

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022





**33** YOUNG PEOPLE FOCUS ON A MORE POSITIVE FUTURE

**‘For me, the best thing about Oberstown is the structure, having a routine every day. Like, having someone waking you up each day, having school. I like that because on the outside I was in a care home and I just didn’t really have structure.’**

**19** EDUCATION AT OBERSTOWN



**46** ENERGY & THE ENVIRONMENT

This Report presents a unique public record of the operation of the Campus in 2022, identifying the many achievements, events and developments in the service during the year.

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**Cover Image** – ‘The Potion of Knowledge’, one of the artworks by young people in Oberstown shown at IMMA (Irish Museum of Modern Art) in 2022. See page 29.



**14** SETTING A NEW DIRECTION

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# Chairperson's foreword

**The Annual Report of Oberstown Children Detention Campus is a legal requirement on the Board of Management under section 174 of the Children Act 2001. Presented to the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Roderic O’Gorman, this Report presents a unique public record of the operation of the Campus in 2022, identifying the many achievements, events and developments in the service throughout that time. As Chairperson of the Board of Management, I am truly grateful to everyone who has contributed their time and expertise to the Campus in the last year.**



**T**he Board of Management has responsibility to assure the Minister for Children that Oberstown is operating in line with the requirements of the Children Act 2001, relevant national law and policy and the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016). In 2022, the Board worked hard to provide the highest standards of governance and oversight, including through its standing committees. Throughout this time, and as an independent Board, we also provided both challenge and support to the Director and his Senior Leadership Team in the delivery of their executive responsibilities.

A secure, complex, high-risk 24/7 organisation like Oberstown requires expertise, vigilance and hard work to manage effectively. And it takes passion and commitment to ensure that the young people in Oberstown on detention or remand orders remain at the heart of what we do. Despite numerous challenges, I am pleased to report that both the quality of our governance and oversight and the development of the services and supports that the young people receive in Oberstown continued to improve in 2022.

A significant priority for any Board is the development and adoption of its corporate strategy and, in 2022, Oberstown adopted its new Strategy 2022-2026 (see pages 14-15). Building on our previous plan, 2017-2021, extended during COVID-19, the new Strategy stretches Oberstown to deliver an even more ambitious service for young people who find themselves in detention. Harnessing the creative input of the young people themselves, with the perspectives of staff, management and external stakeholders, the Strategy seeks to consolidate the Oberstown model as a child-centred, rights-based model of individualised care, where young people’s needs are assessed and met as they journey from admission to release – Goal 1 of the Strategy is our commitment to this approach.

Learning from previous experience, a continued focus on our people is recognised in Goal 2, with commitments to develop a culture of leadership, learning and resilience among our staff. Goal 3 reflects that providing the best

possible care for young people is a collaborative enterprise, requiring partnership with families, communities and agencies, while Goal 4 captures the requirement for enhanced organisational performance with decision-making based on robust evidence, research and good data. A commitment to sustainability is central to Goal 5, both with respect to the planet, our physical Campus and our organisation.

This fresh and ambitious Strategy is strengthened further by the commitment to the process of annual business and financial planning, to support implementation, along with agreed KPIs to ensure Board oversight keeps the plan on track. Overall, the Strategy seeks to ensure that the progress made in Oberstown over the period of the last Strategy is both embedded in the organisation and enables it to continue to develop.

Central to the new Strategic Plan and to all of the developments, events and successes detailed in the pages of this Annual Report, are the rights and interests of the young people whose lives, for various reasons, bring them to Oberstown. In addition to all the wonderful initiatives and creativity documented here, it is the quality of care and education that young people receive from staff in Oberstown every day that ultimately helps them to return home, with renewed confidence in their ability to make a positive difference in their lives for themselves, for their families and for their communities.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ursula Kilkelly". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Professor Ursula Kilkelly**  
Chairperson, Board of Management

‘Central to the new Strategic Plan and to all of the developments, events and successes detailed in the pages of this Annual Report, are the rights and interests of the young people whose lives, for various reasons bring them to Oberstown.’

# Director's overview

**Oberstown regained a more regular rhythm in 2022. While the COVID-19 pandemic continued to present considerable challenges in the first quarter, notably affecting staff availability and restricting or postponing some activities, life on Campus made an energetic return to normality as the year progressed.**

The driving force in all our work is delivery of the best possible care for our young people and helping them maximise their potential. There are many moving parts involved in making that goal a reality, and continuous improvement of our plans and approach is essential. In 2022 we made significant progress in this regard thanks to the day-to-day work of staff across Campus, supported by the Board of Management and our partner organisations, and the efforts of the young people themselves.

## Strategic direction

Publishing the new Oberstown Strategy 2022-2026 is a key milestone in the development of our service. We developed the Strategy through a collaborative and consultative approach, led by the Board and involving management, staff, stakeholders and our young people. The result is a clear direction for the coming years, with goals that are owned and co-created by the people who will ensure its success (see pages 14-15).

This spirit of collaboration is essential at Oberstown, where strong relationships are key to everything we do. In setting our direction for the coming years, we therefore took the opportunity to reflect on and refresh our purpose, vision and values. One of the highlights of 2022 was the shared commitment and pride in our work demonstrated at the series of town hall meetings held with groups of staff across Campus during the year. The focus was on

how we will implement our strategy in the coming years and the effort and ingenuity required to deliver ambitious goals for the care of our young people, the wellbeing and development of our staff, strengthening partnerships with families and external agencies, enhancing transparency and accountability, and the sustainable development of the organisation. The positive mood of these meetings underlined the talent, energy and resilience on hand to deliver on our goals.

## Developing trauma-informed care

Becoming a more trauma-informed and trauma-responsive service is important to Oberstown. Many of our young people have complex needs and have experienced trauma; they have also caused harm through their offending. This raises questions about the best mix of programmes and supports for our young people and for the skills and resilience required of our staff.

We are fortunate to have Tusla's ACTS (Assessment Consultation Therapy Service) and the HSE's Forensic Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (FCAMHS) as an established presence on Campus, and this year we took steps to extend our staff's capacity to manage trauma-related issues, both for our young people and staff. In November and December, we rolled out new supervision training specifically tailored for managers of care teams who work on the frontline in what can sometimes be a very challenging environment. The training included an introduction to the processes associated with trauma and its effects on the behaviour of staff and young people, and has real potential to help bring about positive change.

An associated training initiative focuses on incident management training, again tailored to the Oberstown environment and developed with staff input, which gives staff across the Campus a common approach to assessing and managing challenging incidents. The goal is to give people real confidence to do their work in a way that de-escalates situations and ultimately leads to a continued reduction in physical interventions and restraints.

## Key appointments

Our values put the young people in our care at the heart of everything we do, so it was again fitting that key appointments early in the year benefited from input from young people. Two new Deputy Directors joined the Senior Leadership Team, both with specific responsibilities for the care of our young people. Candidates for the Deputy Director roles were interviewed by young people as part of the selection process, a valuable experience for all the individuals involved and a powerful illustration of the value of participation and inclusion in our rights-based model of care.

In an active year for staff recruitment, two further new additions to the Campus team merit special mention. After a long search, we were fortunate to find a new Chaplain for Oberstown. John Herron arrived with a background in pastoral care and community development and has had a positive impact both on young people and staff, engaging people through activities and educational initiatives in line with our focus on self-reflection, personal growth and hope for a better future. Significantly, the young people value the role played by the Chaplain and this was sharply illustrated over the course of the year when some of our young people experienced family bereavements – the Chaplain's support for young people and staff during these difficult times helped to comfort and strengthen our community.

The arrival of Micheál Craven, our new Health, Safety and Risk Officer, was another significant addition to the team. His extensive experience in private industry provided renewed impetus to key areas of our health and safety systems, including our recertification to ISO standards. He is also an example of a strength evident in many areas across Campus, where staff members offer their skills and experience to provide training and develop programmes focused on offering our young people pathways to employment.

## Building effective partnerships

We saw further progress this year in developing a collaborative workspace within and beyond the Campus.

Preparation for leaving is the focus of our CEHOP® model, with individual plans and intensive work on each of the elements building towards successful outcomes. One of the key challenges is to equip our young people with the self-confidence, awareness and practical skills that will serve them well in the future. Partnerships with external companies and agencies are therefore essential in bringing expertise in to Oberstown to help us work with the young people with the goal of equipping them to thrive and make a positive contribution to society when they leave.

Two new partnerships established in 2021 extended our reach in this regard. Towards the end of the year we partnered with Way 2 Work, which provides individual mentoring, training and routes to employment for young people who are in care or detention. The partnership made a promising start and has the potential to make a difference in the years ahead.

We also started working more intensively with Candle Community Trust, which works to support young people as they transition back into the community. Oberstown and Candle share a commitment to a trauma-informed and restorative practices approach designed to build positive relationships and divert young people from repeating patterns of offending behaviour.

## Fostering talent

Our very successful relationship with Gaisce – The President's Award, built over many years, reached new heights in 2022. Our young people achieved a total of 28 Gaisce awards during the year, including two gold medals, the highest level of achievement. The impact of Gaisce on Campus is not just the medals, however, it is the journey the young people take to complete their projects and the personal development they experience in the process. Staff are involved as Gaisce PALS and their support and encouragement builds on our relationship-based approach. Earning a Gaisce award is recognised by the young people as something that is worth working for, just like the academic or vocational qualifications and certifications they can earn in Oberstown.

Our work with Gaisce was at the heart of a milestone

event for Oberstown in 2022 – an exhibition artworks by young people in Oberstown presented at the Irish Museum of Modern Art (see pages 29-32). The project was a collaboration between Gaisce, IMMA and Oberstown and was a powerful way of showing the world what our young people are capable of, given the time, energy, effort and attention and a goal.

On Campus, another collaborative artwork project saw renowned art educator and street artist Joe Caslin work with young people to create two impactful murals at the entrances to the residential units (see page 33). Financed by the Dormant Accounts Fund, the project started during the summer activities programme with a series of workshops teaching the young people how to select a message and the techniques involved in creating a piece of public art. One of the most impressive aspects of the project is Joe's conclusion that some of the young people learned and worked to a standard that would make them employable on similar projects out in the community.

The murals are part of the Campus now, and serve as a reminder that, whatever journey our young people have travelled, they have ability – we just have to find the hook, the key to unlock their interest and realise their potential. This may be through a high profile project, a chance to engage with subjects at school, or a fun activity such as the Oberstown Come Dine With Me competition, which created a real sense of excitement and community on the Campus during the summer (see page 27).

## Measuring success

Our young people and staff can look back on 2022 as a year of significant achievements. However, defining outcomes and successes for the service as a whole is a challenge, mainly because our young people present with a wide range of individual, complex needs. These include primary care issues, literacy and numeracy challenges, anger management, physical disabilities, mental health and substance misuse issues.

We organise the service to address these needs in an intensive way, working alongside specialist providers on all aspects of the CEHOP® model of care (see page 12).

Through keyworking sessions with care workers and the placement planning meetings (PPMs) which draw together all the contributors to a successful journey through Oberstown, we set achievable goals and track progress at five-weekly intervals, creating a rhythm and routine for our young people.

Knowing that each young person's journey is unique is both a challenge and key motivating factor for our staff. Every year we see educational achievements, both in the conventional sense and by more individual measures (see page 19). We have a limited time to make a difference but we work hard to make an impact at this stage in the young person's life. We know that young people who have left Oberstown have gone on to be really successful, but we also know that they are still maturing when they leave here – so some of the lessons learned here will not fully impact on them until they're in their mid to late twenties. So our responsibility is to give them as much intensive support as we can during their time here because it becomes impactful for them later on in life. And we have to remember that sometimes we don't see the immediate change – it's not like flicking on a switch.

Through the Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027, Oberstown contributes to national forums examining how best to meet the needs of emerging adults – people between the ages of 18 and 24 who are or who have been in conflict with the law. During 2022, I attended meetings of the Youth Justice Governance & Strategy Group and the Youth Justice Oversight Group offering Oberstown's perspective on this important stage of the ongoing journey for some of our young people.

## Being good neighbours

As we focus on helping our young people to be positive contributors to society, it is important that we are good neighbours to our local community. Oberstown covers a significant amount of ground in north County Dublin, and perhaps half of our staff live within 15 miles of the Campus. We are a major part of the local community and the local economy, and we look to maintain good relationships with local businesses and civic groups.

However, people drive by Oberstown on a daily basis and they have no real idea of the work we do on Campus. Part of our responsibility is to change that narrative by engaging more with the outside world.

In 2022 we were pleased to continue providing our Meals on Wheels service for senior citizens in the local community and to resume our annual Christmas Dinner event for the Man O'War Senior Citizens Group (see page 61). In November, during Fingal County Council's Inclusion Week, we engaged with the newly-opened Lusk Community Cultural Centre to display the young people's artworks previously shown at IMMA. This gave members of the local community and visitors the chance to meet with Oberstown staff and learn more about our work with young people.

## Listening to young people

During 2022, visits from international partners including the Netherlands Helsinki Committee and the Giving Back Project helped validate the view that Oberstown's rights-based participative approach measures up to international best practice. We have also had two positive annual inspections by HIQA assessing the service against our Children's Rights Policy Framework, introduced in 2021 and setting out 12 Campus Rules that help ensure we involve young people in key decisions about their care (see pages 42 and 43). Our Advocacy Officer, supported by external agencies including EPIC, plays a key role in the systems that allow young people to find their voice and have their say in every aspect of their experience on Campus (see pages 16-17). All of which means young people have a direct line to the Director, providing me with a customer feedback loop to identify what is working and where we need to improve.

One of my personal highlights of 2022 came from an interaction between one of our young people and Noel Baker, a journalist from the Irish Examiner who came to Campus in summer 2022 to see how we operate. Speaking freely about his experience in Oberstown, the young person's views formed the introduction to the feature article. He spoke about how, when he first arrived, he did

not really buy in to the approach, did not want help and fought the system. Once he realised that we are here to help and started taking the opportunities we offer, his outlook changed, summarised in his quote that gave the article its headline: 'It's a good little place; it's nothing like prison. There's good people here.'

That is a really positive affirmation of all the work that goes on in Oberstown, from the back door to the front door involving all the staff who have a daily impact on the lives of our young people.



**Damien Hernon**  
Director



# About Oberstown

**Oberstown is Ireland's national centre for the detention, care and education of young people under 18 years referred by the courts on detention or remand orders. Established under the Children Act 2001, the Campus provides individualised care to young people through an integrated multi-professional approach that enables young people to address their offending behaviour and return successfully to society.**

**Y**oung people referred to Oberstown by the courts usually face criminal charges of a serious or persistent nature. They often have very complex needs and require individualised and specialised care and support to ensure their needs are met and they are prepared to return to their communities to live constructive and fulfilling lives.

In line with legal requirements, Oberstown meets the needs of young people in relation to their Care, Education, Health, Offending behaviour and Preparation for leaving – the five elements of CEHOP®, the Oberstown model of care (see page 12).

Oberstown applies a rights-based model, set out in the Children's Rights Policy Framework. This means that young people participate in decision making about their care, their lives and the Campus as a whole. The framework spells out 12 Campus Rules that set standards to ensure

that young people at Oberstown are safe, get the best care possible and have their rights respected.

## Life on Campus

Located in Lusk, Co Dublin, the Campus is a modern, secure, custom-built facility, with residential units that accommodate up to eight young people. Young people are cared for 24/7 by Residential Social Care Workers and Night Supervising Officers; 170 staff in a total of 251 are directly involved in the front-line care of young people.

In 2022, Oberstown was authorised to accommodate a maximum of 40 boys and six girls. The average daily occupancy was 32 young people, the majority of whom were boys. Over the course of 2022, there were 110 young people detained on the Campus.

At the centre of the Campus is a large school, with a varied primary, secondary and vocational curriculum

delivered by the Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board (DDLETB) (see page 19). Oberstown staff run an extensive schedule of afterschool activities (see page 26). The Campus health suite offers a full range of medical and health services.

Specialist programmes address offending behaviour and underlying factors (see pages 24-25). Multi-disciplinary care is provided by a range of professionals (psychology, speech and language therapy and addiction counselling) through Tusla ACTS (Assessment Consultation Therapy Service) and the National Forensic Mental Health Service who provide psychiatric care. The Campus Chaplain caters for the young people's religious and spiritual needs and the Advocacy Officer promotes young people's participation in decision making across all aspects of the organisation (see page 19).

## Governance and Management

Oberstown has a Board of Management, which has responsibility for the overall management of the Campus. The Board is appointed by the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) under sections 164 and 167 of the Children Act 2001 (the Act), the primary legislation governing Oberstown. Section 158 of the Act states that the principal objective of Oberstown is to provide appropriate

educational and training programmes and facilities for children having regard to their health, safety, welfare and interests, including their physical, psychological and emotional wellbeing (see pages 37-41).

The Act assigns the day-to-day running of Oberstown to the Director, who under the Act has primary ('in loco parentis') responsibility for the young people on Campus. The Director, together with the Senior Leadership Team, is charged with ensuring that the needs and rights of young people are met and the standards set down in national law are fulfilled.

