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PM/CG

25 February 1998

Jacquie C Roberts - Director
Social Work Department
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FAX 01382 436022

Prepared by
Social Worker Phillip McGill
☎ 436031

SOCIAL BACKGROUND REPORT
CHILDREN'S HEARING

The following child:-

Surname	Tarbett	Date of Birth	09.07.91
Christian Names or Forenames	William	Religion	
School	Longhaugh Primary		
Address	c/o [redacted]	Occupation	
	[redacted]		

is to appear on _____ at _____ Children's Hearing

in connection with Annual Review

Contents

Introduction to William's Circumstances ..... Page 2

William's Family Background ..... Page 3

About William, his development and his views ..... Page 4

About William's contacts with his family ..... Page 6

Conclusion and Recommendations ..... Page 8

Appendix: Events that led to the children living in the care of the Social Work Department ..... Page 8

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Introduction to William's Circumstances

William has lived continuously in the care of the Social Work Department since September 1994 (when he was three years old). William was actually received into care through a Place of Safety Order at the insistence of Children's Panel members, who were seriously concerned about the behaviour of William and his siblings, and the lack of any parental control.

William lived with his brother, [redacted] in foster placements, with Mr and Mrs [redacted] from September 1994 to December 1995, and then with Mr and Mrs [redacted] from January 1996 until March 1997 when William moved to Mr and Mrs [redacted] (his current foster carers). Between December 1995 and January 1996 [redacted] and William were cared for by Mrs [redacted], which placement did not seem to be a happy one for the boys (they made allegations suggesting an incident of physical abuse, these were investigated and not substantiated).

There is also a regular respite arrangement in place such that William spends approximately one weekend per month with Mr & Mrs [redacted] foster carers. William enjoys these visits and gets on well with their son [redacted] (8 years).

William has settled well into his current foster home, where he lives alongside other foster children (2 boys, 1 girl) and the [redacted] 2 teenage daughters. William really enjoys being part of this busy household, particularly the opportunities to play with the boys whom he considers to be his best friends.

William has separate individual monthly contacts with his mother and father, for one hour each, supervised by Maureen Petrie, who he has known for a long time. William has fortnightly contacts, for one hour, with his brother and sister, [redacted] and [redacted].

William did not make progress at school following his move to the [redacted] causing everyone concern that he was preoccupied with other matters to do with adjusting to moving foster placement. William began to make progress when he returned to school following the summer 1997 break, and is now performing reasonably well in class. There are some difficulties to do with William's poor social abilities, leading to fighting in the playground at lunchtimes.

William's mother believes that he should remain in the care of the Social Work Department. She attends regularly for their contact meetings, and uses these meetings to encourage the children to make progress at home and at school.

William's father has never accepted that William needed to come into the care of the Social Work Department, nor that he was ever other than a good parent to William. His stubborn insistence upon these points has been a constant feature of his relationship with the Social Work Department. He attends regularly for contact meetings but has very limited ability to engage with the children.

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The Social Work Department decided, in 1996, that William (and his siblings) were needing to be looked after in the long term, and that appropriate placements should be identified for each child, where they might stay without further disruption. Since the making of this plan the Social Work Department has sought a placement for William but been unsuccessful. It is unfortunately the case that presently there is a serious shortage of long-term placements for primary-age children, particularly boys, across Scotland.

The Social Work Department referred to Children 1st organisation, in 1997, for independent assessments regarding:-

1 The contact arrangements between William, [redacted] and their parents.

2 The potential likelihood of either parent being able to have the children returned to their care.

The first of these has been considered and acted upon. The assessment regarding the parent's abilities to care is nearing completion and will be available by mid-March 1998.

William's father has made an application to the Sheriff Court for a Section 11 (Children (Scotland) Act 1995) Residence Order in relation to William, [redacted] This application was lodged in November 1997 and is yet to be heard. The Social Work Department have submitted a report which concludes that the application should not be granted as it is not in the best interests of any of the children.

