



**NORTH AYRSHIRE
COUNCIL**

REPORT TO THE CHILDREN'S HEARING

Date of Hearing

Outcome

Name Lewis Duncan

Date of Birth 22/10/84

Address 114 Morar Place, Irvine

School Attended Kibble School, Paisley

Grounds of Referral Review

Religion

Basis of Report (The information contained in this report is an historical summary, based on information contained in Social Work Directorate files and is offered for general guidance only.)

The information contained in this report is derived from knowledge of the family gained in the course of Social Work contact.

FAMILY DETAILS

Name	Age	Relationship to child	Employment/School other eg ATC	Income and Source
Carolyn Duncan	34	Mother	Part-time hairdresser	
Lewis Duncan	14	Subject	Schoolboy	
Grant Duncan	12	Brother	Schoolboy	
John Cameron		Significant Person	Employed	

Financial Situation

The family state that there are no financial issues.

Other Agencies Involved

Matters of Particular Concern (to be listed numerically)

Report Compiled by Linda Currie

Date Completed January 1999

Date Sent to Reporter

Signed

Designation Social Worker

MAIN BODY OF REPORT**Points to be covered (plus any other relevant areas):**

1. Analysis of Family Background.
2. Previous History of Involvement with Hearing System.
3. The Child.
4. The School.
5. Attitude to Grounds of Referral.
6. Plan of Work.
7. Matters of Particular Concern.
8. Assessment and Possible Options.

Analysis of Family Background

Mrs Duncan, Lewis's mother, was born in Lugan, North Ireland. Her father was in the RAF and in the course of her upbringing she lived abroad and in various parts of the UK.

She met her husband, the father of both her sons, while living in Kinloss, Scotland. The couple were married for over six years when the parental relationship broke down. Lewis was about three and a half years of age at this time, he has vague recollections of his birth father, however has always regarded John Cameron as his father.

Following the break down of the marital relationship Mrs Duncan met and formed a co-habiting relationship with John Cameron. The couple resided together for eight years and both boys regard Mr Cameron as 'dad'. The couple moved from the North of Scotland to Troon approximately three years ago. Soon after this move the couple's relationship broke down and Mrs Duncan resided independently with both boys until she formed a relationship with George Wilson. Mr Wilson bought a house in Irvine and Mrs Duncan and the boys moved to reside in this area. The boys continued to enjoy a close relationship with Mr Cameron.

Lewis did not enjoy a happy relationship with Mr Wilson, on 17th December 1996, two weeks into the relationship, a Child Protection Investigation was undertaken when Lewis alleged that Mr Wilson had assaulted him. No further action was taken at that time as there was no evidence to corroborate Lewis's statement. On 29th February 1997 social work staff noted bruising to Lewis's eye during a routine visit.

On 29th May 1997 a further Child Protection Investigation was undertaken when Mr Wilson assaulted Lewis in the local community, this assault being witnessed by neighbours. Following this incident work was undertaken with the family when Mr Wilson was asked to take a 'back seat' leaving Mrs Duncan to deal with any discipline issues re Lewis. By December 1997 the relationship between Mr Wilson and Mrs Duncan broke down, following a further violent outburst. Mrs Duncan and the boys were accommodated in bed and breakfast accommodation until allocated the present family home in Castlepark.

On 27th August 1997 Mrs Duncan contacted the family social worker to inform her that during an argument with Lewis a cereal bowl had struck him in the face, cutting him. Child Protection Procedures were undertaken and Lewis was treated at Crosshouse Hospital for a cut to his forehead and nose.

Though it was recognised that the injury was probably caused accidentally, it was felt that the relationship between Mrs Duncan and Lewis had deteriorated and both agreed to a voluntary reception into care under Section 25 Children (Scotland) Act 1995.

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Due to ongoing school attendance problems as well as relationship problems Lewis has remained in care, initially in Dalrymple Place Childrens Unit, then Newfield since July 1998 at Kibble School.

Mr Cameron has throughout the period since he split up from Mrs Duncan remained in contact with Lewis and his brother. The boys have regular contact with him, spending weekends and holiday periods in Mr Cameron's care.