Within DCEDIY, the Children Detention Schools Unit has direct responsibility for Oberstown. Governance and performance arrangements are set out in an Oversight Agreement between DCEDIY and Oberstown, reviewed annually. The Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) has responsibility for inspecting Oberstown at least annually using a rigorous and transparent approach (see pages 42-43).

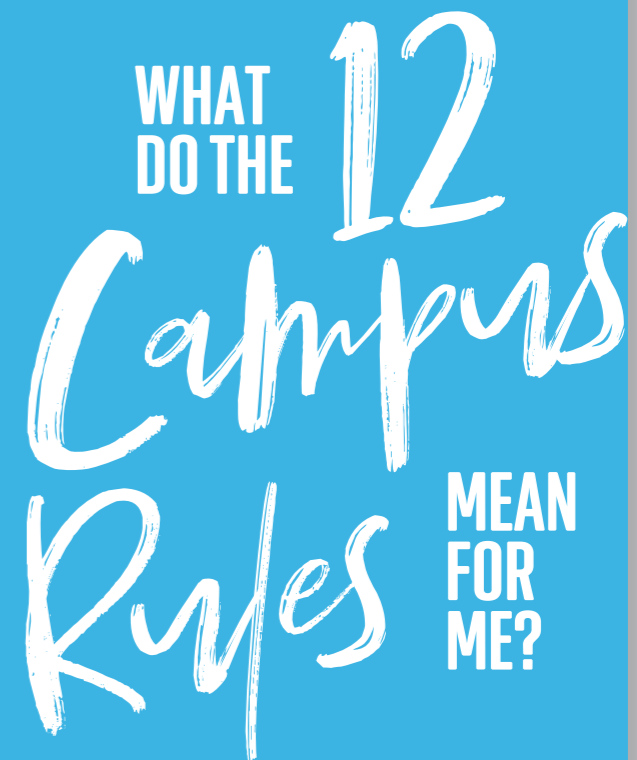
Oberstown is accountable to the Minister for implementation of relevant national policy. This includes the Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027, which makes specific references to the role of Oberstown in the youth justice system, assigning lead or co-responsibility to Oberstown for a range of strategic actions. For more information, go to [https://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/Youth\\_Justice\\_Strategy](https://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/Youth_Justice_Strategy)

## Stakeholders

Oberstown works with a wide range of external stakeholders in the delivery of the Campus purpose. These include partners who support and provide education, care and vocational training services on site and organisations that engage with young people in a variety of ways to promote their successful return to their communities or onward placement to prison (see page 34).



## CHILDREN'S RIGHTS POLICY FRAMEWORK



**Children's Rights Policy Framework:** Adopted by the Board under s179 of the Children Act 2001, the 12 Campus Rules are 12 standards that have been set to make sure that Oberstown is a place where young people are safe, get the best care possible and where their rights are respected.

# Oberstown in numbers 2022

Maximum number of young people: **46**  
[40 MALE + 6 FEMALE]

Average daily population: **32**  
[13 REMAND  
19 DETENTION]

Number of young people detained on remand or detention orders:

**110**  
[106 MALE + 4 FEMALE]

Average age: **16**  
Where from? **39** DUBLIN **6** NON-IRISH ETHNICITY **30** FROM THE TRAVELLER COMMUNITY

In Oberstown on 31/12/21: **28** + **82**  
New admissions:

Onward placements 2021: **87**  
Where to? **48** HOME **16** RESIDENTIAL CARE **14** OTHER **9** IRISH PRISON SERVICE

Detention orders: **48** + **62**  
Remand orders only:

Average length of detention order (days): **227**  
Average length of remand order (days): **63**  
Number of court escorts: **485**

**24.5** HECTARE SITE

**21,000**<sup>M2</sup>  
Building floorspace

**64**  
Afterschool activities classes per weekday

**24/7:365**  
ROUND THE CLOCK, EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR SERVICE

**251** **170**  
STAFF  
[52% FEMALE  
48% MALE]  
Staff directly involved in front-line care of young people

**28**  
Gaisce Awards

**€26.218M**  
FINANCIAL ALLOCATION

[**€17.507M** PAY  
**€2.135M** PENSIONS  
**€6.576M** NON-PAY]

**43**  
Parliamentary Questions

**2,427**  
Nursing appointments

**883**  
GP appointments

**203**  
Dental appointments

**13**  
Data Protection Requests

## CEHOP<sup>®</sup> is Oberstown's model for individualised care



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### Care

- Placement planning process based on initial and ongoing needs assessment and focused on supporting each young person's return to the community.
- Individual care plan with input from inter-disciplinary professional care team, family and other significant people in the young person's life, including input from external agencies as required.
- Supports and services provided by a trained, expert multi-disciplinary team.
- Young person's voice is key at every stage of the process.

### Education

- All young people attend school in Oberstown.
- Full support for learning, including taking state exams and pursuing vocational training. The Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board (DDLETB) delivers the curriculum on Campus.
- Educational objectives focused on equipping young people for the future, with outcomes measured in line with individual progress and potential (see page 19).
- School classes and an extensive programme of afterschool activities (see page 26).

### Health

- Access to healthcare services for all young people on Campus.
- Purpose-built medical suite

managed by Clinical Nurse Manager working with two nurses and a Residential Social Care Worker (RSCW). Health & Wellbeing team promote health and wellness of young people.

- Visiting GP, dentist, optician, podiatrist and physiotherapist providing services onsite.
- HSE Forensic Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (FCAMHS) provides psychiatric services to young people in Oberstown. In 2022, there were 126 FCAMHS clinic appointments.
- Tusla's ACTS (Assessment Consultation Therapy Service) provides multi-disciplinary services to address behaviours associated with complex clinical needs. In 2022, Oberstown made 95 referrals to ACTS.

### Offending behaviour

- Focus on working with young people to address factors associated with their offending behaviour.
- Programmes develop young people's sense of responsibility

and life skills and support their care on Campus. Areas addressed include victim empathy, controlling impulsive behaviours, avoiding misuse of drugs and alcohol (see page 24).

### Preparation for leaving

- Placement planning meetings (PPMs), held onsite, identify and review the needs of young people and the services and supports they require.
- Each young person has a PPM at five-weekly intervals to review their progress. Oberstown chairs the PPM, with attendees including the young person, residential unit staff, teachers and external partners with a role in the young person's return to the community or onward placement. Family members or guardians attend the meetings either in person or via telephone or video link.
- The process is structured to give the young person a say in decisions that affect their ongoing care in Oberstown and their life after leaving the Campus.

The Oberstown Board, management and staff are guided in their work by the Campus mission, vision and values.

## PURPOSE

Oberstown Children Detention Campus provides care and education for young people referred by the courts on detention or remand orders, supporting them to address their offending and return successfully to society.

## VISION

The Oberstown vision is to provide young people with the highest standards of rights-based, child-centred care that meets their needs and enables them to maximise their potential.

1.

We place young people at the heart of what we do.

2.

We listen to young people, acknowledging and respecting their right to participate and influence decisions that affect them.

6.

We foster learning, encouraging new ideas and ways of working.

## VALUES

5.

We work in partnership to fulfil our shared vision.

4.

We respect each other – our staff, young people and external partners – promoting honesty and authenticity.

3.

We act with integrity and are accountable for our actions.



# Oberstown Strategy 2022-2026



Oberstown's Strategic Goals cover five key areas: 1. Care of young people at Oberstown; 2. Staff wellbeing and development; 3. Partnerships; 4. Transparency and accountability; 5. Sustainability. Each of the Strategic Goals has five high-level Strategic Actions – see Appendix 1 for detail on these actions and progress in their implementation.

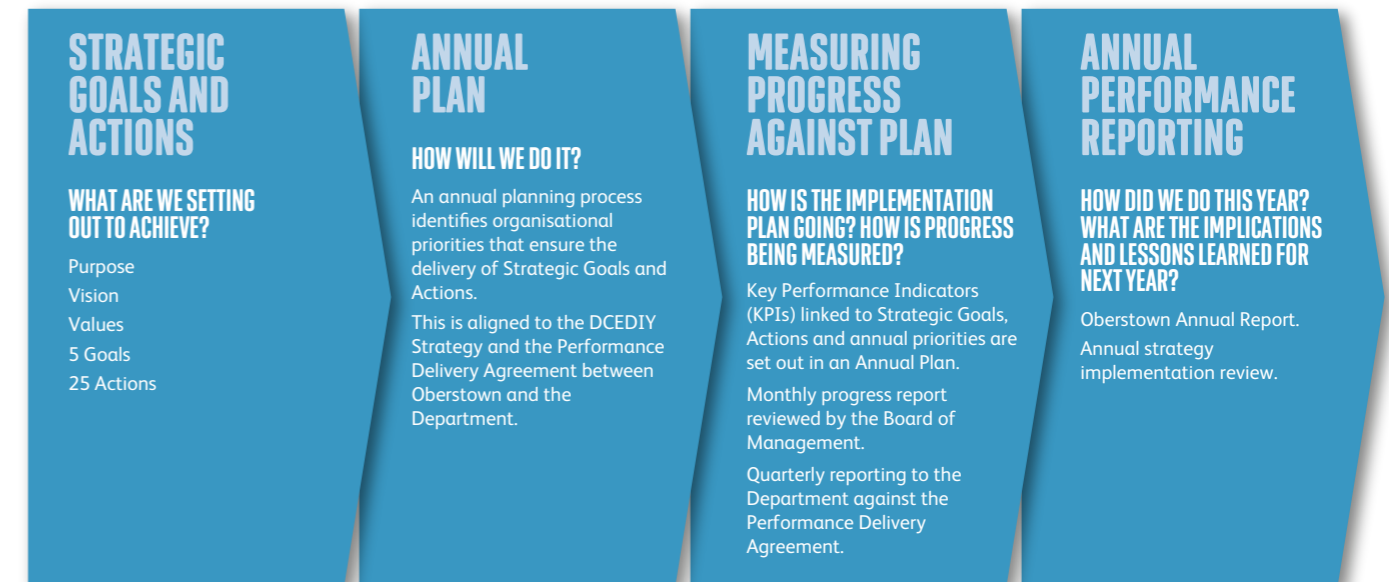
**The Oberstown Strategy 2022-2026 reflects the organisation's purpose, vision and values. It sets out five Strategic Goals and their associated Actions representing the overall direction, focus and ambition for Oberstown in the coming years.**

The Strategy builds on progress made under Oberstown's 2017-2021 Strategy, extended due to COVID-19. It takes account of the organisation's responsibilities under national law and policy, the Strategy of Oberstown's home Department (DCEDIY) and aligns with the Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027.

## Implementing the Strategy

The Board of Management approved the new Strategy at its meeting on 25 April 2022. The Director takes the lead on implementation, together with the Senior Leadership Team, who foster a joint sense of ownership of the goals across the organisation. Everyone in the Oberstown community has a role to play in implementing the Strategy, which was developed through a process of consultation with staff, stakeholders and young people.

In 2022, the Senior Leadership Team began work on an Annual Plan, for approval by the Board, which identifies priorities for each year of the Strategy and introduces Key Performance Indicators to help measure and track successful implementation of the Strategic Goals. Regular



progress reports to the Board by the Director are designed to ensure appropriate oversight of the process. An annual account of Strategy implementation will also feature every year in the Oberstown Annual Report (see Appendix 1).

## Resources

Oberstown is fully committed to the implementation of the Strategy 2022-2026 and to ensuring the resources are available to achieve its ambitious goals. Rigorous financial management and planning to accompany the development of each annual plan is in place to this end. The Strategy is designed to align with the Oberstown risk management process so risks to its success are identified and treated.

The ongoing support of the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth is a key factor, and providing the Minister with regular updates is a priority for the Oberstown Board and Executive.

## Equality and human rights

Oberstown is committed to the implementation of the public sector equality and human rights duty, as set out in section 42 of the *Irish Human Rights and Equality Act 2014*. The *Oberstown Strategy 2022-2026* reflects these values and fulfils the organisation's responsibility to promote equality and human rights among its staff, young people, service users and everyone affected by its policies and plans.

'Everyone in the Oberstown community has a role to play in implementing the Strategy, which was developed through a process of consultation with staff, stakeholders and young people.'

# Voice of the young people

**Oberstown's values highlight the organisation's commitment to "listen to young people, acknowledging and respecting their right to participate and influence decisions that affect them". Active participation in rights-based advocacy processes ensures that young people have their say in all aspects of life on Campus.**

Oberstown's Advocacy Officer, Gráinne Smyth, acts as the link between young people, Campus management and the Board. Young people know they can raise concerns or suggestions with the Advocacy Officer and they will be taken seriously. The Board closely monitors this key aspect of Oberstown's rights-based approach both through monthly reports by the Advocacy Officer and through the work of the Board Young People Committee, which regularly meets with young people on Campus.

Complaints are a key component in the advocacy process. There is a formal procedure for recording complaints; all complaints are investigated and each young person signs a copy of their complaint,

feedback is provided on each complaint and the young person registers their satisfaction level with the outcome.

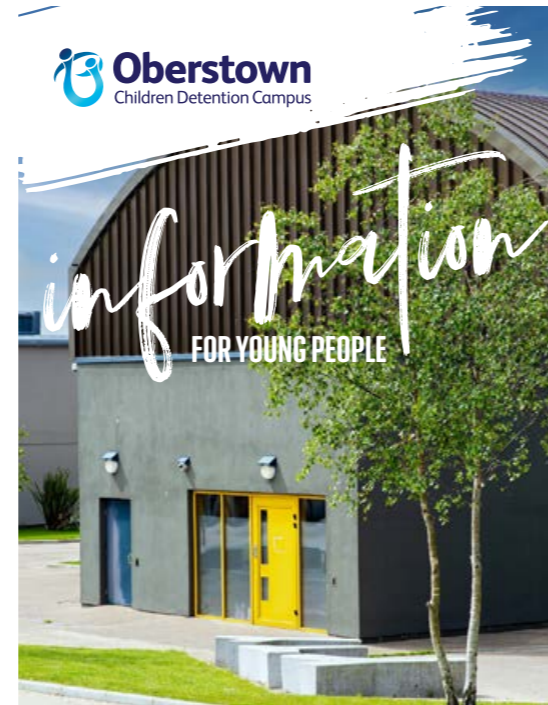
The Advocacy Officer oversees the Campus complaints procedure for all matters that do not have a child protection element. (Child protection matters are taken to the Designated Liaison Person for Child Protection – see page 17.)

Young people made 21 complaints through the advocacy service in 2022, down from 26 in 2021. The Advocacy Officer recorded 399 advocacy issues in 2022, a reduction of 23 on the previous year.

## Consultation and participation in 2022

In 2022, young people's views informed decisions on a wide range of topics. The Campus Council, a formal structure with elected representatives from each of the residential units, met eight times during the year. Young people also participated in focus groups, registering their views on established and new initiatives. Issues and initiatives included:

- Workshops to progress the STEPS+ careers portal (see pages 22-23).
- Planning for Summer School activities – young people gave their feedback on their experience of engaging in 2021 summer activities on Campus.
- Developing a child-friendly version of the Oberstown Strategy 2022-2026. A group of young people



**Left:** Young people provided input to the content and design of a new young person's information booklet, published in 2022. Each young person has a copy, and all new admissions to the Campus and their parents/guardians receive a copy.

worked with the Advocacy Officer, Communications Officer and art teachers to identify graphical representations of Oberstown's strategic goals.

- Meeting with the Catering manager, through the Campus Council, to discuss food and supplies issues. The kitchen facilitated a change to mealtimes for a pilot period in August 2022, at the request of the young people; original mealtimes resumed following the trial period, again at the young people's request.
- Requesting and securing a number of changes to equipment in unit bedrooms. New curtain panels were installed for all bedroom windows following a successful test in two of the units. Young people reviewed bedroom supplies inventories and all their suggested changes were agreed and approved following health and safety checks.
- Reviewing restrictive practices – young people offered their

perspective on Campus procedures through a special meeting of the Campus Council.

- Discussing an Individual Recovery Plan initiative to help with behaviour management. Young people were briefed on this initiative and gave feedback on their practical experience of the procedures supporting the Children's Rights Policy Framework.
- Contributing to focus group sessions, facilitated by an external consultant, to develop a new Campus Participation Strategy.
- Meeting with the Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO) to discuss how young people engage with the service on Campus. This resulted in a change to the OCO's monthly visit, with OCO staff attending activities and meeting young people in the school building rather than through appointments in the visiting suite. While the new arrangements include a facility for private consultations, the aim of making the OCO service generally more accessible to and informative for young people was successful.