The Social Work Department does not believe that William could be safely and appropriately cared for by his father, nor by his mother, and therefore recommends that William's current supervision requirement is continued.

William's Family Background

Mother: Linda Archer k/a Robertson (28 years)) not married;
Father: David Tarbett (50 years)) separated in 1995
Brother: [redacted]
YPU
Sister: [redacted]
Half-Brother: [redacted]

Mr Tarbett has five adult children from a previous marriage. These children were all looked after by the Social Work Department, initially at Mr Tarbett's request. Mr Tarbett reported that the 3 elder boys returned to his care, however, the Social Work Department assumed parental rights of the two younger children ([redacted]) and they remained in care [redacted]

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Since coming into care in 1994 William has had some regular contacts with his elder sister [redacted] and very occasional contact with his elder brother [redacted]

Ms Robertson was brought up in the care of the Social Work Department, latterly in Carolina House Children's Home. Ms Robertson and Mr Tarbett began to cohabit shortly after she left Carolina House.

Ms Robertson and Mr Tarbett's cohabiting relationship appears to have been characterised by violence and hostility with frequent separations and reparations. The children were, to a greater or lesser extent brought up against this background, and received poor, sometimes neglectful, parental care.

Since their latest separation in 1995 Ms Robertson maintains that she does not intend to renew her relationship with Mr Tarbett. Ms Robertson does not talk about this with the children unless they raise it.

Mr Tarbett has seemed to the Social Work Department to remain quite preoccupied by the ending of his relationship with Ms Robertson. Mr Tarbett frequently raises concerns and allegations regarding Ms Robertson's present behaviour with social workers. It is Mr Tarbett's view, as expressed to us, that the children's mother cannot love them, because she is not fighting to have them returned to her care as he is. Mr Tarbett does not accept that Ms Robertson may be considering the circumstances and choosing to put her children's needs before her own. There has been at least one occasion witnessed by myself when Mr Tarbett expressly told the children that their mother did not love them. On this occasion Mr Tarbett upset William by showing him a photograph which Mr Tarbett said had been torn up by his mother. (This occurred in October 1996).

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About William, his development and his views

I have had approximately fortnightly contact with William since becoming his social worker in January 1996. Most of our meetings involve William choosing an activity (football, pool and McDonald's being three of his favourites) and then a discussion with William and his carers.

Over the time I have known William I have seen him make appropriate developmental progress across most areas, and observed how his educational development was arrested for a long period as he settled into his new foster home. This is an unfortunate, but quite usual part of some children's reactions to moves-in-care.

William identifies himself more closely with his brother and sister, [redacted] than with either his mother or his father. William is particularly impressionable in relation to [redacted] - he worries about [redacted] he emulates [redacted] repeating and trying to exaggerate [redacted] behaviour. [redacted] and William's relationship when they were together in foster care was characterised by almost continuous

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aggression and by sexual play. Both boys were filled with strong feelings including anger, loss and worry when they were separated in March 1997.

William has a limited understanding of his background. He knows that [redacted] and himself lived at home with his mum and dad (and some of his elder siblings) and that he then went to live with "[redacted]) with [redacted] The only reference William has made to me to his early childhood is about his memory of being hit by his dad, with a belt, when his dad had been to the pub, and of his elder brother stopping this.

William speaks fondly of '[redacted] and their dogs, and of '[redacted]). William was the youngest at the [redacted] and enjoyed being in that special place. He grew very fond of '[redacted] and their two sons, and they were all equally fond of him.

William would not have chosen to move on from the [redacted] and is still unsure about why this had to happen (he is clearly not old enough to understand how "temporary fostering" works). William has now come to know and to care for "Aunty [redacted] and "Uncle [redacted] and to feel a part of their family, with his "best pals" [redacted] William has a limited awareness of this also being a temporary placement, however, Mr and Mrs [redacted] are very skilled at helping foster children to come to understand their place within the family, and this is an area which they continue to sensitively explore with William.

