

**ASSESSMENT CONFERENCE FOR
KEVIN McGOWAN DOB: 09.04.86**

**HELD AT KIBBLE CARE AND EDUCATION CENTRE
ON WEDNESDAY 08/03/2000 at 1.30PM**

This should be read in conjunction with the assessment report and education report presented by Kibble School.

Those in attendance:

Gordon Mercer (Unit Manager, Kibble School) Chairperson and Minute taker.
Tony Birney (Depute Unit Manager, Clydevue)
Chris Robertson (Head Teacher, Gourrock High)
Wendy McMillan (Mearns Centre)
Angela Jeffries (Education Psychologist)
Tom Laurie (Teacher, Kibble School)
Harry Scott (Social Worker)
David MacLeer (Senior Social Worker)
Kevin McGowan (Subject of Report)
Mr & Mrs McGowan (Kevin's Parent)
Stella Sneddon (Keyworker, Kibble School)

G Mercer opened the meeting by asking the Social Worker to give a brief resume of events leading up to Kevin's admission to Kibble School.

Harry Scott (Social Worker) stated that it appeared that there had been several problems over the last year and some of these incidents had been quite serious. In August 1998 Kevin had been enrolled at Wellington Academy and it would appear that throughout the early stages of his placement here he had difficulties settling in. This pattern of behaviour had continued for a period of time and in February 1999 Kevin was expelled. This occurred as a result of an assault on a teacher, this incident along with a fairly disruptive level of behaviour led Wellington School to believe that they could no longer cope with Kevin or his behaviour. This in turn led to Kevin being offered a place in the Mearns Centre (Education Support Unit) along with a part time programme to attend Gourrock High School.

Whilst initially Kevin's attendance at the project was good he fairly quickly began to attend sporadically. Kevin would only turn up when something was on offer that suited him ie activity based programmes PE etc. This in turn led to the part time attendance at Gourrock High never really getting off the ground.

Throughout the summer Kevin's behaviour in the community began to give cause for concern. He was involved in drinking in the company of some older boys and on at least two occasions was charged with police assault.

The behaviour was also mirrored in the family home and Kevin was particularly non-compliant with his Mother's efforts to manage and discipline his behaviour. By December Kevin's behaviour had reached a point whereby he did not respond or address his behaviour with any of the adults in his life. In December Kevin appeared before a Children's Panel and a recommendation for a period of assessment was supported and endorsed by the Hearing.

G Mercer then asked Mr & Mrs McGowan their view of the issues leading up to Kevin's admission to Kibble. Both parents said that it was significant that the transition from primary to secondary had been a major problem for Kevin to manage. They felt that since Kevin's commencement at secondary his behaviour had been more difficult to manage to the extent that they found it hard to believe that Kevin was the same child they had known in the latter stages of his primary education. Both parents acknowledged that Kevin had initial problems in P1, 2, 3 but between primary four and seven his behaviour had settled and he in the main appeared to be a fairly happy child.

However both parents had mentioned that they felt Kevin displayed some learning difficulties in relation to Kevin's reading and writing skills in primary school. They also both felt that this issue had never been addressed.

Gordon Mercer then asked Angela Jeffries (Educational Psychologist) if Kevin had ever been assessed as having a record of needs. She went on to say that though it had been looked at it had never been identified that Kevin had any significant learning difficulties. This was in contrast to Mr & Mrs McGowan's view that they both felt and still do that Kevin may suffer from some form of dyslexia. Angela Jeffries went on to say that had Kevin continued to attend Gourrock High that further exploration of these issues could have occurred. She further commented on the fact that throughout most of Kevin's education he had been unable to manage change effectively and clearly struggled with new relationships and period of change. This opinion could be supported and evidenced throughout Kevin's educational history and most recently by his reaction to his initial admission to Kibble.

At this point in the meeting Gordon Mercer indicated that he felt it was an appropriate time to take discussion a stage further and look at Kevin's behaviour since his admission.

Stella Sneddon (Keyworker) was asked to give a resume on Kevin since his admission to Kibble. Kevin had initially be placed in South Unit on his arrival at Kibble, however in his first two days he was:

1. Removed to Mill St Police Station and held overnight after barricading himself in another boy's room and assaulting a member of the Care Staff.
2. After being returned from Mill Street he was again involved in a fairly serious incident resulting in him being charged with assault on two staff members.