## Liaising with external agencies and promoting best practice

Liaison with external agencies and initiatives helps ensure that advocacy at Oberstown keeps abreast of best practice. During 2022 the Advocacy Officer continued to develop Oberstown's support network for

young people in a variety of ways, including:

- Ensuring that young people are aware of the range of external supports and services available to them. These include the OCO and the services of EPIC (Empowering People In Care).
- Representing the voice of young people at a Law Society of Ireland virtual training event for solicitors. 'Effective Advocacy for Young People', chaired by Judge John O'Connor, featured presentations by the Oberstown Chairperson, Director, and Advocacy Officer.
- Liaising with Young In Prison, part of the Netherlands Helsinki Committee Project, to explore ways of developing Oberstown's Campus Council.
- Meeting the Scottish Prison Service, along with Oberstown's Designated Liaison Person for Child Protection (DLP), to discuss research into a child-friendly complaint mechanism within the Scottish system.
- Networking to enhance Oberstown's knowledge and build awareness of the service. Workshops, webinars and seminars attended included those hosted by a wide range of institutions, including: Children's Rights Alliance, Children and Young People's Centre for Justice (Scotland), Cork Life Centre, The Association for Criminal Justice Research and Development (ACJRD), Department of Justice, Irish Criminal Justice Agencies (ICJA).

## OBERSTOWN'S CHILD PROTECTION SERVICE

Oberstown has a highly experienced Social Worker who is the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) for Child Protection on Campus. Each residential unit has a poster showing DLP Bill Byrne with information on how young people or staff can report concerns about the safety of any young person. HIQA's 2022 report noted the effectiveness of the advocacy and child protection resources available on Campus: "While young people said they could talk to any member of staff or their keyworker at any time about issues, they spoke highly of the Advocacy Officer and the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) by name. The young people said that these two staff would speak with them after an incident they were involved in and ask them about their experience of it and if there were any concerns that they had."

In 2022, there were 114 matters referred to or followed up by the DLP in line with Campus policy and Children First legislation. Twenty-two of these matters were forwarded as Mandated Reports to Tusla, the Child and Family Agency; eight of the Reports referred to matters internal to Oberstown. The DLP referred 10 matters to the Garda Ombudsman on behalf of young people. The Social Worker also fulfils a valuable educational role on Campus, conducting Victim Empathy programmes with young people and providing staff training in Safeguarding. The Social Worker also supervises placements for social work students – in 2022 a student from Maynooth University successfully completed a 14-week placement.

# My Oberstown experience

One young person outlines his activities and plans for the future.



## School and activities

For me, the best thing about Oberstown is the structure, having a routine every day – school in the day and activities in the evening to keep my day busy.

At school, I like all the hands-on activities like woodwork and metalwork, and I like art and maths. I've done my QQI Level 3 and I've started Level 4.

There's no writing work in activities, it's just practical stuff. I like playing football over on the Astro with lads from the other units and a few staff. We couldn't do that when COVID was on and it's a lot better now without the COVID rules, you can mix with people now from the other units.

Gaisce is a good experience, I like doing that. I have my bronze and silver and I'm going for my gold. I was with people from other units doing painting for it. In Oberstown, I've found out that I like doing art. I'd only done it in primary school but then I only got the first year of secondary school so I never got to experience the good bit of art. Then I came here and I've learned how to paint portraits of people, paint whatever I want. I had a painting that was in IMMA.

I'm doing the triathlon training. I'd never really done anything like that before. I like it, it's good for the head and it keeps me busy. I'm doing it for eight weeks, so that's two months passing for me and it doesn't even feel like it. I feel a lot better for it.

We do stuff for charity and the community. I did some work in textiles making emergency bags for women in the domestic violence shelters. And we did pillows and comfort blankets for teenagers who were in a bad spot. We've all helped out where we can.

## Campus Council

Campus Council is where one young person from each unit come together and sit down with Gráinne [Advocacy Officer] and talk about if we want something improved

or we need something done for us. Before I go over to the meeting I ask the others on the unit if they want me to say anything because I am the voice of the unit.

So the likes of the food, we're always asking to make it healthier. In our unit there's at least five of us who are doing exercise every day and we need the right fuel. That's something I've learned from all the fitness people. Other things like getting MP3 players to play music, because you can't use the internet but want to play music. We're trying to get better selection on the TV channels. Even though I'll be gone before they get them changed, we keep asking so we can make things better for the lads.

## Work experience

I do work experience in the kitchen. You have to be very trusted to be allowed to work in the kitchen and they agreed because I was doing well. I've tried the kitchen and I like it but it's not like doing woodwork, which I enjoy more. But because I've worked in the kitchen it gives me options, so I could go work in a coffee shop.

## Future plans

I have PPMs [placement planning meetings], about how I'm getting on in Oberstown and what I'm looking to do. Closer to leaving it's time to think about where I'm going next, how well I'm doing, all the stuff I've done over the time I've been here. It has got better because you can see the improvement.

Hopefully I'm leaving later this year. They are trying to get me out to do an apprenticeship in carpentry. That's my goal. If I get released I know exactly what I want to do and will be working on the apprenticeship on a building site.



# Education at Oberstown: personal plans to maximise potential

**Meeting young people's educational needs is vital to Oberstown's focus on maximising the potential of each individual in our care. The Oberstown Campus School, centrally located at the heart of the Campus, is operated by the Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board (DDLETB) and delivers a curriculum that covers state examinations and QQI certification. Suzanne Fitzpatrick, School Principal, outlines Oberstown's uniquely challenging and rewarding approach to learning.**

**A**t Oberstown, we have the opportunity to work with young people who, before they arrive, have perhaps disengaged from education completely. So it is important that we devise an educational plan to ensure that they experience success and achieve their goals.

We start by looking to continue with the educational level the learner presents with on admission and work to tailor a programme to meet their academic and social needs. Key factors include the time they will spend here, an assessment of what they can achieve, and their future plans and career interests. This holistic approach is part of Oberstown's CEHOP® model and placement planning process, and it is of utmost importance that the young person is included in their educational plan, so that they feel that they are in control of their future. So, when each young person comes to the school for the first time, we sit with them, we discuss their previous experience and we also go through what they would like to achieve when they leave Oberstown – perhaps future employment plans, or whether they will continue in mainstream education or perhaps in a Youthreach setting.

In Oberstown Campus School we offer the national curriculum, with all subjects on the Junior and Senior cycle. Young people benefit from learning support and BKSB (basic key skills builder) programmes to develop literacy and numeracy. We are also in the unique position of providing courses leading to Level 2, 3 and 4 Certification in General Learning from QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland) (see page 21).

Offering a range of options based on each young person's individual plan repositions school for many of our students as a place where they can learn and grow at their own pace, and surprise themselves with what they can achieve. The young people are very happy and very engaged in school. Attendance is excellent. We often hear comments like 'Can I have this class in the afternoon?'

**'I like all the hands-on activities like woodwork and metalwork, art and maths. I know it's not everyone's favourite but I like maths. I've done my QQI level 3 and I've started level 4.'**

**- YOUNG PERSON**

or 'Can I have a double in this class?' It is a very positive thing to hear the students planning what they are engaging in, showing they are happy with what is on offer and taking a new approach to school in general.

In 2022, we awarded our second ever Student of the Year award, recognising both academic achievement and school community involvement. Whole-school initiatives are established highlights of the school and Campus calendar, encouraging teamwork and collaboration with peers. Maths Week, Active Schools Week and Reading Week all follow naturally from the curriculum, while Positivity Week is part of the School's Amber Flag initiative.

Involving the young people is key to supporting a learning community, not just in school but also in the Campus as a whole. Our Student Voice Committee, with its 'One Student, One Voice' ethos, and the Campus Council are forums where the young people learn how to work together to influence decisions and progress ideas that have a real impact on their lives on Campus and beyond.

Our special environment means we have extraordinary opportunities to offer education, personal development, life skills and work experience in collaboration with other teams on Campus – including Activities, Advocacy, Young People's Programmes, Catering, Health and Safety and the Campus Chaplain. Teachers and Campus staff continue to work closely and collaboration in recent years has extended to providing an academic component to the annual Summer School. Again, student demand has helped make the initiative a success as we tap into the skills and resources on Campus to provide options that prepare learners for career opportunities and help them explore new hobbies and skills.



'For me, the best thing about Oberstown is the structure, having a routine every day. Like, having someone waking you up each day, having school. I like that because on the outside I was in a care home and I just didn't really have structure.'

- YOUNG PERSON

### Amber Flag Status

In 2022, the Oberstown Campus School achieved Amber Flag status for the first time. The Pieta House Amber Flag Initiative recognises the efforts of schools that support mental wellbeing and help eradicate the stigmas associated with mental health issues.

Oberstown's young people, supported by a team of teachers led by Assistant Principal Colette Macken, arranged and completed a range of projects to earn the Amber Flag. This included organising and hosting a fundraising bake sale for everyone on Campus, raising more than €1,000 to support the volunteers at Pieta House. Young people designed the poster, arranged the publicity, made the cakes and used their barista skills to serve the coffee on the day.

The initiative is ongoing, and the young people involved say they want to support the great work that the volunteers at Pieta House do every day. Mental Health is a topic close to their hearts as "we've been through a lot of this ourselves and we want to help other people".



Suzanne Fitzpatrick,  
School Principal

## NATIONAL CURRICULUM AND QQI CERTIFICATION

Oberstown Campus School ensures the national curriculum is available to all young people on Campus, with learning plans tailored to each individual's needs. All subjects in the Junior and Senior cycles are covered: English, Irish, Maths, Science, PE, RE, Art, Engineering, Wood Technology, Home Economics, Business, SPHE, Geography, History, Politics & Society, Chemistry, Biology, Music.

In 2022, two young people achieved their Leaving Certificate, studying English, Maths, Art, Music, Engineering, Construction Studies, and Home Economics.

Three young people achieved their Junior Certificate, studying: English, Maths, Art, Engineering, Wood Technology, Business, and Home Economics.

The Campus school also provides courses leading to Level 2, 3 and 4 certification in General Learning from QQI (Quality And Qualifications Ireland). Modules on offer: Communications, Functional Maths, Computer Literacy, Personal Effectiveness, Breakfast Cookery, Short Order Cookery, Craft (Pyrography, and Ceramics and Design), Textiles, Workshop Skills, Engineering, Health & Fitness, Art, Intercultural Awareness, Crime Awareness, Personal Care, Work Experience, and Career Preparation.

In 2022, young people earned certificates in 37 modules at Level 3 General Learning QQI.

# Career guidance: best foot forward

**Helping young people to understand their career options and choices is a key aspect of the Education and Preparation for Leaving elements of Oberstown's CEHOP® model of care. In 2022, significant progress was made, including the appointment of a dedicated Career Guidance Counsellor and enhancements to STEPS+ (Skills, Training, Education, Person-Centred Support), the bespoke online career learning platform developed for the young people in Oberstown.**

**D**esigned by career professionals from CareersPortal.ie – through in-depth consultation in Oberstown with young people, teachers, staff and parents – STEPS+ comprises interactive tools to help young people to learn about themselves and their training, education and employment opportunities. The project is funded by the Dormant Accounts Fund. The platform has four core apps – My Strengths, My Skills, My Interests and My Work Areas – which facilitate the self-assessments that help key workers and young people to explore their options in education, training and work, including apprenticeships.

The platform provides access to a Steps+ Career File for each young person and an Administration area where assigned staff can track assessment results, progress and development of the young person during their time on Campus. Meeting notes are integrated into the platform and an individual dashboard tracks engagement by each young person. In 2022, the Administration function was enhanced to enable staff to consider young people's careers reports/portfolios in placement planning meetings (PPMs).

Collaboration and consultation are key to the STEPS+ process, with feedback from young people's focus groups

informing revisions to the apps and additions to the platform. In 2022, improvements included the addition of accessibility tools, in line with the UDL (Universal Design for Learning) framework to support learners and staff with issues arising from challenges including autism, dyslexia, language and visual impairment. New accessibility enhancements include a user-friendly voice feature and a colour vision indicator app to help young people prepare for apprenticeship. The project has also been adapted to suit specific individual needs, such as the introduction of a bespoke CAO app developed for an academically-motivated young person.



**Hands online:** Young people engaging with the STEPS+ platform give feedback that helps improve and extend the platform's capabilities.

Meetings with parents and guardians helped move the STEPS+ project forward in 2022, and their continuing involvement is seen as a significant factor in each young person's positive change.

‘Collaboration and consultation are key to the STEPS+ process, with feedback from young people's focus groups informing revisions to the apps and additions to the platform.’

Young people's engagement with STEPS+ is encouraged through a support structure that includes a CareersPortal Guidance Team, whose flexible approach to working with young people on weekends, during school mid-term and summer holidays has been a major factor in the project's success to date. In November 2022, a qualified Career Guidance Counsellor joined the Oberstown Activities Team who uses STEPS+ in one-to-one guidance sessions with young people, supported by CareersPortal professionals and "STEPS+ Champions" from each residential unit.

The STEPS+ approach is informing the provision of on-Campus practical skills training, including catering skills experience and SafePass certification. In 2022, the STEPS+ team engaged with external agencies including Solas Project, Pathways and the Cherry Orchard Equine Centre to explore options for expanding the programme of training activities offered on Campus. STEPS+ is also a focus for building dialogue with stakeholders within the education, training, employment and social justice sectors to develop the links between Oberstown and further education, training and employment opportunities.

## STEPS+ KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN 2022

Young people's focus groups provided feedback to developers on developing the platform.

Individual meetings were held with parents and a parents' focus group to gain input from parents and guardians.

56 guidance hours provided directly to young people on a 1:1 basis and in small groups.

37 young people have availed of one or more individual sessions with STEPS+ Guidance Counsellors.

Key findings of a survey of all young people who engaged in the project:

- 90 % of young people said they enjoy engaging with STEPS+
- 88 % said Steps+ helped them learn something new about themselves
- 88 % said that the Steps+ is easy to use
- 72 % of RSCWs and 56 % of NSO staff completed STEPS+ training, delivered across seven separate training sessions.

Eight Steps+ Champions in place to support the implementation of STEPS+ within their units.

A Careers Guidance Counsellor joined the Activities Team to embed STEPS+ as part of the suite of programmes on offer in the young people's Activity Schedule.

Keynote speakers from external education services met with young people to discuss the transformative power of education.

## Young people's programmes 2022

**Oberstown runs a series of programmed interventions that aim to build young people's responsibilities and address the factors associated with their offending behaviour. These interventions are developed and offered in line with each young person's individual CEHOP® care plan. The principles of restorative practice, with a focus on positive outcomes, underpin all interventions with young people on Campus.**

### Outcome Star Assessment Tool

Outcome Star is a core element of keyworking in Oberstown. It is a set of evidence-based tools for assessing, identifying and meeting the needs of young people in order to help them focus on positive change.

We use the Justice Star variation of the approach as it fits well with CEHOP®, encouraging young people to build a holistic picture of their personal development across 10 key areas of their lives, including but not limited to addressing offending behaviour: Accommodation; Living Skills & Self Care; Mental Health & Wellbeing; Friends and Community; Relationships and Family; Parenting and Caring; Drugs & Alcohol; Positive use of time; Managing strong feelings; A Crime-free life.

Unit managers and residential social care workers (RSCWs) use Justice Star to help young people measure their progress throughout their stay on Campus, and help them to engage with targeted programmes and interventions.

### "Pathways" Life Skills Intervention

The "Pathways" life skills intervention is Oberstown's keyworking framework. This is a practical life skills guide for young people who are preparing to leave care, delivered by RSCWs in nine one-to-one modules during keyworking sessions. It is available to every young person on a remand or detention order in Oberstown.

**No. deliveries 2022:** Delivered to each young person on Campus through the CEHOP® model of care.

### Decider Life Skills

Based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT), the programme uses skills under four core skill sets: Distress Tolerance, Mindfulness, Emotional Regulation and Interpersonal Effectiveness. The programme uses a lifejacket metaphor as a fun and memorable way to introduce young people to the skills that keep them afloat when an "emotional emergency" occurs. Young people learn coping skills and develop the resilience required to deal with impulsive behaviours.

**No. deliveries 2022:** 24 groups facilitated by 11 Oberstown staff.

### Victim Empathy

"What Have I Done?" is a practical approach to encouraging empathy in young people who hurt others through their behaviour. It challenges the young person to consider what they can do to help repair the harm they have caused.

**No. deliveries 2022:** Five groups delivered by three trained Oberstown staff, including the Oberstown Social Worker/Designated Liaison Person.

### Restorative Thinking

This programme gives young people access to a full understanding of restorative justice in the criminal justice system, explaining the concepts and identifying how each young person can engage to help resolve their own offending behaviour. The programme equips young people and those at risk of offending with the skills, knowledge and understanding to adopt restorative practice as a key life skill to manage daily challenges and conflicts, to become solution-focused problem solvers.

**No. deliveries 2022:** Two pilot groups facilitated by four trained Oberstown staff, including the Oberstown Social Worker/Designated Liaison Person.

### Crinan Drug Relapse Prevention

A group work intervention that aims to teach participants how to examine the triggers for and the consequences of their drug/alcohol use. It supports young people to develop strategies that help them effectively manage and overcome any stressors or triggers in their environment that may cause a relapse, and is therefore best suited to young people due for release shortly after completing the programme. The programme consists of eight modules.