William has told me that he does not want to live with his parents, and that he thinks that he should stay with a foster family. William once referred to his elder brother (the one who he had said had stopped his dad from hitting him) as someone in his family who could look after him.

On two occasions over the last year William has referred to being visited at school: in May 1997 he said his big brother had been to see him at school and told him to expect to see his dad at school the next day; in October 1997 William reported, quite definitely, that he had seen his dad at lunch-time. When asked about these incidents Mr Tarbett said he had not visited William's school.

At their contact meeting of 29 January 1998, William asked Mr Tarbett when he might receive his Christmas presents. Mr Tarbett was noted to have told William that the presents would be delivered that night. Subsequently William was unsettled for the next few days, waiting for his presents. At a meeting with myself and a colleague on 3 February Mr Tarbett expressly denied having told William that he would have the presents delivered after the last contact. Mr Tarbett insisted that he had said they would be delivered "soon". To date these presents, overdue from Christmas 1997, have not been delivered. Mrs [redacted] reported to me that William asked her "Why does my dad tell me lies?"

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About William's contacts with his family

As noted earlier "Children 1st" were asked to assess the children's contact and to make any recommendations regarding improving the contact experience for all concerned.

This assessment was requested as it was recognised that the current arrangement of two monthly meetings, involving all of the children and either their mother or father, was not working well for the children.

Mrs Yvonne Jamieson of Children 1st completed her assessment in December 1997 and prepared a report which has been seen by William's parents and ourselves.

In her report Mrs Jamieson made some general points regarding the contact meetings, and then made some specific observations regarding each child. The following is extracted from the report:-

"Recommendations for Contact:

The following recommendations are made on the basis that the children will not be returning to the care of their birth family and the Social Work Department plan is the children need alternative permanent care.

Given each child is different and has very different needs I will look at them individually but there are some recommendations that would apply to the three children.

1 Sibling contact should be separate from parental contact. At the moment contact does not seem to be an enjoyable experience for the children because it is so fraught. If the children saw their parents separately from their contact with each other, both should be easier to manage.

2 The contact needs to be planned and managed by the children's social worker and/or supervisor of the contact. The children need the opportunity to have contact which is carefully planned around an activity they enjoy. This should involve doing different things and going different places and not always in the same room. This should avoid the contact becoming negative and boring for the children.

3 The people supervising the contact need to be seen to be in charge and control of the contact while enabling as far as is possible positive interaction between the family members.

4 Both parents need to co-operate fully with the plans for contact and work with the people supervising the contact to make it a positive experience for the children.

5 The contact currently needs to be supervised because both parents at times in the past have clearly struggled to manage the children appropriately. This may

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become easier if they are seeing the children individually and is something I would suggest should be reviewed after about 6 months.

William:

My view is William's attachments are with his siblings particularly [redacted] He has little interaction with either parent during contact but obviously enjoys being part of a family. I think it important for him to maintain contact with his parents because it is the only family he has until a more permanent home is secured for him. In the current contact arrangements he finds it hard to settle and after about half an hour is wanting to go home. Given his age and lack of attachment to the parents this is understandable. I would therefore suggest the contact time be reduced to approximately three quarters of an hour unless a planned activity was to take longer."

The Social Work Department recommends that the conditions in William's supervision requirement are amended to take account of Mrs Jamieson's conclusions.

Given the new arrangements it will now be possible to observe how William enjoys contact with his mother and father, and to note how much effort they are prepared to put into making their contacts with William enjoyable for him.

By the time of this Children's Panel, the new arrangements will have been in place for approximately 6 weeks. Mrs Petrie, Social Work Assistant, will be able to discuss how things are going with the Panel.

Conclusion and Recommendations

William has lived in the care of the Social Work Department since September 1994 and has been approved by the Social Work Department as a child who requires permanent care outwith his family of origin.

Prior to William's reception into care the Social Work Department and the Children's Panel had very serious concerns regarding the quality of parental care offered to William by Ms Robertson and Mr Tarbett. These concerns are described in the final section of this report.