The relationship between Mrs Duncan and Mr Cameron however, remains very poor with a great deal of animosity being demonstrated by both adults. Mrs Duncan can often appear to be the most antagonistic person in these confrontations given that she becomes very emotional and verbally expresses her feelings. Mr Cameron, though appearing quiet and controlled, is however equally confrontational, using key words and phrases which result in antagonising any confrontational situation.

Since Lewis was received into care the couple have established a pattern of shared care whereby he spent time with both parents, the pattern of contact being established via contact contract meetings chaired by social work staff. Recently Lewis has been reluctant to reside with his mother and has consistently stated his wish to reside with Mr Cameron on a permanent basis.

Initially Mrs Duncan was not happy about this plan, nor the fact that social work and residential staff felt that Lewis's opinion should be listened to, at one point expressing the opinion that if Lewis did not return to reside with her he should remain in care. She expressed the opinion that her sons were being split up and that they should live together, it has been pointed out to Mrs Duncan that her sons have already been split up since Lewis has been Looked After by the Local Authority since 1997.

By December 1998 the relationship between Lewis and his mother deteriorated and following a confrontation in the family home contact ceased. At a Looked After Review on 22nd December 1998 Mrs Duncan advised that she no longer objected to the plans that Lewis move to a day boy placement at the Kibble School and reside with Mr Cameron.

PREVIOUS HISTORY OF INVOLVEMENT WITH HEARING SYSTEM

In October 1996, Lewis was made subject to Voluntary Supervision under Section 39 (2) Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968.

2nd September 1997 Children's Hearing Decision Lewis admitted to Newfield under Section 69 (4) for residential assessment.

30th September 1997 Children's Hearing decision residential order under Section 70 naming Newfield.

10th March 1998 Childrens Hearing - continued for supplementary report.

14th April 1998 Continued Psychological and Safeguarder reports.

19th May 1998 Continued for Psychological report

17th July 1998 Childrens Hearing - decision to vary the Supervision Requirement to name Kibble School.

13th August 1998 Childrens Hearing, Supervision Requirement varied to name Kibble School.

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The Child

Lewis is a healthy young man who shows appropriate physical development for his chronological age. He enjoys all types of activities including fishing, swimming, camping etc.

since his reception into care his interaction with peers and adults has improved. Lewis has built a good relationship with his key worker and is becoming more willing to explore his feelings. He can at times experience problems with peers within the residential unit, when his immature behaviour causes conflict.

Lewis has settled well at Kibble School and has benefited from both the educational and residential setting. As can be seen from his current school report he is a very positive pupil who is achieving well in all classes.

The School

Lewis changed primary schools in response to location changes while living in the North of Scotland and again moving to Ayrshire.

Lewis initially attended Marr College, Troon, where a referral to the Reporter's Department in response to problematic incidents within school, in combination with truancy issues and the school's knowledge of problems being experienced by Mrs Duncan with Lewis within the home. This action resulted in Lewis being made a subject to voluntary supervision.

Lewis's immaturity coupled with difficulties experienced at Marr College suggested he could be fairly vulnerable when moving to Irvine Royal Academy. This came to fruition with instances of truancy and feigned illness. At that time Mrs Duncan and staff at the school had great difficulty in keeping track of Lewis's movements which was complicated by him returning to Troon to visit his dad.

In September 1997 when Lewis was received in Newfield, he attended school within the resource centre. He coped well with small classes and the restricted academic curriculum. Following the assessment process a plan was formulated to reintegrate Lewis into Irvine Royal Academy over a short period of time.

Unfortunately this plan was unsuccessful with truancy emerging very quickly. Further part time timetables were negotiated, however none were successful over a protracted period. In June 1998 a review decision was to seek a residential school placement for Lewis. This recommendation was accepted at a Childrens Hearing in July 1998, when placement was identified at Kibble School, Paisley.

Lewis settled well at Kibble School and has benefited from both the educational and residential setting. As can be seen from his current school report he is a very positive pupil who is achieving well in all classes.