After these incidents Kevin was transferred to Clydeview where his peer group were much younger (nearer his own age). In the early stages of his time in Clyde Kevin was given very clear structures and his behaviour was managed for him. It was Stella's opinion that this had worked well for him and there had been little or no problems

In the unit or classroom presented by Kevin. Stella went on to say that he had made efforts to communicate with staff and kept himself out of the limelight with respect to other young people's problems. Stella has had good contact with Mr & Mrs McGowan and feels there is a strong bond between Kevin and his parents. Stella further said that home leave and contact had gone very well for Kevin and continues to do so at this stage.

Gordon Mercer then asked Tom Laurie (teacher at Kibble) how Kevin's attitude and work had been within education. Mr Laurie stated that Kevin had presented no management problems within school and that he had applied himself well to all tasks presented to him. Kevin has particularly excelled himself in P.E. and Home Economics subjects that he has a natural talent for. Kevin is less able in reading, writing and maths but has clearly made good use of the smaller class setting and has used this as an opportunity to seek assistance. Mr Laurie states that Kevin clearly values the relationships he has made in the Education Unit and he sees no reason why, in this environment, Kevin could not set targets and achieve results.

Gordon Mercer then asked Kevin how he felt things had gone since his admission to Clydeview. Kevin stated that it was alright but he would still rather stay at home. When pressed on how he would manage education, Kevin said that he would like to attend Kibble as a day boy as he felt that people made time for him and he felt less out of his depth within the environment that Kibble had to offer. When asked about the initial incidents at the beginning of his placement he said that he had played to the audience and, been caught up in things which had little or nothing to do with him. He expressed a regret of this and acknowledged it had not been one of his better ideas.

Gordon Mercer then asked Mr & Mrs McGowan how they felt things had been since Kevin's admission to Clyde. Both parents expressed that they had noticed a great improvement in Kevin's attitude. In relation to his behaviour whilst on home leave, Kevin's dad had been much more co-operative with the limits they had placed on him. They also mentioned that on at least one occasion when Kevin's peers had been drinking and involved in fights, Kevin had returned home early and gone out of his way to detach himself from the behaviour. Both Mr & Mrs McGowan felt they had the Kevin of old back and they were delighted with his behaviour and attitude. They went on to say that Kevin appears much happier and in general, family life has become less strained.

SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT

Kevin McGowan would appear to be a young man who has struggled with various aspects of his life. From a very early age he would appear to struggle with changes to routines, peers and adult relationships. It has been evidenced that since his introductions to primary school, high school and latterly Kibble, that he does not have the ability to manage relationships particularly with adults in a position of authority and after this, has resulted in fight or flight. It can be evidenced that he either absents himself from the situation or reacts. The latter part of his behaviour has, without a doubt, caused him problems in relation to education and the law.

He is a young man who on the surface, may give the appearance of being relatively bright and articulate in actual fact struggles and may have some learning difficulties. He is also physically mature for his age and although only thirteen could be mistaken for being much older. This in itself, has presented Kevin with another set of difficulties. It would be fair to say that Kevin's peer group have expected much of him and have often looked to him to carry out behaviour that they themselves are not capable of. This may be the reason that Kevin has at times been involved in fights with others in the community. Everybody at the assessment is of the opinion that the structured environment that Kevin has experienced at Kibble has assisted him to manage his behaviour and anxieties that have often had him uptight. It was noted by all at the assessment that Kevin has become more relaxed and for the first time, contributed to the process of this meeting. This is possibly a result of Kevin feeling quite good about himself for the first time in a long while. All present felt that continued structure and support would assist Kevin's self-esteem to improve and hopefully, in turn lead to Kevin becoming more confident in his own abilities. He is now clearly motivated to change and with the right support and opportunities should continue to do well.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) A place that will offer educational day care with the right structures to be identified.
- 2) One to one work with Kevin and his family to be identified to offer continual support for Kevin and his family.
- 3) Further exploration of Kevin's learning difficulties to be looked at in conjunction with Educational Psychologist.
- 4) Assistance for Kevin with anger management in order to minimise Kevin's need for violent outbursts.
- 5) Kevin to return to the family home with the above recommendations identified and in place.

**GORDON MERCER
UNIT MANAGER/
CHAIRMAN.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'G. Mercer', written over the printed name.