Since his reception into care William has made good overall developmental progress and has become more attached to his foster carers than to his birth parents.

William's mother believes that it is in William's best interests that he remains in foster care. Ms Robertson feels frustrated on William's behalf about the lack of suitable long-term resources for him.

William's father believes that William does not require foster care, and that he could be a competent parent of William. He has made an application to the Sheriff Court to that affect. The Social Work Department believes that Mr Tarbett has very limited

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parenting skills, and that he either cannot or will not consider his children's needs separate from his own wishes. This view of Mr Tarbett's abilities is based upon the history known to us and upon Mr Tarbett's attitude to and behaviour towards the children as demonstrated in his contact meetings with them.

An independent view regarding William's parent's potential to be carers for him is being prepared by Mrs Jamieson of Children 1st and will be available to the Panel by mid-March.

I would recommend that William's present supervision requirement, naming Mr and Mrs [redacted] as his foster carers, is continued; with the following conditions:-

1) Allowing William to stay with other foster carers on a respite basis.

2) that William should have supervised contact with his mother once per month for at least three quarters of an hour.

3) that William should have supervised contact with his father once per month for at least three quarters of an hour.

Phillip McGill
Social Worker
Permanence Team
25 February 1998

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REVIEW OF ARRANGEMENTS

RECORD OF DISCUSSION

DATE OF REVIEW:
11 March 1998

NAME:
WILLIAM TARBETT

DOB:
09.07.91

PLACEMENT ADDRESS:
c/o Mr and Mrs [redacted]

Please insert this record of discussion and review decisions into the LAC7 at Page 10.

DISTRIBUTION
Admin, Kirkton SWD
Mrs M Moyes, Service Manager, Kirkton SWD (front sheet only)
Mr R Duncan, Senior Social Worker, Kirkton SWD
Mr P McGill, Social Worker, Kirkton SWD **plus copies for Mr Tarbett and Ms Robertson**
Mr and Mrs [redacted] Foster Carers - **Copy to go via Mrs H Russell, Resource Worker**
Mrs Y Jamieson, Children 1st, Laurelbank, Dudhope Street, Dundee

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The discussion should cover the issues noted above. Please include details of any disagreements and explain how they were dealt with. Give details of any items on the agenda which could not be dealt with at this meeting and explain how they will be resolved.

RECORD OF DISCUSSION

NOTE

Apologies were received from Mrs Clark, Longhaugh Primary School; Mrs Forsyth, Educational Psychologist and Ms M Geddes, Caird and Vaughan (Mr Tarbett's solicitor).

TASKS FROM LAST MEETING HELD ON 04.11.97

1 **The outcome of the educational psychology assessment is awaited.** This is discussed in the body of the minute.

2 **Social worker to continue visiting William at least fortnightly.** That has continued.

3 **Resource worker to continue to visit the foster home.** That has continued.

4 **Contact remains unchanged with Ms Robertson, Mr Tarbett and siblings. However, it is currently subject to an assessment by Children 1st following which it is anticipated that some adjustments may be negotiated with individual parties and, on the basis of those, a written agreement of contact to be drawn-up with all concerned.** This is discussed in the body of the minute.

PLACEMENT

Mrs [redacted] reported that the placement is going fine and William has settled well. There are some behavioural problems eg William tells people to do things but then tells the carers about them, but these are being addressed. William eats and sleeps well. He has started attending the Beavers and seems to be getting on well there and also attends a Teatime Club which he enjoys.

Resource worker pointed out that William fits in quite well with the family group and plays well with the others.

It was noted that William spends one weekend per month in respite placement which he enjoys.