**No. deliveries 2022:** Two groups participated in the course, delivered by two facilitators from Crinan Youth Project.

### Relationships and Sexual Health

REAL U (Relationships Explored and Life Uncovered) is a personal development and sex education programme aimed at equipping young people with the skills, knowledge and confidence to develop healthy relationships and delay the onset of early sexual activity.

**No. deliveries 2022:** Five courses, facilitated by trained Oberstown staff and teachers from the Oberstown Campus School.

### Teen Parent Support Programme

A toolkit that promotes best practice in supporting young people at a critical early point of pregnancy and parenthood. Delivered during key working sessions, the focus is on achieving the best possible health and wellbeing outcomes for young teenage parents and their children.

**No. deliveries 2022:** 3

### #askconsent

#askconsent is a workshop focusing on the key concept of consent in all sexual activity, and the self-awareness and communication skills required to protect themselves and others. It was developed by the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre and has been used in colleges across the country. The Oberstown programmes team adapted the material for

delivery to our young people. The workshops were delivered by two Oberstown facilitators.

**No. deliveries 2022:** 3 groups.

### IPS Prison Transfer Programme – Wheatfield Proof

This programme supports young people through their transition from Oberstown to Wheatfield Prison by familiarising young people with what to expect upon arrival and during their time there. It is delivered by external facilitators from Solas Project, which provides a combination of pre- and post-release support services focused on reducing reoffending.

The programme takes place once a week, over eight weeks, during evening activities.

**No. deliveries 2022:** 7

### Understanding the Court Process

A programme run by Solas Project to help young people understand the court processes and terminology.

**No. deliveries 2022:** One (pilot programme in Q4 2022).

### Learning for Life

A life skills programme facilitated by external facilitators from Solas Project. The aim is to support young people to equip themselves with practical skills they may need when they leave Oberstown. It is delivered once a week over 14 weeks. This was a new course in 2022.

**No. deliveries 2022:** One group, April – August 2022.

### Driver Behaviour Programme

Pro-Social Ireland delivers this programme, designed for any young person who has road traffic offences and is willing to challenge their driving behaviour. The programme consists of four modules delivered over six two-hour sessions over three weekends. Content is adapted to suit the young people in Oberstown.

**No. deliveries 2022:** One group, September – October 2022.

### Street Doctors

Street Doctors is a registered charity run by junior doctors and medical students. They teach life-saving first aid to young people at risk of violent crime and drug use. This workshop is delivered by external facilitators in two one-hour sessions.

**No. deliveries 2022:** Six groups, October – November 2022.

### ShoutOut

The ShoutOut workshop is an interactive, dynamic and informative hour-long session where external facilitators explore LGBTQ+ terminology, scenarios where students can act as good allies, and ways in which to create a welcoming environment for LGBTQ+ students. Facilitators also share their own stories of coming out, or becoming allies themselves, and explain how some language and behaviour they experienced could be hurtful, and when it was supportive.

ShoutOut returned to Campus this year for the first time since COVID-19 restrictions.

**No. deliveries 2022:** Four groups, August 2022.

### Life Connections

Workshops by Life Connections featuring open conversations about emotional, social and mental health issues. Topics include mental health, grief, loss, healthy relationships and emotional intelligence. This was a new course in 2022.

**No. deliveries 2022:** Ten groups, April – August 2022.

### Crosscare Counselling

Crosscare addiction counselling was a new service in 2022, with counsellors attending once a week to work with young people.

**No. deliveries 2022:** Weekly, August – December 2022.

# Afterschool activities and skills training

The Oberstown Activities team offers an extensive range of recreational, educational and skills training programmes. Young people attend afterschool sessions voluntarily and have their say in the range of activities offered – including sports, creative arts, personal development and relaxation classes and vocational skills courses.

During regular school terms, afterschool classes and activities start at 4pm and finish at 7.30pm each evening from Monday to Friday. On average, the Activities team delivers 16 classes in each of four time slots – a total of 64 classes each weekday evening.

## AFTERSCHOOL CLASSES 2022

Art	Mindfulness
Art and Design	Music
Badminton	Pottery
Baking	Textiles
Boxing	Triathlon Training
Digital Music Production	Wall Tennis
Fitness Training	Wood Pyrography
Football	Wood Technology
Home economics	Woodwork
	Yoga



Sporting activity on Campus increased during 2022, with group activities returning to pre-COVID-19 levels. The new triathlon training programme was very popular with young people.

## Summer School 2022

The Oberstown Summer School runs each year in July and August, organised and delivered by the Activities team. In 2022, Oberstown again worked with the Campus school to provide morning and afternoon sessions in July. The morning school, catering mainly for young people who wanted to continue their school studies during the summer, ran from 10am to 1pm, with the Activities team taking over for the afternoon classes from 2pm to 6pm. The summer school offers all the term-time afterschool activities along with additional options, including drumming workshops, rap recording, computer games competitions, drama, snooker, and pottery classes.

Young people also attend life skills programmes during the summer school, in line with their individual needs. The summer 2022 programmes offered were: Solas Prison Transfer Programme; Solas Learning for Life Programme; The Decider Programme; Life Connections; Crinan Drug Relapse Programme; Real U programme (see pages 24-25 for information on the full range of young people's programmes.)

The Campus marked the end of the summer school with a day of activities including a Young People v Staff football match and a presentation of prizes to recognise best-in-class work by the young people during summer activities. Six young people received silver and bronze awards from Gaisce – The President's Award at the event.

## Sporting challenges

Sports activities are popular on Campus, giving young people opportunities to relax, keep fit and develop individual and team skills. Building on the high interest in acquiring fitness instructor and personal training qualifications, Oberstown runs triathlon training and boxing programmes as afterschool and summer school activities.

In 2022, three young people completed the first Oberstown Triathlon. Professional triathlete Ger Redmond of Pro Coaching runs an intensive eight-week training programme to prepare participants for the challenge – 25km on an exercise bike, 750m on the rowing machine and 5km on the treadmill.

Kenneth Egan, Irish Olympic boxing silver medallist, runs a boxing training programme that focuses on the sport's skills and benefits as a means of developing self-discipline and personal achievement. Young people who take part in boxing classes must keep to the programme's code of conduct and behavioural requirements, both during sessions and in their other activities on Campus.

Opportunities for team sports were limited in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID-19 restrictions. However, 2022 saw a gradual return to football sessions on the Campus Astroturf pitch and a number of matches took place between young people from Oberstown and visiting football teams from local clubs and businesses, helping to build relationships with the community.

## OBERSTOWN 'COME DINE WITH ME'

During the summer school, young people and staff took part in Oberstown's version of Come Dine With Me. This was a very popular fun and learning activity, with young people and staff from each residential unit engaged in friendly competition to impress panels of judges comprising volunteer staff members from across the Campus. The unit teams each prepared a three-course meal, working with the Activities team's home economics and baking experts to bring their creative ideas to life.

Indian, Japanese and Italian specials featured alongside some creative twists on traditional steak and chicken dishes. Teamwork was the order of the day, demonstrated through the quality of the tasty food on offer and the personal touches shown in the service, including colourful table dressings, printed menus and – in the case of the winning team – live background music to accompany the meals.



Judges Fay McClory, Anne Gibney and Paul Keegan entered into the spirit of a Hawaiian-themed meal served up by young people.

## Vocational skills/employability

Oberstown afterschool vocational skills training programmes focus on providing young people with practical skills that increase their prospects of employment in the future. Vocational skills programmes offered in 2022:

### Fitness instructor training

Image Fitness Training works on Campus with the Oberstown School and Activities team to deliver a 12-week course leading to qualification as a fitness trainer. In 2022, a total of 22 young people and six staff achieved a National Elite Professional Certificate EQF Level 3 in Fitness Instruction. Modules cover practical fitness instruction, anatomy, physiology and training methods, with assessment based on practical and written examinations. Four young people completed the additional modules required to earn their National Elite Professional Certificate EQF Level 4 as a Personal Trainer.

### SafePass

SafePass is a mandatory safety awareness training programme for construction workers; employers must make sure that employees on construction sites carry SafePass cards. It is a one-day programme that teaches participants the essentials required to work on construction

sites without being a risk to themselves or others. Courses were run on Campus in 2022, with 22 young people achieving their SafePass.

### Manual Handling

Manual Handling is the transporting or supporting of a load that involves lifting, putting down, pushing pulling, carrying or moving. A practical course provides young people with the knowledge and skills to correctly pre-assess, lift, carry and lower objects. It also enhances their understanding of best health and safety practice. A total of 18 young people completed the course in 2022.

### Catering and food production

Oberstown's Catering team provides training and work experience to young people in the Campus kitchen. In 2022, three young people worked in the kitchen.

Java Republic Coffee has an established relationship with Oberstown, providing certified barista training on Campus and supplying coffee machines to help young people to practise their skills. Operational reasons meant that the barista courses did not take place in 2022, but plans were put in place to develop a coffee van catering business education and training programme for young people which will be up and running in 2023.



## Gaisce – The President's Award

Oberstown has long recognised the value to young people of participation in activities that help them earn Gaisce bronze, silver or gold awards. Every eligible young person is entered for the award scheme, which promotes positive experiences for transition to adulthood and has been shown to have an even greater impact on the personal development of young people from more marginalised backgrounds. Staff members act as President's Award Leaders (Gaisce PALs), who help the young people to set and achieve their personal Gaisce challenges, recording their progress on individual records on the Oberstown case management system (CMS).

In 2022, young people on Campus achieved a total of 28 Gaisce awards – 2 gold, 8 silver and 18 bronze. Each award represents months and sometimes years of commitment on the part of young people to developing their personal skills, self-awareness, community consciousness and self-confidence.



## National showcase for Oberstown artists

'Don't look back in anger'  
Acrylic on canvas, 130 x 166 cm  
"The reason why I'm making this is to show the world to look forward"

The Ride Away from the Storm, an exhibition of artworks made by young people in Oberstown, was shown at IMMA (Irish Museum of Modern Art) in Kilmainham, Dublin from 26 April to 8 May 2022. The exhibition set out to highlight the positive value of engagement in the arts and shared creative processes for young people, and to give voice to their experiences. It came about through a collaboration between the Engagement and Learning Programme at IMMA, Gaisce – The President's Award and Oberstown.

Nine young people created eleven paintings in the art room in Oberstown over six months as part of the Community Involvement challenge of their Gaisce Award. The process saw the young people work with their art teachers on a citizen curation programme as part of IMMA's contribution to SPICE, a European research project that supports communities who lack access to the museum

to share their perspectives on art. For Oberstown's young artists, this meant viewing the online IMMA catalogue in facilitated sessions and choosing works that they felt were in tune with their own approach. At the exhibition, the Oberstown artworks were displayed with explanatory note by each young person describing their work. (These notes are shown as the captions to the works on the image above and on the following pages.) A dedicated page on IMMA's website included a downloadable exhibition guide showing all the works at the exhibition alongside the young artists' choices from the IMMA collection.

Roderic O'Gorman, Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth officially opened the exhibition at IMMA on 26 April 2022. During the exhibition, Oberstown Activities Coordinator, John Smith, took part in a panel discussion 'Exploring Youth Voice in Art and Culture' at IMMA.





**'The Diamond Bar'**  
Acrylic on canvas, 137 x 165 cm  
"Although Michael Collins and De Valera were on the same side once, they had severe differences of opinion about Ireland. This is prevalent in today's world still, as everybody seems to be playing a metaphorical game of wits with themselves and each other."



**'The Potion of Knowledge'**  
Acrylic on canvas, 158 x 130 cm  
"As a young boy I have always had a fascination for computer games based in medieval times. The values in that time were relatively straightforward and unmaterialistic. I feel that these values are hard to find in today's world. And so I put them in a container to preserve them."

**'Desert Campaign'**  
Acrylic on canvas, 137 x 167 cm  
"My nan asked me to paint this. It's a painting of my great-grandfather. He fought in Tunisia during World War 2. I have a photo of him in his army uniform. I started with a historical black and white photo, then added the Sherman Tank and other details in photoshop. Then I added colour and painted it."



**The Ride Away from the Storm**  
Acrylic on canvas, 155 x 198 cm  
"Two cobs. Behind them, a storm is about to break. I started painting one horse then I realised he needed a friend."



**'Damage'**  
Acrylic on canvas 198 x 176 cm  
"The damage rubbish is doing to the world."

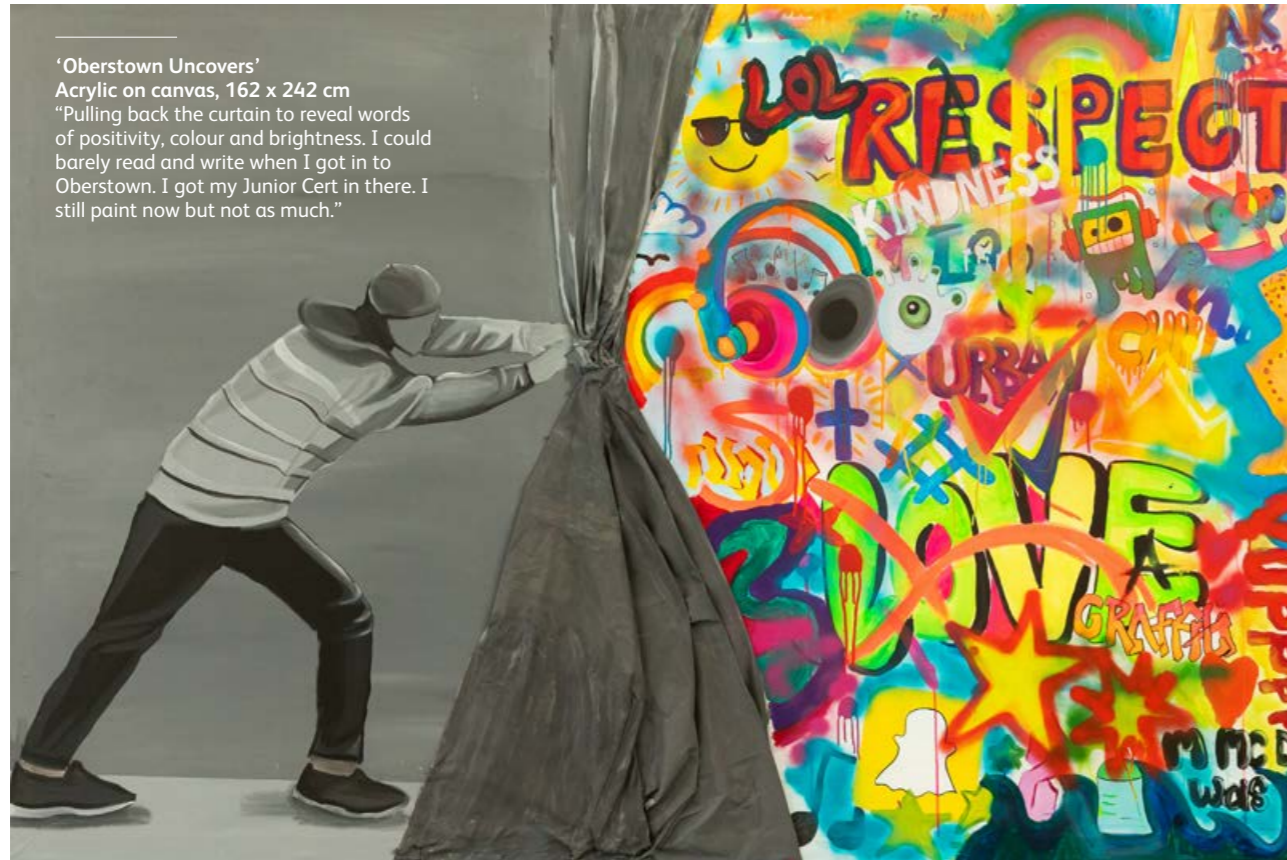
**'Untitled'**  
Acrylic on canvas, 137 x 165 cm  
"This is an image of a vintage travelling wagon. This wagon was hand crafted and drawn by horse through the country roads. These wagons are becoming really scarce."



**'Silver Stream'**  
Acrylic on canvas, 122 x 156 cm  
"I love everything about cars, even though I've never driven one. This is a painting of the Silver Stream car, the first car ever to be made in Ireland. First produced in 1908 in Co. Kildare, it is the only one ever made and was considered on the same level as Rolls Royce at the time."



**'Shakey Bridge'**  
Acrylic on canvas, 137 x 165 cm  
"This is a painting of the Shakey Bridge in Cork City. I did this painting because I used to go swimming down there when I was younger. This painting brings back good memories."



**'Oberstown Uncovers'**  
Acrylic on canvas, 162 x 242 cm  
"Pulling back the curtain to reveal words of positivity, colour and brightness. I could barely read and write when I got in to Oberstown. I got my Junior Cert in there. I still paint now but not as much."



**'Nice set and forget'**  
Acrylic on canvas, 143 x 162 cm  
"To go out look at the sun set and forget about everything that you're worried about."



