrepair of the premises. He also commented that, when the boys left Glin, they often seemed very lost in the world:

Some of them do not easily fit into their new surroundings especially those who have never known what family life should be. Many drift from job to job and eventually emigrate. The general impression of the visitor would be, I think, that the institution fulfils a useful purpose and many pupils who have been the victims of circumstances and brought up under sordid conditions are given a fresh start and are well prepared for life.

11.154 The Visitor in 1964 stated:

The boys' toilets are bad and require to be completely renovated. Being in the open and uncovered they are exposed and in wintertime this is severe on the boys. They would require to be replaced by new toilets but owing to the uncertainty with regard to the future

of industrial schools this is scarcely to be recommended. The boys' kitchen is in the same bad condition as it has always been.

- 11.155** The following year, the Visitor acknowledged that a substantial sum had been spent on updating the boys' kitchen, but additional renovations had been put on hold pending a decision on the future of the School. The School closed in 1966.

Home leave

- 11.156** Home leave was first granted in 1924 and was for a maximum of seven days per annum. It was extended in 1935 to 14 days, following an unofficial suggestion by the Cussen Commission prior to its final report. Following publication of this Report, the period was once again extended to 21 days per year, and the discretion regarding who went on home leave was transferred to the Resident Manager, who was thus allowed a certain degree of latitude in determining the length of a child's leave.

- 11.157** In 1948, a further 10 days were allocated, thus increasing the total to 31 days.

- 11.158** Some figures for home leave from Glin between 1942 and 1966 were compiled by Br McCormack in his report. These are available primarily from the Christian Brother Annals and are set out below:²⁶

1942: In July about 80 of the boys spent three weeks with their parents or friends (*Annals*).

1944: 75 boys went on home leave (*Annals*).

1945: 110 boys went home for a three weeks holiday in July (*Annals*).

1953: In August all but three of the boys returned from holidays in their homes. One of these had been taken to England by his mother, but after negotiation he was returned to the school (*Annals*).

1955: About 50 boys went home on holidays (*Annals*).

1958: About 50 boys went home on holidays (*Annals*).

1961: About 40 of the boys got a fortnights holiday with families who offered to take them (VR 19.4).

1962: In July, 36 boys went home for a months holidays (*Annals*).

1965: In July some boys went home for their holidays. In August, 36 boys went to Carne, Co. Wexford for 3 weeks holiday. Transport was provided by the Limerick Lions Club (*Annals*).

1966: In July, 20 boys went home on holiday and 30 went to Knockadoon. All returned on 1 August (*Annals*).

- 11.159** These figures are not absolute and are provided without context, and even contradicted on occasion by Department of Education figures; for example, in 1942, 70 not 80 boys went on home leave and, in 1944, 74 boys went on leave out of a total of 207. Some years are also missing, but can be found in records provided by the Department of Education; for instance, in 1948, the Department recorded that just 28 boys returned home that summer.

- 11.160** The Department's desire to extend home leave to a wider number of children, for a greater period of time, met with resistance from a number of Resident Managers, Glin included. On 22nd November 1944, the Manager of Glin wrote to the Industrial Schools Branch of the Department

²⁶ Provided in the research paper produced by John McCormack cfc.

of Education, defending the decision to send only 74 children out of a total of 207 on home leave. The Manager stated, 'I kept them in the school because I had no guarantee that their friends would be able to maintain and take care of them'. He also stated in this letter that every boy in the School wrote to relatives regarding the home leave, with 74 positive replies, six negative replies and no replies in the remaining cases. Closing the letter, he remarked, 'I did not consider it advisable to send boys on holidays to parents and relatives who did not reply'.

- 11.161** This hostility to home leave emerged most strongly when, in 1949, the Department of Education proposed to extend the maximum period to six weeks in a calendar year. Just seven schools were in favour of the proposal and 37 were against it, including Glin. The Resident Managers, in a letter dated 7th June 1949, stated their reasons in very clear terms:

It was pointed out that when the children return from Home Leave there is always a marked disimprovement in manners and conduct; they are often very discontented, impatient of control, and physically and morally upset. All this is highly detrimental to the general spirit of the School, and it takes children quite a long time to settle down again to the ordinary routine.

Numbers of them return ill-fed and sickly, in an unkempt condition, with clothes in a filthy condition. It takes weeks to get rid of the vermin. Sometimes their language is vile, having picked it up in undesirable quarters. And for some such considerations some Managers suggested that instead of extending the Home Leave period, it should be shortened.