Social worker advised that he is really pleased with how the placement is going for William. When he first moved, although there were not any issues between William and the family, he was definitely quite 'flat'. However, this resolved itself after a little time in the family home but there were real concerns regarding the long period of regression at school. For example, William acted as if he could not count, spell or recognise words and it was initially thought this was to do with him having had such a wrench after being so attached to the [redacted] family (his previous placement). Although William was forming attachments in the foster placement, for quite some time there was a definite sense at school that he was not making progress. However, it is positive to note that, over the past few months, William has really settled in. He is much happier, is making progress at school and is really attached and identifies himself in the foster family.

HEALTH

There are no concerns about William's health. He has an inhaler for when he gets 'chesty' but this is not used regularly. He is due a dental appointment.

EDUCATION

William attends Longhaugh Primary School and it was noted from his report that he enjoys school. Mrs [redacted] advised that there are no problems with William attending school, although occasionally she has had to contact the school regarding William's silly behaviour.

With regard to educational psychologist, social worker advised that she has not actually seen William since the time he was referred to her. Educational psychologist is regularly in school and reviews the children with members of staff. William is on the list for her to spend time with but he has not been prioritised. Since then, William has started to make quite definite progress in school and teaching staff are quite happy with the progress he is making. His name, therefore, has not been added to the priority list.

Social worker has spoken to Mrs Clark (Head of Infants at Longhaugh) who reports that, in Maths, William is at the level of Primary 1 and is making efforts. In reading, he is a year behind. Regarding phonics, William knows all 26 sounds and knows how to sound out words

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RECORD OF DISCUSSION CONTINUED

The discussion should cover the issues noted above. Please include details of any disagreements and explain how they were dealt with. Give details of any items on the agenda which could not be dealt with at this meeting and explain how they will be resolved.

and is choosing to do that. There has been a big improvement in his written work and he is making efforts, although his written work is still untidy, as is his colouring. Generally, in class work, William is one year behind but it is hoped that he will catch up by the end of next year. School have noticed that William responds well to praise and, in terms of attitude, he is now taking pride in his work. He receives some learning support on a 1 to 1 basis. His concentration is improving and he still needs a lot of praise to encourage him to continue to make an effort.

Socially in the playground, William appears to find the long empty periods, particularly lunch-time, difficult to cope with when there is no structured work actually happening. Recently he has been bringing things into school to try to interest people ie deodorant, a match etc. Yesterday, he was involved in throwing food in the dinner hall. Generally, William likes to disrupt other children and can sometimes be aggressive doing that.

CONTACT

Senior social worker advised that there has been regular discussions at Children's Hearings regarding contact and concerns about the quality of contact when William and his siblings, [redacted] are altogether. As recommended by the social work department, the Children's Panel requested that an assessment is carried out by Children 1st to look at what is happening in contact and to look at ways of improving contact so that it is a more positive experience. Yvonne Jamieson, Children 1st, carried out the assessment.

Mrs Jamieson pointed out that contact was very chaotic and basically everyone was dissatisfied with the quality of contact the children were receiving. After discussions with parents, the children and their carers, Mrs Jamieson's main recommendation was that the children should be seen individually which would hopefully improve the quality of contact for them. It was also recommended that contact should be reduced to 3/4 hour for William as he was struggling to manage a full hour. It was recognised that it is important for William to have contact with his brother and sister. It is also very important that both Mr Tarbett and Ms Robertson work with the people who are supervising contact. These plans have very recently been put in place so therefore an overall assessment is not yet available.

Social work assistant advised that Ms Robertson gets on well during contact and interacts well with all the children. William has had one contact with his father but [redacted] and her daughter, [redacted] attended as well. William always enjoys seeing [redacted], and spent most of his time playing with [redacted]

William has had three recent contacts with his siblings and these have gone really well although they are still difficult because [redacted] wants to control the situation and what they are doing. It was noted that William looks out for [redacted] and wants to follow what he is doing and check out that he is being well looked after. He thinks it is wonderful hearing what [redacted] has been up to. However, William plays more with [redacted] than with [redacted].

Review officer acknowledged that Mr Tarbett is not in favour of the new contact arrangements and has requested a Children's Hearing to discuss these. Ms Robertson pointed out that she is happy with the new arrangements.