## Oberstown murals

Joe Caslin, a leading Irish street artist and educator, started working on Campus with six young people in July 2022. The project brief was to conduct workshops covering the process of creating works of public art for installation at Oberstown. Joe worked with young people to select quotations that reflect their personal experiences and develop their lettering skills in order to help install the works as murals at the entrance to the residential units. The two quotes chosen – by American poet, writer and civil rights activist Maya Angelou – are determined and hopeful statements reflecting the young people's focus on a more positive future.



# Partnering for positive outcomes

**Effective partnerships with external agencies and services are essential factors in Oberstown's work to deliver the best possible outcomes for young people. These include national services Tusla, the Health Service Executive, the Irish Prison Service, the Education and Training Board, the Probation Service, An Garda Síochána, the Courts Service and the Ombudsman for Children's Office.**

**O**berstown also works closely with external partners Candle Community Trust, EPIC, Extern, Le Chéile, Way2Work and YAP to the benefit of young people and their families, both on Campus and following their return to the community. The work of some of these agencies is outlined below.

## Victim Liaison Service

The Victim Liaison Service, established in 2019, invites interested parties to apply via the web or through an application form available in the Victim Support at Court suites in Smithfield, the Children Court and Criminal Courts of Justice. There were three active cases in 2022, one of which was a new application.

## Candle Community Trust

Candle Community Trust (Candle) works with Oberstown to support a smooth transition for young people to and from placements in either organisation. Funded by agencies including The Probation Service and CDYSB (City of Dublin Youth Service Board), Candle provides educational, developmental, and therapeutic programmes to meet the needs of young people who have experienced disadvantage and marginalisation. Candle aims to divert young people from offending behaviour and has pioneered the integration of the Trauma Recovery Model and Restorative Practices to address issues identified through Candle's

in-house therapeutic services and interventions.

Towards the end of 2022, Candle and Oberstown identified three programmes as key areas of focus for young people: Candle's Connect Project, its Training Programme, and Therapeutic Services. The Connect Project is an introduction to Candle, which can be used in an early release programme or during an assessment period for a young person looking to engage with Candle's full-time training programme upon release. Once a young person has engaged with Candle's educational and developmental programmes, they can avail of Candle's therapeutic services on site.

When a young person in Oberstown is referred to Candle upon release or early release, a Candle staff member visits the young person on Campus to build a relationship and outline what the young person can expect from the organisation and its services. The outreach worker will also visit any young people known to Candle in Oberstown towards the end of their sentence to ensure a smooth transition back into the Candle programme.

The initiative also ensures that a young person's educational progress and achievements in Oberstown are transferred to Candle's education programme, working towards the best outcomes and continued engagement in education. Similarly, if a young person on the Candle training programme is placed in

Oberstown, their work is given to the Principal of the Oberstown Campus School.

## Y-JARC

The Joint Agency Response to Crime initiative targets the most prolific, repeat offenders. It runs in Blanchardstown, Dublin and Gurrabraher/Mayfield, Cork with ten places on each programme. Participants include Oberstown, the Irish Prison Service, Tusla, the Probation Service and An Garda Síochána. Progress meetings are held every three weeks and Oberstown is represented at both the Steering Group and operations levels.

## Le Chéile Mentoring

A dedicated Le Chéile staff member, based on Campus, works with the Oberstown team to respond to parents of young people in detention and referrals for young people identified as suitable for temporary release. Le Chéile works alongside keyworkers to identify suitable families for the service and can attend Placement Planning Meetings to support parents. Le Chéile parent mentoring is a community-based service offering individual support to parents at various locations around the country. A trained volunteer mentor meets the parent weekly to focus on self-care and goal setting, building and sustaining positive family relationships, and increasing access to community supports. Work with young people on temporary release aims to promote hopefulness and good decision making, working towards successful reintegration into their families and communities. The approach is based on restorative practice and ultimately aims to reduce reoffending.

In 2022, the parents of 15 young people engaged with the service and 5 young people on temporary release were supported.

## Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO)

The OCO attends the Campus monthly. In 2022, OCO representatives met with seven young people in person through formal appointments and engaged with young people informally during afterschool activities.

## EPIC

EPIC – Empowering People in Care provides external advocacy for young people, visiting the Campus once a month.

## Dept. of Justice Bail Supervision Scheme

The Dept. of Justice Bail Supervision Scheme, provided by social justice charity Extern, can cater for up to 25 young people each year. The courts and Oberstown can refer a young person to the Scheme. During 2022, 60 young people from Oberstown were eligible; 42 were already known to Extern, 1 was referred by the courts and a further 17 were referred by Oberstown.

## Way 2 Work

In September 2022, Oberstown partnered with Way 2 Work Ireland (W2W), an organisation that provides individual mentor-mentee, training, and employment programmes for young people who are in care or detention. W2W focuses on young people (aged 16-23 years) referred by Tusla or Oberstown. Two young people were referred to the mentoring programme in 2022 and there are plans to appoint a designated relationship manager for Oberstown in 2023.

W2W offers a one-to-one service, designed to create employment opportunities for motivated young people with a care-experienced background by connecting them with businesses who want to give back to the community by focusing on youth development. W2W mentors tailor their role to suit each individual, encouraging and motivating each

young person, and supporting their aim of securing training and employment across the various sectors.

## Crosscare Counselling Service

In September 2022, Crosscare Counselling began a pilot project providing addiction counselling to young people in Oberstown. This service complements the work of Tusla's ACTS (Assessment Consultation Therapy Service) team on Campus. The vast majority of young people admitted to Oberstown have substance misuse issues. Crosscare's Counselling Service supports young people whose substance misuse or other addictions may be problematic, through sessions that focus on making informed choices and facilitate access to targeted support and treatment plans. In 2022, 24 young people availed of the counselling service.

## YAP (Youth Advocate Programmes Ireland)

YAP provides intensive support for young people preparing to return to the community. YAP uses a strengths-based, needs-led approach employing community-based advocates to work with young people and their families to support them to achieve their goals. Key areas of focus include: facilitating attendance at education, training and work; developing positive hobbies and interests; strengthening family relationships; and building self-esteem and confidence. In 2022, YAP worked with three young people and their families at Oberstown. In Q4 2022, Oberstown hosted a visit to the Campus by a group of YAP team leaders. The visit was an opportunity for relationship building between the two services and provided YAP with deeper insights into the work of Oberstown.

# Behaviour management

**Young people in Oberstown on detention and remand orders frequently have complex, unmet needs with involvement in offending behaviour that sometimes causes them and others very serious harm.**

While many young people settle well in Oberstown, others find it difficult to adjust to the reality of the secure environment. This can affect their behaviour, their wellbeing and their capacity to cope day by day. From time to time, they can feel overwhelmed, finding it difficult to control their emotions and their behaviour. In extreme cases, this can put them and others in danger.

In Oberstown, our non-judgmental approach is focused on building positive and respectful relationships with young people; this enables us to deliver individualised, rights-based care as residential social care workers build trust and understanding through their daily interactions with young people. This approach supports a productive and safe environment for developing young people's self-awareness and social skills.

The behaviour management approach at Oberstown is thus based on positive engagement, with the

Single separation statistics 2016-2022	
Year	Single separation – total hours
2022	3,530
2021	3,679
2020	3,200
2019	3,499
2018	8,031
2017	12,733
2016	25,448

early detection and mitigation of potentially difficult or challenging situations a priority. While the Children's Rights Policy Framework permits the use of restrictive practices – such as the temporary separation of a young person from their peers or a physical intervention – these are used only in line with policy, with staff adhering to training, approval, review and oversight requirements. Restrictive practices are never used as a punishment and, in general, they take place in the context of positive behaviour management. Crucial to

this is that young people understand that the management of good behaviour is a collaborative effort with the goal being to resolve issues and situations quickly and safely.

In Oberstown strict adherence to policy is reviewed regularly by management, and the Board scrutinises trends in the use of restrictive practices on a monthly basis. Regular training, a clearer policy framework and better follow up and review mechanisms – such as After Incident Reviews – have all played a role in reducing the incidence of such practices (see chart).

It is also important, as part of Oberstown's rights-based approach, that young people understand the reasons for any such intervention, that they feel respected throughout and that they have the opportunity to provide feedback, in a safe space, on the experience. In this regard, the 2022 HIQA inspection noted the "warm and encouraging" nature of staff engagement with young people on Campus, and that young people are supported to address their offending and develop positive behaviour (see page p42). This support includes involving the young people in agreeing their personal behaviour management plan, designed to help them regain their balance.

# Oberstown Governance and Management

## Governance structure

Oberstown operates under the auspices of the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY). The Director is accountable to the Board of Management for all aspects of Campus operations and for providing the Board with all relevant information to ensure effective oversight.



## Board membership

The Board of Management of Oberstown has 12 members plus a Chairperson and includes representatives of the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY), the Department of Education, Tusla, two representatives from the local community and two independent members of staff, with five members identified via the Public Appointments Service (PAS) process. Members are appointed for a term, renewable, of up to four years. The current term of the Board of Management began on 1 June 2019. During 2022, four members left the Board: Eamon Clavin, Elizabeth Howard, Denis O’Sullivan and Emer Woodfull. Five new members joined: Elizabeth Davey, Úna Ní Dhubhghaill, Liz O’Neill, Martin Quigley and Dymphna Sherry. Profiles of the Board members are provided on pages 40-41.

## Board of Management

Oberstown is governed by a Board of Management appointed by the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth under the Children Act 2001 (sections 164 and 167). The Board operates in line with legislation and the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, complying with good governance, setting the strategic direction of the Campus and overseeing the delivery of the Oberstown Strategy and national policy in line with the 2001 Act.

The Board carries out its functions on behalf of the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. Its key responsibility is to provide oversight and strategic direction to Oberstown on behalf of the Minister. The Board is also responsible for supporting the Director to deliver the strategic plan and is accountable to the Minister in line with the Children Act 2001 and associated legislation and policy.

## Board meetings

Under the Children Act, the Board must hold as many meetings as necessary for the performance of its functions and is entitled to determine its own procedure. There were 11 regular Board meetings in 2022. An update was circulated to staff and published on the Oberstown website following each Board meeting.

Dates of the Board of Management meetings, and details of attendance, are set out in Appendix 2.

## Board committees

Six standing Board committees were in place in 2022 – the Audit and Risk Committee, the Governance Committee, the People and Culture Committee, the Sustainability Committee, the Strategy Committee and the Young People Committee. Dates of the Board of Management and committee meetings, and details of attendance, are set out in Appendix 2. The Committees all operate in line with clearly defined Terms of Reference, approved by the

Board and set out in the Oberstown Governance Handbook.

### Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee met seven times in 2022 to review matters of finance, internal control and risk, providing oversight in these areas on behalf of the Board and in line with its terms of reference. During 2022, the committee:

- Met representatives from the office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) to discuss the external audit of the 2021 financial statements. The statements received a clean audit; the committee reviewed the audited financial statements and recommended approval by the Board.
- Tracked implementation of all audit recommendations.
- Provided regular review and interrogation of financial information and budget vs actual profile.
- Reviewed budget estimates for 2023 and recommended these to the Board for approval and submission to Department.
- Reviewed the System of Internal Control.
- Approved the reappointment of external auditors.
- Approved and oversaw the Internal Audit Plan 2022.
- Commissioned a review of the Oberstown Risk Management Framework.

### Governance Committee

The Governance Committee met four times during 2022 to oversee arrangements for oversight and governance in line with its terms of reference. During 2022, the committee:

- Developed the Committee workplan for 2022, covering: Strategic Planning; Succession Planning/Board Skills Matrix; Oversight of Board Annual Work Plan; Reporting to the Board; Implementation of the

recommendations of Board Excellence; Performance reviews – Board/Chair/Director.

- Oversight of Departmental Agreements – Performance Delivery Agreement and Oversight Agreement.
- Ensured compliance with SIPO requirements; provided oversight of annual returns.
- Reviewed Board reporting.
- Assurances around management of critical incidents.
- Input into Goal 4 of the Strategic Plan 2022-2026.
- Completed the Code of Practice Compliance Checklist.

### People & Culture Committee

The People & Culture Committee met four times during 2022. Its work included:

- Input into Goal 2 of the Oberstown Strategy 2022-2026.
- Commenced the process of reviewing and approving HR Policies.
- Established and provided oversight of two Staff Engagement Groups.
- Developed enhanced HR reporting to the Board.
- Commissioned an organisational capability review.
- Provided oversight of Strategic Priorities for 2022 and 2023 around Goal 2.

### Strategy Committee

The Strategy Committee met six times in 2022. The role of the committee is to support the development of the next strategic plan and ensure its implementation. During 2022, its work included:

- Worked with the Oberstown Senior Leadership Team to develop the Oberstown Strategy 2022-2026.
- Worked with the Oberstown Senior Leadership Team to develop organisational strategic priorities for 2022, and provided oversight of their implementation.
- Reviewed the Board Committee Structure from a strategic

perspective – endorsed the establishment of a Sustainability Committee and Research Group.

- Adopted expanded terms of reference in February 2022 to include the oversight of implementation of the Strategy and the development of KPIs.

### Sustainability Committee

The Sustainability Committee was established in October 2022 and met twice during 2022. The committee established its priority workplan, including:

- Agreed terms of reference and reporting system for the Board of Management.
- Reviewed the 2022 strategic priorities for Goal 5 of the Oberstown Strategy 2022-2026.
- Progressed the Oberstown Climate Action Roadmap.
- Reviewed the Facilities Management Contract.

### Young People Committee

The Young People Committee ensures that the views of young people are heard and taken into account by the Board, and reviews the Oberstown advocacy and participation process.

The committee met four times in 2022. As part of the Board’s direct engagement with young people, the committee met with young people and discussed matters of concern to them, including: mobilities; TV, Netflix, access to movies; textiles, bed linen, curtains; electric razors; courses, Safe Pass, manual handling; mixing, non-mix with peers; support after admission for young people who are smokers; laundry baskets; lack of writing tools in bedrooms; food; and bed size. The committee discussed these issues with the Director and reported back to the young people and the Board.

## BOARD ACTIONS 2022

- Led the development of the new Oberstown Strategy 2022-2026.
- Monitored the implementation of the Oberstown Strategy, supporting the Director to deliver in key strategic areas.
- Oversaw the appointment of two new Deputy Directors.
- Approved the Financial Statements and Statement of Internal Control for 2021.
- Interrogated data on the use of restrictive practices, setting clear expectations for their reduced use in line with Oberstown policy.
- Deepened executive engagement in governance processes through the scheduled attendance of the Senior Leadership Team at Board meetings.
- Approved the Terms of Reference of the Sustainability Committee.
- Approved the Oberstown Code of Practice Compliance Checklist and submitted the checklist to DCEDIY.
- Introduced Young People Matters, a new Board agenda item to highlight the holistic experience of young people at Oberstown.
- Commissioned a review of the capability of senior management.
- Developed a Performance Committee to oversee the Director’s performance, to commence in 2023.
- Reviewed format and content of executive reporting to the Board.

# Oberstown Board of Management 2022

## Professor Ursula Kilkelly Chairperson



**Appointment:** Ministerial  
**Appointment date:** 1 June 2019 (reappointment)

**Term:** 4 years (on Oberstown Board since 2012, Chairperson since 2016)

**Committee membership:** Audit & Risk, Governance (Chair), Strategy, Young People, People & Culture (Chair)

Professor Ursula Kilkelly is a Professor of Law at University College Cork and an established international expert in youth justice and detention and children's rights. She is a Chartered Director with the Institute of Directors.

She is co-author, with former Oberstown Director Pat Bergin, of *Advancing Children's Rights in Detention, A Model for International Reform*.

## Brian Arnold



**Appointment:** Ministerial (Community representative)  
**Appointment date:** 21 July 2021

**Term:** 3 years

**Committee membership:** Sustainability (Chair)

Brian Arnold is a local community representative, resident in the vicinity of Oberstown. He is a management consultant with over 30 years' experience in the public and private sectors. He is Chairperson and a director of Lusk Community Council.

## Eamon Clavin



**Appointment:** Ministerial (Department of Education nominee)

**Appointment date:** 4 July 2019 (reappointment).  
Stepped down from the Board 30 June 2022

**Term:** 4 years

**Committee membership:** Governance, Strategy

Eamon Clavin is a Divisional Inspector in the Department of Education, attached to the Inspectorate's Teacher Education and Inclusion Evaluation and Policy Support Unit. He has a particular interest in Special Education, DEIS and Traveller Education and is a Council member of the National Council for Special Education (NCSE).

## Bernadette Costello



**Appointment:** PAS process  
**Appointment date:** 4 July 2019

**Term:** 4 years

**Committee membership:** Audit & Risk (Chair)

Bernadette Costello is a Chartered Director and Chartered Accountant. She is the former Director of Internal Audit & Risk at University of Galway and has extensive experience in financial and management accounting, corporate governance and related areas. She is currently a director of a number of boards in the public and charitable sectors.

## Jennifer Gargan



**Appointment:** PAS process  
**Appointment date:** 4 July 2019

**Term:** 4 years

**Committee membership:** Audit & Risk, Governance, Strategy, Young People (Chair)

Jennifer Gargan is a qualified social worker who has worked in the areas of community development, child protection and family support. As CEO of EPIC, Jennifer was an active advocate for the rights of young people with care experience in order to bring about changes in legislation, policy and practice.