Attitude to Grounds of Referral

N/A Review Report

Plan of Work

Regular planning meetings have taken place to review Lewis's home leave pattern. This was particularly important due to the consistent animosity of the parents towards each other.

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By the time the writer was allocated the case in October 1998 the relationship between Lewis and his mother had deteriorated and Lewis was reluctant to spend contact periods with her. He was clearly stating that he wished to live with his dad when he was discharged as a day pupil.

Initially Mrs Duncan was reluctant to let this happen, however as the relationship with Lewis deteriorated towards the end of 1998 Mrs Duncan at a Looked After Review on 22nd December 1998 advised that she accepted the plan that Lewis work towards day boy status at Kibble School and to reside with Mr Cameron.

Lewis is at present resident within Kibble School only one night per week, residing with Mr Cameron, attending the new Extended Day Programme within the school. This programme aims to offer an effective alternative to residential care and will offer additional supports to Lewis as he moves from residential status to the eventual goals of day boy. North Ayrshire Social Work Directorate have agreed to finance this place until the Education Directorate agree to take over financial responsibility of this case.

Staff from Kibble and the writer will co-work in home visits to Lewis and Mr Cameron. The aim of these visits being to ensure any problems are openly discussed and hopefully resolved and to assist Mr Cameron to set appropriate boundaries on Lewis's behaviour.

Mr Cameron is at present employed as a carer for Glasgow Inclusion. He works on a flexible rota and has been able to work around Lewis's home contact. It has been made clear to Mr Cameron on several occasions that it is not appropriate for Lewis to accompany him to his work.

Meeting will also be set up to facilitate contact between Lewis and his mother. The aim being to facilitate a rebuilding of a positive relationship. Lewis is resistant at the present time to having contact with his mother, or to taking part in discussions to explore the reasons behind this. It is hoped that with time and encouragement Lewis and Mrs Duncan will be able to resolve at least some of their difficulties.

Matters of Particular Concern

The constant animosity demonstrated by both Mrs Duncan and Mr Cameron has a direct impact on Lewis's behaviour and impacts on his relationship with his mother. It also offers Lewis the opportunity to continue to manipulate both parents.

Assessment and Possible Options

Following Lewis's reception into care to Dalrymple Place Childrens Unit and Newfield Resource Centre, reintegration to mainstream education was attempted on several occasions, when these plans failed Lewis moved to reside at Kibble School on 18th August 1998.

Since this time Lewis has settled both within the residential and educational environment, enjoying the small class settings offered within Kibble School. As shown by his education report Lewis is achieving well in all subjects, he has midweek leave from the school to Mr Cameron's home and has demonstrated the ability to return to the school for classes.

It has been recognised that Lewis does not require the structure of the residential unit at this time, the only reason for his continued residential status being the conflict over which parent he should reside with.

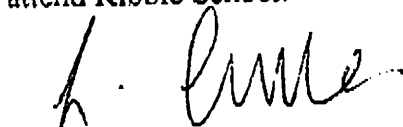
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While taking on board Mrs Duncan's point that Mr Cameron is not Lewis's natural father and has no legal rights regarding Lewis. He has been the father figure throughout Lewis's formative years and has continued to support both Lewis and his brother since the family unit split.

Lewis has consistently clearly stated that he wishes to reside with Mr Cameron, Mrs Duncan's initial objections to this plan caused a further deterioration in the already fragile relationship between mother and son. It is hoped that with assistance Lewis and his mother will be able to confront and discuss their difficulties and to form a positive relationship in the future.

Mr Cameron will require support as he takes on the role of single parent, having day to day care of Lewis, rather than part time contact and the need to set appropriate boundaries on Lewis's behaviour. Mr Cameron has been able to negotiate his work rota around Lewis's leave, hopefully he will continue to be able to do so on a full time basis, which will prevent a conflict of interests. We would continue to state that Lewis should not accompany Mr Cameron to work.

we would therefore request that the Supervision Requirement under Section 70(3) Children (Scotland) Act 1995 be varied to allow Lewis to reside with Mr Cameron at 8 Logan Drive, Troon, with condition that he attend Kibble School.



LINDA CURRIE
SOCIAL WORKER

15.01.99/LA