

KNOWL VIEW SCHOOL.

WEEK-END BOARDING.

- (1) The policy of the School is clearly stated in the document pertaining to the appointment of Head Teacher (4/S450/ER/TM Jan. 1976):

"The basis of a child coming to the school is that he comes in order to learn to live at home and to cope in a school situation. Accordingly, contact is kept with each child's home and he is returned to the home quite frequently, the aim being to return him to the normal home and school situation as soon as possible."

- (2). This statement of policy implies:

- (i) that for a boy admitted to the school there is a reasonably good family structure or alternative 'home base' (e.g. family group home) and also a reasonably good prognosis that the boy will be able to return permanently to the home at a future date.
- (ii) that the Education Authority responsible for each boy will contribute to the individual programme of each boy by ensuring that he has the means of going home at whatever frequency the school, in consultation with other interested parties (e.g. Social Worker, Educational Psychologist, Psychiatrist, parents etc.), deems to be appropriate.
- (iii) that 'frequently' as used in para (1) may, for some children, mean every week-end whilst for others it will be less frequent but that every boy should return home at least once per half term.

- (3) The statement of policy does not imply:

- (i) that the school should in any way seek to or be obliged to provide a substitute home environment for children needing long or even short term total care provision.
- (ii) that the school should be viewed as a custodial establishment where children are obliged to 'earn the privilege' of going home.
- (iii) that children should be denied the right to go home for any purely administrative or financial reason if it is in their best interest to go home.

- (4) The placement of a child in a residential establishment can, and often does, alter the dynamics of the family remaining in the home. This can lead to the child being rejected by and from the family.

The placement can also isolate him from his peer group at home leading, in many cases, to boredom and frustration in holiday periods and in turn placing more pressure on both the boy and family.

It is essential that from the day of arrival in the residential school the boy's individual programme should be directed to preparing him for leaving it and both the boy and his family should realise this. Learning to live harmoniously within a residential school must not be seen as an end in itself. It is through the experience of living with other people that a boy may be helped to adjust to his own family and to society.

This is less likely to happen if a boy is subjected to what amounts to a 'total care' situation that is interjected by arbitrarily arranged school holidays.

The parents must not be allowed to abandon responsibility for the children but rather work with the school to effect the adjustment to home and return to day school.

DPA

T. Hopwood,
Headmaster.

26th September, 1977