## Elizabeth Howard



**Appointment:** Ministerial (Community representative)

**Appointment date:** 4 July 2019 (reappointment). Stepped down from the Board 30 June 2022

**Term:** 3 years

Elizabeth Howard is a local community representative resident in the vicinity of Oberstown.

## Elizabeth Davey



**Appointment:** PAS process  
**Appointment date:** 18 July 2022

**Term:** 4 years

**Committee membership:** Governance

Elizabeth Davey was called to the Bar in 2006. She is a practising barrister specialising in criminal, administrative, mental health and investigative law. She has a Masters in Criminology and a particular interest in youth justice.

## Laoise Manners



**Appointment:** Ministerial (Staff member)  
**Appointment date:** 21 July 2021 (reappointment)

**Term:** 2 years

**Committee membership:** Strategy

Laoise Manners is a residential social care worker (RSCW) and part of the Oberstown Health & Wellbeing team.

## Donal McCormack



**Appointment:** Ministerial (DCEDIY nominee)

**Appointment date:** 22 March 2021

**Term:** 2 years

**Committee membership:** People & Culture

Donal McCormack is the service director responsible for Tusla, the Child & Family Agency's Children's Residential Services nationally. He has over 30 years' experience in social care staff and senior operational management roles, spanning community and residential services.

## John McDaid



**Appointment:** PAS process  
**Appointment date:** 4 July 2019

**Term:** 4 years

**Committee membership:** Audit & Risk, Strategy (Chair)

John McDaid is the Chief Executive of the Legal Aid Board having previously worked for the Board as a solicitor and also having worked in private legal practice.

## Craig Mulligan



**Appointment:** Ministerial (Staff member)

**Appointment date:** 21 July 2021

**Term:** 2 years

**Committee membership:** People & Culture

Craig Mulligan is a residential social care worker (RSCW) in Oberstown.

## Denis O'Sullivan



**Appointment:** Ministerial (DCEDIY nominee)

**Appointment date:** 1 April 2021. Stepped down from the Board on 25 November 2022

**Term:** 2 years

**Committee membership:** Strategy

Denis O'Sullivan is a Principal Officer

in the Children Detention Schools Unit, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY). He worked in the Department of Children and Youth Affairs from its establishment in 2011 up to the establishment of DCEDIY in 2020; prior to that, he served in various senior management roles within the Department of Health.

## Úna Ní Dhubhghaill



**Appointment:** Ministerial (DCEDIY nominee)

**Appointment date:** 28 November 2022

**Term:** 1 year

**Committee membership:** Strategy

Úna Ní Dhubhghaill is a Principal Officer in the Children Detention Schools Unit, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY).

## Liz O'Neill



**Appointment:** Ministerial (Department of Education nominee)

**Appointment date:** 20 July 2022

**Term:** 1 year

**Committee membership:** Young People

Liz O'Neill is the Department of Education representative on the Board and a school inspector with 15 years' experience of carrying out evaluations in a range of learning settings, including post-primary schools, special schools, special care units, and Oberstown School. More recently, her work has involved supporting the Office of the Inspector of Prisons in conducting evaluations of education, work and training in prison settings.

## Martin Quigley



**Appointment:** PAS process

**Appointment date:** 18 July 2022

**Term:** 4 years

**Committee membership:** Governance (Chair)

Martin Quigley is the Director of Data & Analytics with Pobal, where he has responsibility for reporting, analytics and using data to support evidence-based social inclusion programme delivery and policy making. Martin is a qualified social care worker, having

previously spent several years working with young people experiencing homelessness in Dublin city.

## Dymphna Sherry



**Appointment:** Ministerial (Community representative)  
**Appointment date:** 18 July 2022

**Term:** 3 years

**Committee membership:** Sustainability

Dymphna Sherry is a local community representative, resident in the vicinity of the Oberstown Campus.

## Emer Woodfull



**Appointment:** PAS process  
**Appointment date:** 4 July 2019 (reappointment).

Stepped down from the Board 30 June 2022

**Term:** 3 years

**Committee membership:** People & Culture, Young People

Emer Woodfull is a practising barrister at the Law Library Dublin who was called to the Bar in 2003. She has a background in child, criminal, investigative, inquiry and employment law. She was previously an award-winning current affairs broadcaster and series producer in RTE, the national broadcaster.

## GENDER BALANCE

- As at 31 December 2022, the Board had seven (58%) female and five (42%) male members, with no positions vacant.
- The Chairperson is female.
- The Board therefore meets the Government target of a minimum of 40% representation of each gender in the membership of State Boards.

## Health Information and Quality Authority Inspection 2022

Inspectors from the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) carry out an annual inspection of Oberstown, as required under the Children Act 2001. Since 2021, HIQA has used Oberstown's Children's Rights Policy Framework and its 12 Rules as bespoke child-centred and rights-based standards for evaluating Oberstown's unique service.

In November 2022, an announced inspection took place over five days. A HIQA team of five inspectors:

- spoke with young people to find out their experience of the service
- talked with staff and management to find out how they plan, deliver and monitor the care and support services that are provided to young people who are placed in Oberstown
- observed practice and daily life to see if it reflected what people said
- reviewed documents to see if appropriate records are kept and that they reflect practice and what people told the inspectors.

Inspectors met 22 young people to talk about their experience of life on Campus; a further 28 young people's views were collected through questionnaires sent prior to the inspection. They also met with 11 parents and guardians, five social workers and three probation officers. They interviewed 35 members of staff – including residential social care workers, site managers, unit managers and senior managers –

as well as the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) for Child Protection and safeguarding, the Advocacy Officer, Chairperson of the Board of Management and four clinical staff working as part of the therapeutic teams on Campus.

The inspection judged Oberstown to be either compliant or substantially compliant across all standards inspected. In its report, HIQA stated that the service at Oberstown is “well-led and managed by a highly motivated senior management team” and led by a Director who is “experienced and well established and provides good leadership and direction.”

Young people interviewed as part of the inspection said that they felt relaxed when interacting with staff members and the inspectors observed that staff engagement with young people was “warm and encouraging”. Feedback from the parents, guardians and external professionals working with young people at Oberstown was also highly positive.

The report noted that young people were supported to both address their offending behaviour and develop positive behaviour

through interactions with staff, key working discussions and participation in targeted programmes and activities.

The inspectors found that young people received good quality care that promoted their development, wellbeing and potential as evidenced by a holistic, collaborative and rights-based approach to their care.

HIQA focused on six of the 12 Campus rules in its 2022 inspection. Findings included:

### Rule 1 – Care

Young people in Oberstown receive good quality care that promotes their development, wellbeing and potential as evidenced by a holistic, collaborative and person-centred approach. Participation by young people in decisions about their care is good.

**Improvement focus:** Many improvements were noted in the use of the electronic case management system (Oberstown CMS). However, inspectors found that record keeping did not consistently reflect the good quality work being carried out by staff with the young people.

### Rule 6 – Safeguarding

Appropriate systems are in place to protect young people from harm and abuse. Records of all incidents, allegations and complaints are maintained and the DLP for Child Protection is notified promptly where incidents or potential incidents involving child protection or welfare concerns occur. Where risks related to practice are identified they are managed appropriately.

**Improvement focus:** A process is in place to record and track child protection concerns. However, improvements are required to ensure that appropriate contingencies are in place in the absence of the DLP.

### Rule 7 – Participation

Young people at Oberstown are consulted in decisions made about their care and can avail of opportunities to participate in meaningful activities and programmes to support them. Young people know their rights and are supported to exercise those rights – for example, they knew how to make a complaint. Their views are considered and have influenced a number of positive changes across the Campus. They have appropriate access to legal representation and maintain good contact with families.

### Rule 8 – Positive behaviour

Young people are supported to develop positive behaviour through interactions with staff, key-working discussions and participation in programmes and activities. They are supported to understand norms of good behaviour and there are effective incentives and supports to motivate young people to sustain good behaviours such as the ratings system, opportunities for permitted absence, and training opportunities.

**Improvement focus:** Greater consistency is required to implement a programme of key working sessions, and to record these sessions in order to monitor and review their effectiveness. Improved consistency is also required in the application of ratings and recording them on the Oberstown CMS.

### Rule 9 – Restrictive practices

Restrictive practices are used effectively to manage risk and protect children from harm, and staff are vigilant in observing and detecting behavioural cues or triggers by the young people. Staff proactively de-escalated and diverted young people away from potentially serious and harmful incidents, with a consequent reduction in the necessity for use of restrictive practices.

**Improvement focus:** Further improvements are required to ensure consistent and accurate recording of the use of restrictive practices. A policy on individual recovery programmes is required to provide effective recording and oversight in this area.

### Rule 10 – Staffing, management and governance

Oberstown is well-led and managed by a highly motivated senior management team with clearly defined governance structures that promote continuous improvement. The service is proactive and responsive to the needs of the young people. Effective communication systems are in place for information sharing in relation to progress, risk and challenges.

**Improvement focus:** Build on ongoing progress in use of the Oberstown CMS to further support managerial oversight and monitoring; greater consistency required in staff supervision; improved management of perceived staff shortages.

For the full HIQA inspection report, see <https://bit.ly/HIQA2022>.

## OTHER STATUTORY BODIES WITH POWERS OF INSPECTION OR INVESTIGATION

### The Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO)

– promotes the rights and welfare of children and young people up to 18 years old living in Ireland. The OCO deals with complaints made by or on behalf of children, including those in Oberstown, in relation to the actions of public bodies under section 8 of the Ombudsman for Children Act 2002, as amended. During 2022, seven young people requested to meet with the OCO representative.

### The Department of Education

– carries out inspections of the Oberstown Campus school.

Oberstown is also subject to regulation by a range of other statutory bodies, including:

### Workplace Relations Commission

– compliance with employment legislation.

### Health Service Executive

– inspection of environment (catering areas and drinking water) by Environmental Health Officers; and the Health and Safety Authority regarding compliance with the Health and Safety Act 2005.

### Fingal County Council

– inspects the integrated constructed wetlands on Campus.

‘In its report, HIQA stated that the service at Oberstown is “well-led and managed by a highly motivated senior management team” and led by a Director who is “experienced and well established and provides good leadership and direction.”

# Business and compliance overview

**Oberstown operates in accordance with the principles of good governance in line with relevant legislation, the Children Act 2001 and the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016).**

## Conflict of interest

There were no declared conflicts of interest – personal, professional or financial – concerning any decisions of the Board during 2022. The Board maintains a Register of Interests that is reviewed by the Governance Committee annually. Any conflicts are declared at each Board meeting. None were declared in 2022.

## Protected Disclosures

The Protected Disclosures Act 2014 facilitates workers in raising a concern regarding wrongdoing or potential wrongdoing in the workplace by providing them with certain forms of protection from action which might be taken against them for so doing.

The Act provides for different methods of protected disclosure depending on the circumstances and protects disclosures by workers including current or former employees, contractors, consultants, trainees, agency staff and interns.

Section 22 of the Protected Disclosures Act 2014 requires the publication of an Annual Report

each year relating to the number of protected disclosures made in the preceding year and any action taken in response to such disclosures.

Oberstown confirms that, for the financial year from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022, no new reports were received in accordance with the provisions of the Protected Disclosures Act 2014. An investigation into the one report received in 2021 was concluded in 2022.

## Parliamentary questions

Oberstown works with DCEDIY to provide accurate and up-to-date information to public representatives and officials in a prompt and consistent manner. In 2022, Oberstown contributed to the answers to 43 parliamentary questions – up from 26 in 2021.

## Freedom of information (FOI) requests

Oberstown publishes details of FOI requests received, in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform’s Code of Practice for Freedom of Information for Public Bodies.

In 2022, Oberstown received five requests under the Freedom of Information Act, 2014. All five requests were granted or part-granted.

## Data protection

The year 2022 was the fourth full year of the application of GDPR and the Law Enforcement Directive (LED). In 2022, Oberstown continued to develop policies, systems and procedures, placing considerable emphasis on staff awareness and training, aimed at ensuring our compliance with the requirements of data protection legislation.

The Data Protection Officer in Oberstown:

- assists in monitoring internal compliance
- informs and advises on data protection obligations
- provides advice regarding Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs)
- acts as a contact point between data subjects and Oberstown.

A dedicated email address (DPO@oberstown.com) is in place to facilitate data protection queries and reporting. Data Protection also has a dedicated space on Oberstown Workvivo, the Campus internal communications platform. In 2022, Oberstown received and responded to 13 Data Subject Access Requests (DSAR). There were seven non-reportable breaches in 2022.

## Financial allocation

The budget of Oberstown Children Detention Campus is allocated by DCEDIY. In 2022, the Campus received a core allocation of €26.218m as follows:

Allocation item	Amount €m
Pay	17.507
Pensions	2.135
Non-pay	6.576

The Campus also incurred Capital expenditure of €1m in 2022 along with a capital carryover allocation of €0.25m, funded by DCEDIY.

Oberstown’s payroll function is provided on a shared service basis by the National Shared Services Office through DCEDIY. The accounting officer of the National Shared Services Office is responsible for the operation of controls within shared services.

The functions underpinning these responsibilities include authorising and monitoring payments for goods and services, tendering processes and compilation of monthly returns to DCEDIY.

## Internal financial control

The Board has overall responsibility for the internal financial control of Oberstown. It delegates responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of risk management and the internal control environment to the Board’s Audit and Risk Committee.

## Budget management

The Director and the Senior Leadership Team prepare an annual budget based on the operational and developmental needs of Oberstown. The annual budget is recommended for approval to the Board, via the Audit and Risk Committee. Day-to-day responsibilities for managing expenditure within budget limits is assigned to the Director. Expenditure is monitored closely with monthly reports furnished to DCEDIY, and quarterly to the Audit and Risk Committee.

## Internal audit function

Internal audit is an independent appraisal function whose role is to provide assurance to the Board, the Audit and Risk Committee, the Director and all levels of management as to the adequacy and effectiveness of the systems on governance, risk and internal controls operating with Oberstown.

The Internal Audit function is outsourced. Oberstown procured for Internal Audit Services through the

Office of Government Procurement using their established framework for accountancy and auditing services. It operates in accordance with an audit charter approved by the Board and an annual audit plan approved by the Audit and Risk Committee and the Board. In carrying out audits, the contractor complies with the Institute of Internal Audit Standards, as adapted by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform for use in government departments.

The internal auditors completed a review of internal controls in 2022. Recommendations made were accepted.

## Procurement

Oberstown operates under the Public Procurement Guidelines, which provide the direction for all procurement policy activity, ensuring that the Campus complies with and observes the objectives and key principles of competition, equality of treatment and transparency that underpin national and EU rules. Oberstown avails of centralised managed contracts established by the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) and continues to engage the OGP for advice on current and future procurement requirements. In 2022, a number of contracts were successfully procured in conjunction with OGP in line with the Oberstown procurement plan.



### Financial statements for the year 1 January to 31 December 2022 and Oberstown statement on internal controls

The Board of Management is required to keep accounts subject to Ministerial direction (s.173) in line with the requirements of the Children Act 2001.

Throughout 2022, Oberstown Children Detention Campus continued to manage its financial resources in line with governance requirements. Budgeting and ongoing forecasting enabled secure management of actual expenditure against planned and available resources.

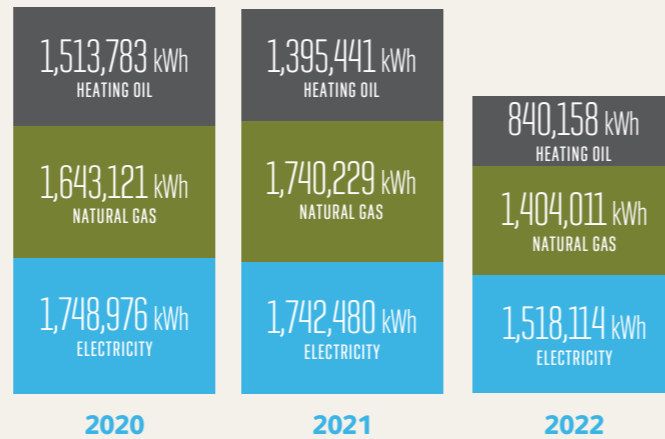
The Financial Statements of Oberstown Children Detention Campus for the year 1 January to 31 December 2022 and its Statement on Internal Controls for the same period have been completed and will be published as appendices to the Annual Report 2022 on the Oberstown website ([www.oberstown.com](http://www.oberstown.com)) following completion of the audit by the Office of the Comptroller & Auditor General (C&AG). Financial statements for the year 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021 are available as an appendix to the 2021 Annual Report on [www.oberstown.com](http://www.oberstown.com).



## ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT 2022

Oberstown reports annual energy efficiency data through the SEAI's public sector energy monitoring & reporting system. The SEAI manages the reporting process on behalf of the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC).

### Campus energy usage 2022:



### Energy savings

Oberstown consumed 1,115, 868 less kWh in 2022, a saving of 23 % on 2021.

