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HQ 4

CLIENTS NAME: David StandishSHEET No.

July 84	This case was transferred to me at the beginning of July from Intake Worker, Steve Bowden, following a Hearing decision on 4th June to place David on supervision. We made a joint visit to the family home on 11th July, so that I might be introduced to the Standish's and to allow me to obtain an up-to-date picture of their situation. It was encouraging to learn that there had been a marked improvement in David's behaviour and in the home atmosphere in general, since his return from Burnside House, where he had spent three weeks on assessment. There had only been one incident which had occurred since then, involving David being apprehended after a glue-sniffing session with his friends. Otherwise, his parents reported a considerable change in his attitude and willingness to co-operate or compromise within the home. When I visited the family later in the month, we discussed their visits to see Dr. Wills at the Child Psychiatry unit at D.R.I. It was clear that Mr. and Mrs. Standish were unable/unwilling to recognise their own contribution towards David's difficult behaviour and wished to label the problem as lying with David alone. However, it seemed that they were committed to continuing their appointments as previously agreed and it was possible that with time their awareness would grow. David was quite quiet, but friendly and co-operative in interview and I felt he had the personal resources to work towards beneficial change. His activities with his friends outwith the home were clearly an area where potential for future problems lay and it was my view that it might be helpful to try to channel his energies in more positive directions. To this end, I suggested to him the possibility of becoming involved in the Motor Cycle Group run by Social Workers in the Area. David's initial reaction was of non-committal interest and it was left that he consider the question before I next saw him at the beginning of August. H.G.
Aug. 84	When I visited David and his mother at the beginning of August, we again discussed the possibility of David being referred for a place in the Bike Group. David himself had now become very keen on the idea and with his mother's approval, I said

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I would contact Social Worker, John Clark to let him know of David's interest.

John met David ~~xx~~ the following week and it was agreed that David should be included in the Group's next new intake in September. John would write to David nearer the time giving him specific details.

On 14th August David returned to school and the focus of attention was turned towards his progress and behaviour in school. I contacted David's guidance teacher at Morgan Mr. McArthur, to introduce myself and inform him of my involvement with David in a supervisory capacity. Mr. McArthur agreed to get in touch with me in the event of any difficulties or concerns. At this time, David's behaviour at home was reported to be satisfactory and the problems seemed to lie with other family members i.e. Mr. Standish's new job as a panel beater appeared under threat through lack of work and David's sister Linda had been told by her boyfriend that he wished to break off their engagement. Mrs. Standish was understandably upset and anxious during this period and she was also concerned about the possible effects of these difficulties on David and suspected despite his denial that he was struggling with some hidden problem. She felt that given time he would if necessary confide in her.

H.G.

Sept. 84 I was off on holiday during the last week of August and beginning of September and I contacted the family on my return to arrange to visit. The home situation remained relatively unchanged and David's behaviour was continuing to be acceptable. One apparent spin-off of this new found stability, was that Dr. Will had told the family he felt there was no further need for them to continue seeing him on a regular basis. It had been left that the family contact him towards Christmas to bring him up to date with their situation. David continued to show interest in attending the motor-cycle group, which was due to start on 25th October. Unfortunately his enthusiasm seemed to get a little out of hand, when he decided to ride a friend's motor bike on a public road! His parents were not slow to let him know of their disapproval. Another minor incident during the month was David's refusal of treatment from his dentist. However, the circumstances of the situation somewhat justified his action; he had gone to the appointment expecting to have his teeth cleaned

and polished. but was given an injection and told he was about to have four fillings! His parents were naturally upset by what they viewed as his hasty and rude behaviour. Nevertheless, Mrs. Standish later admitted that although she would not say so to David, she did agree that the Dentist had acted wrongly by not explaining at the outset that X-rays he had had taken the previous week indicated that four fillings were required. Apart from these two issues, there were few areas of concern about David's behaviour during the month. The whole family were in fact looking forward to a fortnight's holiday abroad and David himself had a further week off school beforehand for the October Fast.

Oct. 84

I visited the family during the October school holiday week prior to their departure on holiday. All were looking forward to their fortnight's holiday in the sun, but Mrs. Standish said that their excitement had been marred a little by a letter they had received from Mr. Smith, Assistant Director at Morgan Academy asking the couple to go to see them. Mrs. Standish explained that they had not received the letter until Saturday 20th September, and as the school was then on holiday it was impossible for them to see Mr. Smith before 22nd October. In addition, however, both were saying that they could see little point in going to see Mr. Smith to discuss the incident which had precipitated his letter, as David had already been belted for it and the behaviour had therefore been dealt with. I had to agree with the Standish's that this did seem a little unusual, and stressed that it was possible that Mr. Smith wished to discuss some related issue. However, I agreed to arrange to see Mr. Smith on their behalf and discuss the outcome of the meeting when I saw them on their return from holiday.