Industrial School children generally belong to the poorest families and the home conditions are often most unsuitable and undesirable. It was mentioned where a family of eight lived and slept in one room; also where a father, two girls and a boy slept in the one bed, while the mother, dying of T.B. was in a corner in a bed supplied by the Corporation.

A high percentage of these children are illegitimate and their mothers are not just what they should be; others have been the victims of circumstances getting into trouble because parents or guardians failed to exercise proper control. And as it was by order of the Court that these children were committed to the Schools, it stands to reason it would not be for their betterment to allow them to return to such undesirable conditions for protracted periods.

It was also said that children who could with safety be allowed six weeks' Home Leave should not be in any Industrial School; they should be discharged to their homes and not be allowed to be parasites living on public moneys.

- 11.162** While many of these points may have been true, the tone of the letter shows very little understanding of the need for family contact. In Submissions, the Christian Brothers commented:

The general unsuitability of the children's homes on account of poverty, overcrowding, and lack of parental control also figured among the reasons for opposing the proposal and some Managers (number not given) even suggested that shortening of home leave would be a better option.

- 11.163** They added there was 'genuine concern for the children in the opposition to extending home leave'.

Aftercare

- 11.164** 761 boys passed through the School between 1940 and 1966. Forty percent (308) of these boys were discharged to members of their family. According to the Dunleavy Report, the School Register showed that the boys were discharged to the following relatives:

	1940–1947	1947–1966	Total
Discharged to father	50	79	129
Discharged to mother	35	60	95
Discharged to parents	20	7	27
Discharged to aunt	7	11	18
Discharged to grandmother	5	5	10
Discharged to uncle	4	10	14
Discharged to sister	4		4
Discharged to grandfather	4		4
Discharged to brother	2	5	7
SUBTOTAL	131	177	308

11.165 As can be seen, 81% of those discharged to a relative went to a parent or parents.

11.166 According to the Dunleavy Report, aftercare beyond one year was provided to boys as follows:

Years	Boys receiving more than 1 year aftercare	%
1940–1947	68	18%
1947–1966	61	15%

11.167 It is likely that most of these boys were discharged to places of employment, and had no relatives to look after them. The Brother in charge of aftercare made notes on pay, living conditions and contentedness of the boy.

11.168 Records were kept of the kinds of employment found for the boys. The following table taken from the Dunleavy Report covers the period:

Employment	1940–1947	1947–1966	Total
Farm boy	87	76	163
House boy	21	43	64
Hotel worker	10	16	26
Boot maker*	7	3	10
Shop boy	5	1	6
Tailor*	4	1	5
Religious order*		3	3
Cook*		2	2
Builders labourer	1	1	2
Blacksmith*	1		1
Monumental sculptor*		1	1
Subtotal	136	147	283

* Skilled or semi-skilled work.

11.169 89% of the boys went into unskilled work on farms, or as houseboys or hotel workers. 16 boys between 1947 and 1966 went on to join the Army. A further 14 were charged with criminal offences.

11.170 The Congregation in its Submissions made the point that trade unions had made it difficult for boys to enter trades. However, a number of Visitation Reports pointed out that the limited trades taught were effectively useless to the boys upon leaving the Institution, as they were dictated

by the requirements of the School rather than the kind of training that would prepare the boys for work.