### Environmental highlights

- Oberstown Campus Environmental Committee (Green Team) established with monthly meetings.
- Gap-to-target analysis of Oberstown's energy efficiency and decarbonisation targets undertaken with support of SEAI.
- Draft Climate Action Roadmap drawn up for Board consideration.
- Campus LED lighting upgrade project continued.
- Water treatment – Oberstown's integrated constructed wetlands (ICW) treats waste from the Campus septic tanks. Zero effluent was discharged from the ICW in 2022.

### ICT developments

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is integral to the work of care staff, agencies and partners engaged in the care of young people on Campus. This is evident in the increased use of the Oberstown Case Management System (CMS) to track and record the journey of young people through care, as well as the technologies used to manage and share data among stakeholders. The Campus is equipped to use digital and video technology to communicate with the courts, partner agencies and the families of young people; this aspect of Oberstown's ICT usage developed during the COVID-19 pandemic and continued in 2022.

### Data and information security initiative

The Department of Justice provides primary technology support and infrastructure for the services offered by Oberstown Children Detention Campus, including network services, endpoint devices, internet access and many software applications. All core systems and core data reside within the Department of Justice networks. Access to these resources is strictly controlled via a secure portal or internal private network connection.

In addition, Oberstown provides bespoke technology-based services, applications, and hardware to support other primary objectives that are not available through the set of IT services provided by the Department of Justice. These bespoke, independent services are the focus of a new Information Security Strategy for Oberstown.

Development of the new Information Security Strategy began in early 2022 with an information security review. Oberstown's information security review, prompted by cybersecurity attacks elsewhere in the public sector, focused on benchmarking existing information security practices and documentation against the international standard ISO/IEC 27001/2, 2013. The approach consisted of reviewing documentation, conducting interviews and issuing surveys to various stakeholders in Oberstown and in third party organisations, including the Department of Justice.

'The Campus is equipped to use digital and video technology to communicate with the courts, partner agencies and the families of young people.'

### Oberstown Case Management System (CMS)

The Oberstown CMS is fully operational and is a user-friendly and efficient system that provides a single source of knowledge and reporting on the status and care of young people resident in Oberstown, both past and present. The system is centred on the young person's journey through care. Each young person's records are updated and maintained on a daily basis, offering a detailed picture of individual progress across the entire CEHOP® framework.

The continued development of the CMS is therefore central to Oberstown's ICT strategy.

As with most modern software systems, the Oberstown CMS is constantly updated and improved in line with user feedback, changing requirements and new work practices. Oberstown's CMS team uses an agile system development methodology, ensuring that approved enhancements to the system are available to users at 4-6 weekly intervals throughout the year.

Changes in 2022 covered more than 52 items, delivering new features and system enhancements. The pace of introducing these changes was affected by COVID-19 restrictions and by the temporary assignment of the full development team to another Department of Justice project late in 2022.

‘EazySAFE was introduced in August 2022, giving access to a suite of safety courses through an online learning platform.’

### Health and Safety

The Health and Safety team was boosted by the addition of an experienced Health, Safety and Risk Officer in February and throughout 2022 continued to enhance and embed the Campus risk management system.

**Risk Management Framework** – the Board and Senior Leadership Team conducted regular reviews of risk management for the Campus, leading to updating of the Oberstown risk register. The Audit and Risk Committee commissioned an external review of the Oberstown Risk Management Framework, for action in 2023.

**Training** – EazySAFE was introduced in August 2022, giving access to a suite of safety courses through an online learning platform. Four mandatory courses – Manual Handling, Fire Safety Awareness, First Aid Overview and GDPR Data Protection – were rolled out to all staff, with completion rates above 85% by the end of the year.

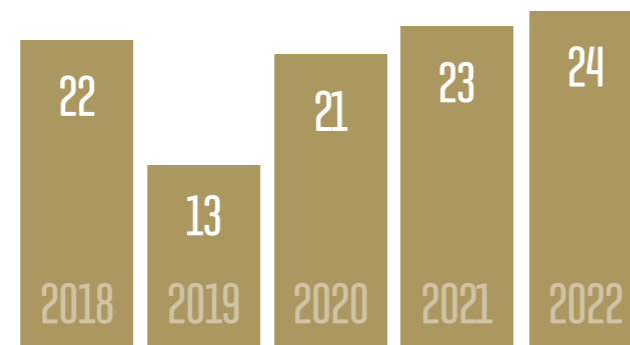
Critical Incident Management training commenced with One Team Risk Management Solutions. A three-year programme of incident management training was also established for the Campus.

**International standards** – Oberstown’s Occupational Health and Safety Management System achieved its 3-year certification under ISO 45001; the certificate is valid from June 2022 to March 2025. Compliance with ISO standards is a key driver of ongoing improvements in health and safety systems on Campus. The Campus Catering service also achieved recertification under ISO 9001:2015; the recertification is valid from May 2022 to April 2025.

Planned enhancements to Oberstown’s ISO 45001 approach were advanced through training with BSI as preparation for assessment against ISO 45003, the international standard for managing psychological health and safety at work.

**Supporting young people’s educational and activities** – the Health and Safety Team worked closely with the Facilities team, School Principal and Activities Co-

HSA reportable injuries 2018-2022



ordinator in supporting and promoting Campus projects including preparation of a horticultural area, catering and painting projects. Courses leading to certificates in Manual Handling, Fire Safety, and SafePass workplace safety are popular with young people; the Health and Safety teamwork with the Oberstown Campus School, Training and Activities teams to facilitate these practical workplace skills learning events.

**HSA matters** – all notifiable HSA incidents are reported by the Health and Safety team. There were 24 HSA reportable injuries in 2022, up from 23 in 2021.



# Working at Oberstown

2022 was a significant year for recruitment, staff training and development, and cross-Campus participation in strategic initiatives.

### Strengthening the team

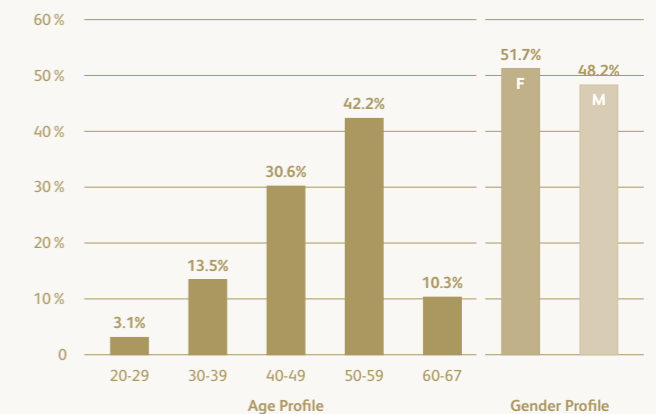
Against the backdrop of a tight employment market, Oberstown made a number of key appointments early in 2022. In February, following a competitive four-stage public appointment process, the Board appointed two new Deputy Directors to the Senior Leadership Team. The voice of Oberstown’s young people was reflected in the selection process, with final-stage candidates interviewed in person by young people, continuing the innovative approach first used in the appointment of the Director in 2021. Both new Deputy Directors focus on the management of care on Campus.

Two further additions in February also had a significant impact on Campus life. A new Chaplain joined Oberstown, following a lengthy recruitment process started in 2021. Young people had raised the absence of a Chaplain as a noticeable gap in the Campus team. With a background both in ministry and community enterprise (running a community café), the new post-holder, John Herron, quickly established himself as a highly effective communicator and facilitator in educational and pastoral activities, supporting both the school and the afterschool Activities team.

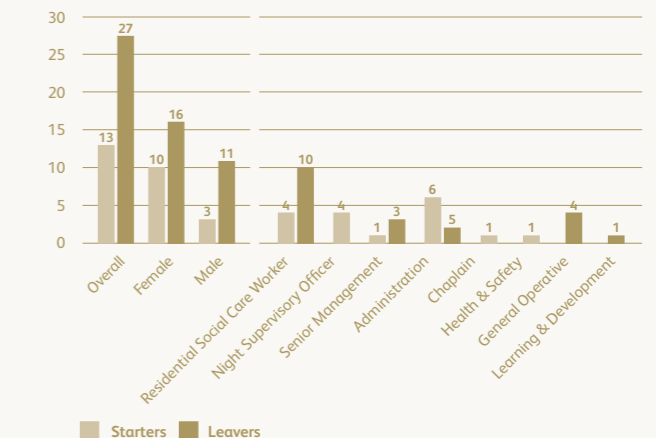
Oberstown’s new Health, Safety and Risk Officer, Micheál Craven, also brought a wealth of relevant private sector experience to the Campus, strengthening Oberstown’s expertise in the certification process for ISO standards and in key areas of health and safety training. He was also instrumental in extending the range of practical skills qualifications offered to young people.

During 2022, Oberstown ran public recruitment campaigns for: Residential Social Care Workers (RSCWs); Programme Facilitator; Activities Support Coordinator; Finance Assistant; General Operatives; Human Resources staff; and Catering staff.

Age and gender profile



Staff turnover



As rolling recruitment continued, measures taken to promote awareness of career opportunities at Oberstown included:

- A pilot programme to allow social care graduates to gain early career experience at Oberstown. The programme was open to individuals who spent their undergraduate student placement on the Oberstown campus.
- Oberstown had an exhibition stand at the Social Care Ireland Conference 2022, where residential unit managers met delegates and discussed their work in Oberstown.

### Learning and development

In 2022, the Training team introduced the EazySAFE e-learning platform for the delivery of mandatory training modules, customised for Oberstown, in Fire Safety Awareness, Manual Handling, GDPR/Data Protection and Introduction to First Aid. Staff completing the online Fire Safety Awareness and Manual Handling theory courses proceeded to take practical training sessions. While online resources were not entirely new on Campus, EazySAFE – backed by in-house expertise and support – raised the efficiency of training provision to new levels. Between its introduction in August and the end of the year, more than 85% of staff had completed the mandatory training modules in these key areas of workplace safety.

Training also played a key role in furthering Oberstown’s strategic aim of becoming a more trauma-aware service. Key initiatives included:

- Customised training in a new model of practice supervision was delivered to managers on Campus. Participants gained insights into how practice supervision attends to both the work that they do with young people, and themselves as part of the wider system and environmental contexts.
- Incident management training, developed with staff input and delivered by One Team Risk Management Solutions, setting out a common approach to assessing and managing challenging incidents on Campus.

- Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) training. In 2022, seven staff volunteers earned their certificates in CISM from South East Technological University, increasing the number of qualified Peer Support Workers to 36 across the Campus.

### Further strategic actions

Oberstown’s new Strategy commits to ‘foster a culture of leadership, learning and resilience among our staff’ with specific actions in the areas of workplace planning, performance accountability, talent management, staff engagement and EDI (equality, diversity and inclusion). In addition to the training initiatives outlined above, further steps were taken to advance strategic actions in 2022.

‘The voice of Oberstown’s young people was reflected in the selection process, with final-stage candidates interviewed in person by young people, continuing the innovative approach first used in the appointment of the Director in 2021.’

### Recognition awards 2022

The Oberstown Recognition Awards acknowledge the contribution of individuals chosen by their colleagues for their contribution on Campus and their commitment to the organisation’s values. There were eight recipients in 2022, six voted for by colleagues and two Director’s Special Recognition Awards.

#### Oberstown Recognition Award Winners 2022

Helen Bradley	Personal Assistant to the Director
Micheál Craven	Health, Safety and Risk Officer
Suzanne Fitzpatrick*	Principal, Oberstown Campus School
Martin Kellegher*	Catering Team Member
Aaron Kelly	Unit Manager
Paddy Kelly	Residential Social Care Worker
John Smith	Activities Coordinator
Laura Totton	Residential Social Care Worker

\*Director’s Special Recognition Award



Pictured with their Oberstown Recognition Awards 2022 (from top): Martin Kellegher; John Smith with Damien Hernon, Director (left); Paddy Kelly, with Rose Murray, Deputy Director.

# The Oberstown Working Well Framework

**The Working Well framework is a comprehensive integrated, interdependent and interrelated whole-system approach to addressing psychosocial wellbeing across the organisation. The framework expands the traditional concept of wellbeing, supporting staff under four pillars designed for the specific demands and opportunities presented in Oberstown.**

The four pillars are:

**Work Safe** – maintaining and improving our healthy and safe working environment.

**Work Healthy** – promoting healthy working habits, including exercise, diet and hobbies.

**Work Well** – taking a collaborative, supportive approach to mental health and wellbeing.

**Work Wise** – working inclusively and living our organisational values.

The Organisational Psychologist has overall responsibility for the framework and works in collaboration with a variety of stakeholders across the organisation on systems and initiatives under each of the pillars.

Some of the key developments from 2022 are outlined below.

## Work Safe

- Developing an Incident Management Framework and Decision-Making Model in line with a review of the incident management process. This encompassed identification of system, training and intervention priorities.
- Sourcing a new model of practice supervision for the Campus. Training in this new model commenced.
- Establishing EazySAFE as the online training platform for the Campus, providing on-demand access to a wide number of Campus mandatory training programmes.
- Maintaining ISO 45001 certification for Oberstown's Occupational Health & Safety Management System.

## Work Well

- Offering 'In-Reach' Employee Support Services. These services include the delivery of 1:1 support sessions to all new employees, creating a space for staff to reflect and access support.
- Introducing LifeSpeak, a new digital wellbeing platform providing online access to subject-matter experts on a wide range of wellbeing topics, access to expert blogs, and bespoke campaigns.
- Delivering 'Out-Reach' Employee Support Services, including a Health Screening Programme taken up by 175 staff. All participants received an individualised report with feedback highlighting areas for further follow up.
- Providing educational sessions onsite, including the popular 'Digital Resilience in An Always-on World'.

## Work Healthy

- Achieving reaccreditation to the Ibec KeepWell Mark and being shortlisted in three categories for the KeepWell Awards 2022. – Best in class: Mental Health, Best in class: Nutrition, Best in class: Physical Activity.

## Working Well 2022

An overview of Working Well Framework events and information provided on the Oberstown Workvivo internal communications platform.

Month	Activity Overview
<b>January</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workvivo posts: Resolutions versus Intentions; Childhood Trauma and Addiction; upcoming launch of LifeSpeak</li> </ul>
<b>February</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch of LifeSpeak platform.</li> <li>• LifeSpeak campaign – Building Better Habits</li> </ul>
<b>March</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LifeSpeak campaign – Food for Thought</li> <li>• Transport for Ireland Marchathon Step Challenge – four teams involved, with Oberstown's March Hares topping the national leaderboard</li> <li>• Workvivo posts: International Women's Day</li> <li>• Book Swap set up in Trinity House</li> </ul>
<b>April</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LifeSpeak campaign – Thriving in a Digital World</li> <li>• Wellbeing workshop – first onsite in two years 'Thriving in a Digital World', Financial Wellness, How to eat to 100, Mindfulness</li> <li>• Workvivo posts: National Workplace Wellbeing Day – 14 no -cost initiatives made available to staff</li> <li>• Ibec WellMark – Oberstown again listed in Top 100 Companies for Leading in Wellbeing</li> </ul>
<b>May</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LifeSpeak Campaign – Mental Health</li> <li>• Onsite workshop – 'Mental Health and Intoxicants' delivered by Mental Health Ireland</li> <li>• Workvivo survey to gauge interest in health screening</li> <li>• Peer Support Workers graduation</li> </ul>
<b>June</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LifeSpeak Campaign – Keep Going</li> <li>• Menopause webinar and managing menopause after cancer</li> <li>• Workvivo posts: Psychological Society of Ireland; Pride and Mental Health</li> <li>• Bike workshop and demonstration onsite - tips on bicycle maintenance</li> </ul>
<b>July</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LifeSpeak campaign – Personal Growth</li> <li>• Workvivo posts: How Therapy Helps with Lori Gottlieb; WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) programme</li> <li>• Shortlisted in Ibec KeepWell Awards 2022 - Best in Class: Physical Activity, Nutrition and Mental Health</li> </ul>
<b>August</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LifeSpeak campaign – Rest &amp; Restore: Shiftwork and sleep</li> </ul>
<b>September</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LifeSpeak campaign – Head and Heart</li> <li>• Workvivo posts: 'Her Heart Matters: Let's Talk About the Menopause' webinar</li> <li>• Set up menopause group</li> <li>• Health screening onsite</li> <li>• Ibec WellMark Awards 2022 – Oberstown shortlisted in three categories</li> </ul>
<b>October</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LifeSpeak campaign – Mental Health</li> <li>• Walktober Step Challenge – seven teams with two teams finishing in the national top ten and Oberstown Campus topping the national organisational leaderboard</li> <li>• Employee Assistance Programme provider on site</li> </ul>
<b>November</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LifeSpeak campaign – Addiction &amp; Recovery</li> <li>• Workvivo posts: International Men's Day; Stop Smoking Information</li> </ul>
<b>December</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LifeSpeak campaign – Gratitude</li> <li>• Thank you gift – box of chocolates for each members of staff.</li> </ul>

‘Two of the Oberstown teams finished in the top 10 in a competition involving more than 1300 teams.’