As agreed, I met with Mr. Smith the following week and established that he was making two points: (1) that David had been involved in two incidents since the start on the new session (2) that because of the change in policy about corporal punishment in the school, David's misdemeanours would not automatically be dealt with by using the belt. As far as the first point was concerned Mr. Smith did^{not} appear to have been fully aware of the extent of David's behavioural difficulties in school up until only six months before. I felt the need to point out to him that the two incidents he was referring to whilst we could not condone them, represented a marked improvement on the situation six months before and an indication of the effort David was now making in school. After checking with Mr. Carr, Mr. Smith agreed that David had made considerable progress during the past six months, which every effort should be made to help him sustain. With respect to (2) I agreed to pass on the substance of his message to Mr. and Mrs. Standish. At the end of the meeting we agreed to keep in touch over future difficulties or concerns.

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When David and his parents arrived back from holiday, I arranged to visit them on 25th October. All three were very tanned and seemed to have enjoyed the holiday very much. The experience of being together away from the everyday pressures of life at home appeared to have been beneficial to relationships and the family had clearly enjoyed the freedom from such tensions. Mrs. Standish remarked on how David had been more his 'real self' during the holiday. We talked about my discussions with Mr. Standish at Morgan and the tightening-up on the use of the belt in the school. Whilst Mr. and Mrs. Standish understood the reasoning underlying the change in policy, they did not feel it would help their own situation, as they envisaged, probably quite rightly, being drawn into the school at an earlier stage in discipline procedure and an increase in the frequency of their contact with the school if David's behaviour was not satisfactory. David, as expected, showed little reaction to this news, although I felt that in a way he would have seen the use of the belt as being in his interests, given that problems in school would not necessarily involve his parents. I hoped that this change in policy may have some deterrent effect upon him. The incident which had been the original source of complaint had in fact been a minor one initially, but one which had escalated because of David's attitude and response. This had been pointed out to him! Before I left after this visit David told me that he had decided he did not want to become involved in the motor-cycle group. We discussed the question but he would not change his mind or say why. I felt the new experience might have been too threatening for him and gave him John Clark's number to phone and notify him of his decision. As I expected, however, David later said that he had lost the number, and Mrs. Standish finally phoned John on his behalf.

Nov. 84

I phoned Mrs. Standish early in the month to arrange to visit the family, only to discover that David had been involved with the police on two occasions in the preceding week. The first incident occurred on Saturday ~~3rd~~ November when David was charged with urinating in a close and the second on Saturday 10th when he was seen in Dura Street carrying a box with alcohol in it. We agreed to ^{disc}discover these incidents further when I visited on 14th.

H. Gunn

As agreed, these incidents were taken up on with the family on 14th. As far as the first was concerned, David admitted to having urinated, as stated, in a close (near Stobswell and Morgan Academy) after playing football one lunch time. He said that his friends had also been charged at the same time. It seemed that that the Police had been 'keeping an eye' on this close, because of residents frequent complaints about their close being used as a urinal! The second incident David said had not resulted in him being charged. He recounted how he had agreed to carry a box with bottles of drink in it for two smaller lads in return for a small payment. The Police had appeared and/

/and the two boys had run off and David had been left 'carrying the can'. Thereafter, David had been questioned by the Police who appeared to have believed his story. No further action would follow. We discussed these two incidents at length, as his parents had already done with him. Mrs. Standish told me that her husband had given David a 'good talking' to as they did not want an escalation in his behaviour as before. I pointed out to David that although neither incident was serious in itself, he was building up a reputation of a trouble-maker. At the very least, he had the unfortunate knack of finding himself in the wrong place, at the wrong time!

David's behaviour remained satisfactory and it was the beginning of December before I saw him again. By this time Mr. Standish had obtained permanent employment as a panel beater with a firm in Fife.

Dec. 84

I received word from Reporter, John Fallon that he intended writing to David's family to let them know that he intended writing to David's family to let them know that he intended taking no action on the incident involving his urinating in the close. When I saw David later that day, I informed him of this news, but reinforced to him the importance of staying out of trouble.

When I saw David himself later that day, I told him of Mr. Fallon's decision and that he and his parents could expect a letter to this effect in the near future. David told me that his father's temporary contract with his new job had now been made permanent, and that the family's main concerns at present were about his mother's health. He intended visiting her in hospital that night.

I arranged to visit on 19th.

H. Gunn

I visited as pre-arranged on 19th and saw Mrs. Standish and David at home. Mr. Standish and Linda were at work. The atmosphere was relaxed, Mrs. Standish was recovering well from her operation and David's behaviour had been good of late - apart from difficulties in getting up in the mornings and arriving at school on time! The family were looking forward to Christmas and it had been agreed that David spend New Year's Eve at his girl-friend, [REDACTED] house. Mrs. Standish hoped that David would not get in to/

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/to any difficulty over the Christmas and New year period, although I felt her mood was more one of guarded optimism, than ~~dependent~~ pessimism. It was left that I would see the family again in the New Year.