Mrs Jamieson advised that it is very important that Mr Tarbett and Ms Robertson work with the people who are supervising contact for the children's benefit. Ms Robertson does this very well and works in partnership. However, unfortunately Mr Tarbett finds this very difficult. Mr Tarbett stated that Mrs Jamieson has only seen him for 1 hour 10 minutes so does not know what she is talking about.

Social work assistant pointed out that, during contact, Mr Tarbett makes no effort to play with the children and, although the children will ask him to participate in games, he refuses.

Social worker advised that the reason for changing contact is to make it a better experience for all parties and people are keen to see how the new arrangements are working. There are differences in what people want to do in contact ie Ms Robertson is happy to play with the children but Mr Tarbett is not. Mr Tarbett is happier when all the children are there because they will play with each other.

It was noted that the venue for contact is perhaps not ideal and this is being looked at.

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Please make sure that you give details of decisions made, action agreed, people responsible and target times.

REVIEW DECISIONS

William to remain in foster care for his childhood.

	Task	Responsible Person	Timescale
1	William to remain in foster care.	Mr & Mrs [redacted] / William	On-going
2	Social worker and resource worker will maintain contact on a regular basis.	Mr P McGill/ Mrs H Russell	On-going
3	Social worker, senior social worker and social work assistant will be considering venues for contact.	Mr P McGill/ Mr R Duncan/ Mrs M Petrie	On-going
4	William is due to have a dental check.	Mr & Mrs [redacted]	As date of appointment
5	It was noted that a Children's Hearing will be held on 16.03.98.	Mr P McGill	16.03.98
6	The quality of interaction during contact will be monitored.	All parties supervising contact	On-going
7	William to continue attending school. Contact with the school will continue by social worker and foster carer.	Mr P McGill/ Mr & Mrs [redacted]	On-going

23 **Please confirm that the child/young person is aware that he/she has the right to apply for:**

	Section 11 Order (eg residence/contact)
	Orders or conditions under Part II of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 in respect of contact (if applicable)
	Discharge of Orders or conditions under Part II of the Children (Scotland) 1995 (if applicable)
	Criminal Injuries Compensation (if applicable)

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24 **Do the child/young person, his/her parents, carers and others all have copies of leaflets about the complaints and representations procedure in the local authority?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

Who will provide such leaflets where necessary and make sure everyone understands them?

25 **Please make a note of any further discussion/other decisions/comments not recorded above**

Signed Chair

Position Date 26/5/97

Signed Reviewing Officer (if not chair)

Position Date

Signed Social Worker Philip Mayin

Position Social Worker · Permanence Team Date 3 4.98

Date this form completed

Day 1 6 Month 0 3 Year 1 9 9 8

Date, time and venue of next review

Day 0 2 Month 0 9 Year 1 9 9 8 at 11.00am

Address Kirkton SWD

Post Code Telephone

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ADMINISTRATION

Normally all participants in the review should receive a copy. Where anyone on this list has been unable/unwilling to attend the review, or there were reasons to exclude him/her, he/she should normally receive a copy of the review decisions as a minimum.

26 **Completed copies of the Review Form or, as a minimum, *The Issues for Discussion, Record of Discussion and Review Decisions* should be sent to:**
Please tick boxes to show this has been done

- [ ] 1 The child/young person
- [ ] 2 His/her mother
- [ ] 3 His/her father
- [ ] 4 Other adult(s) with parental responsibility
- [ ] 5 Carer(s)/Residential Keyworker
- [ ] 6 Other review participants (if applicable)

Name _____ Position _____

Name _____ Position _____

Name _____ Position _____

People consulted before the review should only be sent a copy of the sections/decisions of the review which are applicable to their area of responsibility.

- [ ] 7 Other persons consulted before the review (if applicable)

Name _____ Position _____

Name _____ Position _____

Name _____ Position _____

WAC/PSB
16.03.98
(LAC-REVS/LAC7R-Z/tarbet-w)