Submissions of the Christian Brothers

- 11.171** The Submissions made by the Congregation on issues of neglect of the boys in Glin drew attention first to the General Inspection Reports of the Department of Education, which it stated were generally very favourable. It said that the process of inspection as carried out by Dr Anna McCabe was thorough and had good follow-up. At the end of each inspection, Dr McCabe made recommendations orally to the Manager of the School, which were then followed up by a letter from the Department, formally listing the recommendations. The process came to a close with a letter of confirmation from the Manager that the required alterations and improvements had been made. The Congregation contend that the Resident Manager responded promptly to the Department's requirements, following both General Inspection Reports and Medical Inspection Reports. The reality, however, is that the Department Inspections were a good deal less effective than the Congregation's description would suggest.
- 11.172** The Congregation also drew attention to favourable entries in the Visitation Reports. They included the statement in 1946 that the boys were well clothed and fed, and in 1949 and 1950 there were favourable comments about the variety and quantity of food.
- 11.173** The Submissions pointed out that Inspection Reports recorded improvements in recreational and cultural facilities, as well as holiday arrangements, from the end of the 1940s. Visitation Reports and Community annals also reported the provision of a variety of facilities. As against that, the Reports which were quoted at paras 1.147 and 1.149 above drew attention to the lack of recreation for the boys in Glin and that life was tedious for them.
- 11.174** The Brothers cited documentary records, indicating the availability of cultural and sporting activities. These included a choir, dancing classes, an orchestra, drama and boxing.
- 11.175** In respect of education, it was pointed out that, from 1952 onwards, small numbers of boys in each year attended outside secondary school or vocational school.
- 11.176** The Congregation conceded in regard to vocational training:
- As regards the standards reached in the Shops, it is doubtful if it went much beyond repairs and mending ... However, judging by the very poor record of placement of boys in boot-making and tailoring the skills most of the boys had to offer were not very considerable.
- 11.177** The Congregation contended that the Medical Inspection Reports were also favourable, that the medical records were well kept, and that the local doctor visited the School regularly. On the subject of dental treatment, they suggested that the number of boys referred for treatment was quite low. Quoting the Medical Reports, therefore, the general picture was one of compliance with the standards set out by Dr McCabe, who was satisfied when the School met with her requirements and was also very appreciative of Managers' efforts to improve conditions for the residents. Healthcare was satisfactory, as recorded in the documents that are available. Similarly, hygiene was satisfactory. There are, however, very critical entries in the reports, particularly the Visitation Reports as disclosed.
- 11.178** • **The Congregation Submission was selective when referring to the available documentation, making no reference, for example, to significant criticisms in its own Visitation Reports.**

Differences between Visitation Reports and Inspection Reports

- 11.179** There was a marked contrast between the Christian Brothers' Visitation Reports and the Department of Education Inspection Reports. The former were more in-depth and thorough, whereas the latter tended to be more cursory. The Visitation Reports were consistently critical of the dilapidated state of the School, and concerns about the damp walls in the dormitories, the atrocious state of the lavatories and the treacherous state of the schoolyard were expressed. Dr McCabe also made reference to these issues but not with the same sense of urgency. She did not make any reference to the effect that such sub-standard facilities might have on the children.
- 11.180** In some Visitation Reports, when the Brothers noted the shabby state of the boys' clothing, no corresponding comment was made by Dr McCabe. When she did note that the boys' clothing was tattered and patched, she did not press the matter or make suggestions as to how shortages in supplies could be addressed.
- 11.181** The Brothers conceded in the Visitation Report of 1948 that there was little in the way of stimulating recreational facilities for the boys, but this was not an issue raised by Dr McCabe.
- 11.182** The standard of education was another area where there were conflicting reports. The Visitation Reports were very negative about the standard of education and trades training in the School. It was not an issue that came within Dr McCabe's remit, but the Department's Education Inspector made a favourable report on the School and did not pick up on the criticisms of the Visitors.
- 11.183** The limited trades available were dictated by the requirements of the School, rather than the kind of training needed to prepare the boys for work. A number of Visitation Reports pointed out that these trades were effectively useless to the boys upon leaving the Institution. Boys were ill-prepared for the outside world: they did not fare well after being discharged and often tended to drift from job to job before ending up in England or joining the Army.
- 11.184** Dr McCabe's Inspection Reports, particularly in later years, would suggest that the inspections were not particularly probing, and were, in many respects, superficial. In areas where she did make criticisms, she did not tend to suggest practical solutions to the problems.
- 11.185** A comparison of both the Department and Visitation Reports suggests that the Visitation Reports provided a more reliable source of information about conditions in the School.

General conclusions

- 11.186**
- 1. Glin had a severe, systemic regime of corporal punishment.**
 - 2. The Congregation transferred two Brothers to Glin, despite evidence or suspicion of sexually abusing boys in another Institution under the control of the Christian Brothers. This decision protected both the Congregation and the Brothers but endangered the boys in Glin.**
 - 3. Documentary sources revealed serious deficiencies in the physical care, facilities, accommodation, education, training and aftercare in Glin Industrial School.**
 - 4. Problems affecting the standard of care in Glin persisted, despite being reported by both the Congregation's Visitor and the Department of Education Inspectors.**
 - 5. Glin Industrial School failed in its fundamental requirement to provide care, education and training for the boys.**
 - 6. The Department of Education failed in its supervisory duties. Its role was protective of the institution and its response to serious complaints was cursory and dismissive.**