Jan. 85

I visited the family mid-month and found both Mrs. Standish and David in good spirits. The festive celebrations had gone well, and there had been no difficulties with David, who had spent New Year at his girl-friend's house. In fact, most of his spare time now seemed to be spent with [REDACTED] either at her house or David's. Mrs. Standish said she was quite pleased with this arrangement, as she at least knew where David was and that he was not getting into trouble!

David had by this time returned to school and he told me that he had not been involved in any significant trouble of late. Mrs. Standish pointed out that he had however, been sleeping in a good deal of late, and was frequently late for school. Nevertheless, that David's level of difficulty in school had vastly diminished since the same time the previous year was very encouraging. The home situation viz-a-viz relationships had improved considerably and seemed to be quite stable, especially now that Mr. Standish was in permanent employment he enjoyed. As I did not feel there was a need for the same level of supervision as I had maintained up until Christmas, I decided to let a few weeks elapse before my next visit. I was certain that Mrs. Standish would contact me in the event of any difficulties in the interim.

Feb. 85

At the beginning of the month I called to the family home by prior arrangement made by telephone. The home situation remained stable and David and Mrs. Standish seemed in good humour. David had not been involved in any known incidents and at school lateness persisted as the only ongoing difficulty. However, Mrs. Standish did show me David's report card, which indicated that his marks were poor and that he was significantly underachieving. It was clear that he was just not interested in school. We discussed the situation, but I was quite aware that I was not saying anything to him that his parents had not! It seemed to come down to a question of motivation on David's part, and the difficulty of how to motivate him. His mother later expressed the hope that in time he would be prepared to make more of an effort in school.

H.G.

March-May
1985

Because of difficulties in making mutually suitable visiting arrangements, but also because I had consciously decided to reduce the frequency of visits on the basis that the family were functioning well and I was considering recommending a termination of David's supervision requirement at his Annual Review due in May, visits were restricted to one per month during this period.

The family situation remained unchanged and stable and David did not appear to be presenting any particular difficulties apart from sleeping in in the mornings and going to school late! I felt that the social work task by that time was completely non-directive and that I was more involved in monitoring the situation for the purpose of reporting to the forthcoming Hearing. In April I recieved notification of the Hearing date i.e. 16th April and I discussed the situation with David and his parents and the task of deciding upon a recommendation. I felt that Mrs. Standish in particular was a little apprehensive about the prospect of the supervision order being terminated, lest it proved to have had more of an influence on David's behaviour than might have been expected i.e. as a deterrent. However, I reassured the couple that they could contact the social work department if the need arose in the future and with this 'safety net' they seemed to feel secure with the idea of having the requirement removed. For his part, David was as usual quite non-committal and I felt that this reaction was in all probability due to my infrequent visiting pattern of late which might make him believe there was little difference between being 'on' or 'off' supervision. However, he accepted the reasons for my argument that his requirement could quite justifiably be terminated and that was my recommendation to the Hearing on 16th (see Hearing report). Unfortunately, on the morning of 16th, I received a telephone call from David's Guidance Teacher at Morgan, Mr. McArthur, who told me that David had been suspended from school because of swearing at a teacher (also that he would not, unfortunately, be able to attend the Hearing that evening). Not knowing the details of the situation and believing that David's behaviour at school had been improved over the past year, I did not feel that this development should affect my recommendation to the Hearing. However, I was certainly concerned when I read the copy of the school report, which I received only that day, that the staff at Morgan considered David to be presenting definite problems. As I pointed out to the Hearing that night, the school had made no contact with David's parents to indicate what they were suggesting was a severe level of difficulty with him in the school. The Hearing members appeared to agree on this point and accepted the recommendation that David's 44(1)(b) be terminated. However, I afterwards told Mr. and Mrs. Standish I would be pleased to become involved in their discussions with Morgan over David's suspension, if necessary. After Mrs. Standish's appointment at the school on 17th she ~~phoned~~ me to tell me that the needling had been a disaster, and that David himself had 'blown it', by refusing to apologise to his teacher for swearing. Mr. ~~Brown~~ the Headmaster had been furious, and Mrs. Standish herself, clearly embarrassed and ashamed of David. However, David did eventually made the required apology and he was allowed to return to school. Mrs. Standish voiced his concerns about the possibility of David's behaviour deteriorating once again,

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although she stressed that she and her husband wished to try to handle the situation alone. I said that I would phone her in the near future to find out how things had developed.

H. Gunn

June/July
85

I contacted Mrs. Standish early in June and she told me that David's general behaviour had shown no dramatic improvement of late. However, she and Mr Standish wanted to try to cope with the situation themselves, but that they would contact me in the event of any particular difficulty. However, by the end of July I had not heard from the family and as there seemed little point in continuing this case, I decided upon closure.

CASE CLOSED.

H. Gunn