**Left:** Oberstown’s March Hares team finished top of the national leaderboard in Marchathon 2022, Transport for Ireland’s step challenge competition. Team members pictured with their prizes (l to r): Paul McGuinness, Sinead O’Herlihy, Denise Coffey, Tina Ahern. Missing from photo: Stephanie Loughman.



Making the shortlists was a major achievement, as the awards recognise exceptional success in implementing corporate wellbeing strategies. Oberstown was the only public sector organisation to feature at the awards.

- Finishing top of the organisational leaderboard in Transport for Ireland’s Walktober Step Challenge 2022. Seven teams entered from the Campus, logging an average of 190,766 steps. Two of the Oberstown teams finished in the top 10 in a competition involving more than 1300 teams. Earlier in the year, in TFI Marchathon 2022, an Oberstown team – the March Hares – won the overall competition.

### Work Wise

- Acknowledging the contribution of team members who go above and beyond in living the organisational values. Staff members nominate and vote for their colleagues through the Oberstown Employee Recognition Awards, which took place for the third year in 2022.



**Right:** Seven new Peer Support Workers received their certificates in Critical Incident Stress Management from South East Technological University (SETU) at a special ceremony held at Oberstown in May 2022. The new graduates meant that the Campus had 36 qualified PSWs in 2022. Pictured (l to r): Damien Hernon, Oberstown Director; Anne Meaney, Head of Extended Campus, SETU; graduates Darren Neville; Sharon Tuite; Brian Hogan, Oberstown Deputy Director; Lena McEntee; Lorraine Flanagan; Cara Driscoll, Oberstown Organisational Psychologist. Graduates missing from photo: Craig Mulligan, Keith Millar.



# Communications and engagement

**Oberstown's internal and external communications support the strategic plan, raising awareness of the organisation's purpose, vision and values. During 2022, significant developments included high profile public exhibitions of young people's artworks and more effective use of internal channels. Building communities was a major theme.**

## Stakeholder engagement

Oberstown's drive to develop and strengthen engagement and partnerships with external stakeholders across the youth justice system and in civil society continued in 2022. Notable initiatives included:

**Our Strategy 2022-2026** – engaging internal and external stakeholders in consultations on the development and launch of the new Oberstown Strategy 2022-2026 was a key focus in 2022. The Director and Senior Leadership Team led a series of town hall meetings to discuss the draft strategy during the year, giving staff of all grades further opportunities to provide input to the direction of the Campus in the years ahead. Young people gave their input through focus groups coordinated by the Advocacy Officer and the Communications Officer. This included agreeing visual concepts for a young people's version of the strategy document, which the young people developed, working with art teachers on the Activities team.

**Oberstown stakeholder engagement session, March 2022** – this annual event was held a little earlier in the year than usual to allow for consultation on the draft strategy. Conducted via Zoom for an invited audience of stakeholders, the event featured a formal presentation by the Chairperson and Director outlining key developments at the Campus over the past year, followed by facilitated group discussions of Oberstown's proposed new strategy. Feedback from the audience was positive and included

some helpful suggestions and perspectives on strategy implementation.

More than 45 people attended the event, including representatives from the following external stakeholder organisations: ACTS; An Garda Síochána; Association for Criminal Justice Research and Development (ACJRD); CES (The Centre for Effective Services); Childhood Development Initiative (CDI); Crinan Youth Project; DCEDIY; Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board; EPIC; Extern; GSOC; Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA); Irish Penal Reform Trust (IPRT); Irish Prison Service (Wheatfield Prison); the Judiciary; Le Chéile; Munster Technological University; Oberstown Board; Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO); Solas Project; South Dublin County Council; The Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice; The Probation Service; Travellers in Prison Initiative; Tusla; Young Persons' Probation Service Dublin; Youth Advocate Programmes Ireland (YAP).



**Strategy launch:** Minister Roderic O'Gorman (centre) with Damien Hennon, Oberstown Director, and Professor Ursula Kilkelly, Oberstown Chairperson.

## Initiatives and events 2022

Oberstown was active throughout 2022 in a range of initiatives, including:

**Effective Advocacy for Young People** – the Oberstown Chairperson, Director, and Advocacy Officer presented at a virtual training event for solicitors hosted in conjunction with the Law Society of Ireland and chaired by Judge John O'Connor. The webinar covered similar ground to a 2021 Bar of Ireland event for barristers – helping young people gain a better understanding of the legal system and improved representation in court. The Oberstown perspective gave participants an insight into the effects of court appearances on young people and on the rhythm of Campus life. This was the first collaboration between Oberstown and the Law Society of Ireland, facilitated by Board member Emer Woodfull. Feedback from the organisers and more than 100 attendees was very positive and the Oberstown presentations were added to the Law Society Skillnet's online learning resources as an on-demand course, further extending the reach to a wider audience.

**Way 2 Work launch event** – in September, the Director, Deputy Director Michelle Griffin and Board member Donal McCormack attended a Way2Work and Tusla information and networking event held in Shannon. The event marked the start of Oberstown's formal partnership with Way 2 Work (see page 35).

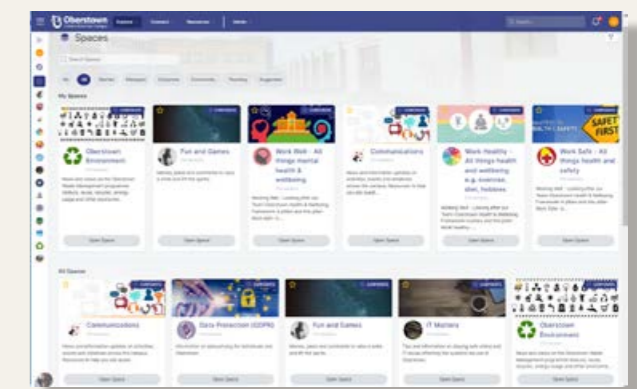
**Sharing the Oberstown experience** – the Director presented the Oberstown perspective on youth justice matters following requests from a range of stakeholder groups. Events included the Garda, Train the Trainer Garda Youth and Adult Case Management Training Programme in the Garda College at Templemore, Tipperary, and presentations to youth justice and children's rights students at University College Cork and Dunbooyne College of Further Education.

**Youth Justice Strategy** – the Director represented Oberstown at the scheduled meetings of the Youth Justice Governance & Strategy Group and at the Youth Justice Oversight Group. These groups, established under the Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027, met a total of six times in 2022.

**International dialogue** – Oberstown's Board and Senior Leadership Team had a series of productive engagements with international children's rights and youth justice organisations. Notable developments included:

- New learning and information exchange relationships established with the Juvenile Detention Centre in Sonoma County, California.
- A visit to Oberstown in July from the Netherlands Helsinki Committee Giving Back Project, which works with young people to use their past experience of detention to shape and influence the justice sector.

- Oberstown hosted visits from delegates of Scottish secure care facility St Mary's Kenmure and from the Children and Young People's Centre for Justice research group, based at the University of Strathclyde.
- The Director and Deputy Director, Brian Hogan, represented Oberstown at the North-South Youth Justice Advisory Group meetings.
- Deputy Director Brian Hogan attended the Restorative Justice Group in the Northern Ireland Office Brussels.
- Senior leaders from the Northern Ireland Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre visited Oberstown in December.



## OBERSTOWN WORKVIVO

Oberstown Workvivo, the Campus internal communications platform, is available to all staff members via their personal account on laptop/PC and mobile phone through a dedicated app – a key benefit for people who want to stay connected while away from the Campus either working from home or due to their shift pattern. Use of Oberstown Workvivo is voluntary, and more than 80% of staff members have an active profile.

As well as staff using the platform to update their colleagues about activities, initiatives and resources across the Campus, Oberstown Workvivo has 'Spaces' on the platform, run by specialist groups and content experts in areas such as Finance, GDPR, IT Matters, the Oberstown Working Well Framework and the Oberstown Environment Green Team.

**Art jigsaw** – A creative collaboration between Oberstown, Mental Health Ireland and the HSE’s Linn Dara Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services produced a distinctive artwork for display at an IIMHL (International Initiative for Mental Health Leadership) conference held in Dublin in October 2022. Seven of the pieces in the nine-piece jigsaw show perspectives on mental health issues from young people in Oberstown and their peers who are engaging with the services of Linn Dara and Mental Health Ireland. The final two pieces were completed by visitors to the exhibition, guided by Oberstown Activities art teacher Sean O’Dwyer.



### Public and media engagement

Oberstown attracted some notable positive media reports in 2022, including coverage of the exhibition of young people’s work at IMMA in April-May 2022 (see pages 29-32). Media items included an *Irishtimes.com* video report from the launch event and an interview with the Director on Dublin City FM’s ‘Artbeat’ programme. IMMA live streamed the exhibition launch, featuring speeches by Roderic O’Gorman, Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Oberstown Director Damien Hernon, Yvonne McKenna, CEO of Gaisce – The President’s Award, and Annie Fletcher, Director of IMMA.

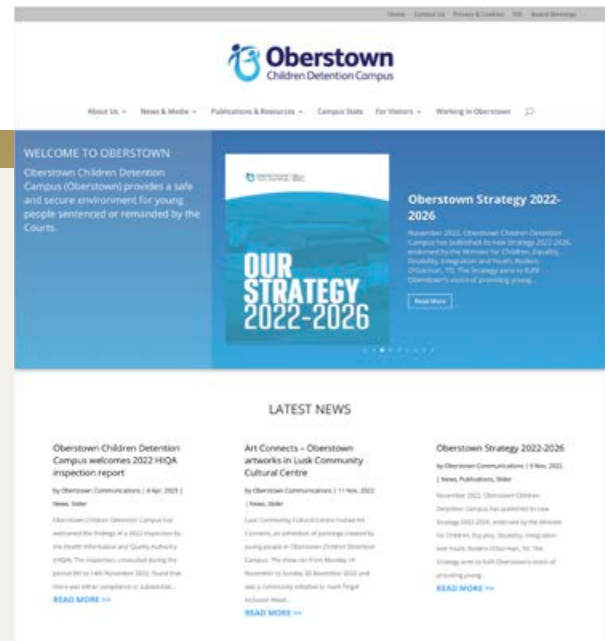
In June, the *Irish Examiner* ran an opinion piece by Oberstown Chairperson Professor Ursula Kilkelly and former Director Pat Bergin under the headline ‘Oberstown could be a world-leading example of how to treat young people in detention’. The article highlighted the approach of helping young people to make choices about their time in detention.

The publication in July of Oberstown’s Annual Report for 2021 attracted coverage across national print, radio and online media including *Independent.ie* and *Irish Examiner*. The accompanying press release featured comments from Minister Roderic O’Gorman along with the Oberstown Director and Chairperson. Media coverage highlighted the notable achievements of young people in Oberstown, including earning qualifications that improve their employment prospects and the implementation of the Children’s Rights Policy Framework.

In August, the *Irish Examiner* published a feature article based on a visit to Campus and research by Noel Baker, Social Affairs Correspondent. The wide-ranging article gave a broad overview of Oberstown’s approach, and included one comment by a young person in its headline: How



**Pictured at IMMA:** (left to right) Damien Hernon, Oberstown Director; Annie Fletcher, Director of IMMA; Minister Roderic O’Gorman; Yvonne McKenna, CEO of Gaisce – The President’s Award.



### OBERSTOWN WEBSITE

Oberstown website – [www.oberstown.com](http://www.oberstown.com) was updated regularly during 2022 with news, publications and statistics, including:

- Monthly updates – statistics on Campus occupancy, behaviour management performance and Board of Management bulletins.
- Blogs and news items covering topics including the exhibitions of young people’s art at IMMA and the Lusk Community Cultural Centre, launch of the Oberstown Strategy 2022-2026 and details of the annual HIQA inspection.
- Publications and documents published during 2022 included the 2021 Annual Report and 2021 Financial Statements, and the Oberstown Strategy 2022-2026.
- Recruitment campaigns promoted through the website are among the most popular items (see pages 49-51)

Oberstown is reshaping youth detention – ‘It’s a good little place; it’s nothing like prison. There’s good people here’

In March, the Association for Criminal Justice Research and Development (ACJRD) hosted an online seminar ‘Effecting Change: Learning from the experience of Oberstown’. Oberstown Chairperson Professor Ursula Kilkelly and former Director, Pat Bergin, presented at the seminar moderated by Dr Mary Rogan, Associate Professor of Law at Trinity College Dublin. The seminar covered the journey behind establishing Oberstown as a modern child-centred detention facility which enabled the ending of imprisonment of children in Ireland in line with national policy. The aim of this event was to present the details of the change achieved in Oberstown and to highlight, for discussion by an international audience, how the lessons to be learned could effect change elsewhere in the criminal justice system. The content of the seminar was drawn from *Advancing Children’s Rights in Detention*, a book co-authored by Professor Kilkelly and Pat Bergin (see page 60).

Oberstown’s external press agency provided a media office service throughout the year. Oberstown has a policy of not commenting on individual cases but takes the opportunity of media enquiries to clarify issues and raise awareness of the work done on Campus. The Oberstown website includes a Media Toolkit section and provides statistics on Campus performance. Press enquiries contribute to ongoing assessments of the information published on [www.oberstown.com](http://www.oberstown.com).



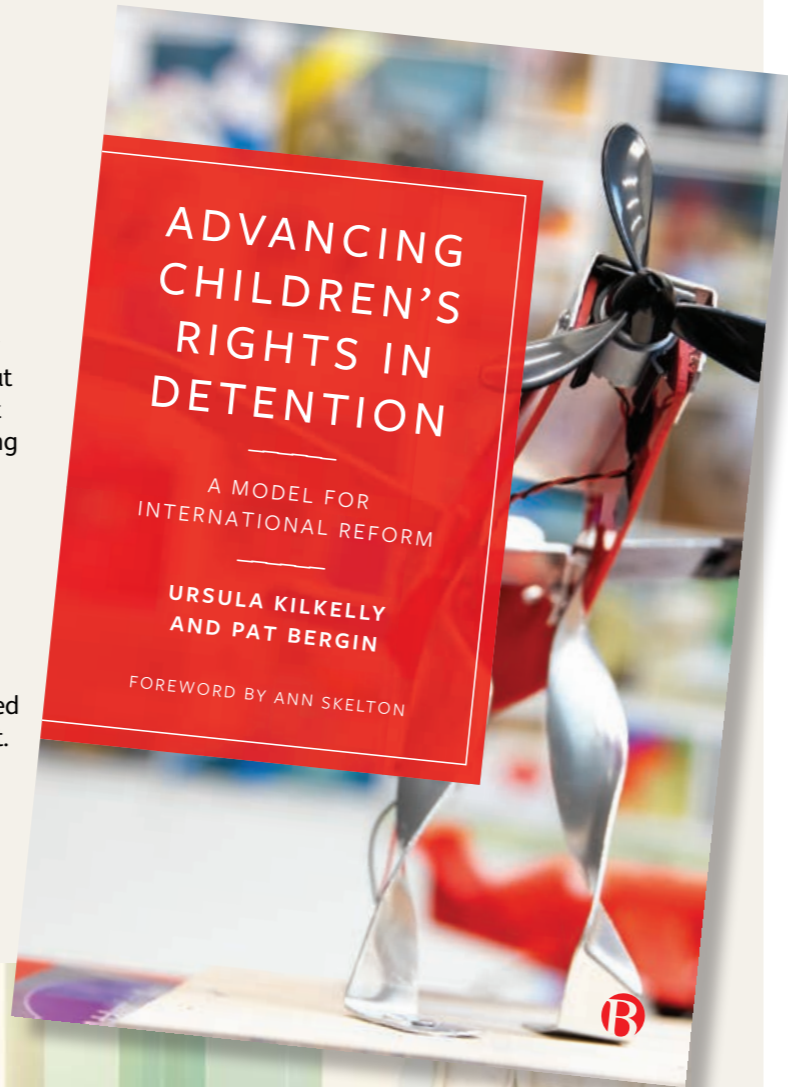
**Fingal Inclusion Week 2022:** In November, Lusk Community Cultural Centre hosted ‘Art Connects’, an exhibition of artworks by young people detained at Oberstown. The exhibition took place during Fingal County Council’s Inclusion Week, and was launched by Joe O’Brien, TD for Dublin Fingal and Minister of State for Community Development, Integration & Charities. Oberstown Board member Brian Arnold, Chairman of Lusk Community Council, was instrumental in making this key community initiative possible.

## OBERSTOWN - AN INTERNATIONAL CASE STUDY IN CHILD-CENTRED, RIGHTS-BASED DETENTION

In July, Judge John O'Connor spoke at the official launch of *Advancing Children's Rights in Detention – A Model for International Reform*, a book co-authored by Oberstown Chairperson Professor Ursula Kilkelly and Pat Bergin, former Oberstown Director. The authors set out a model for rights-based reform of child detention, using the example of Oberstown to illustrate how Ireland set about transforming law, policy and practice in this key area of youth justice and discussing the challenges, successes and lessons learned in the change process.

The event took place in the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland in Kildare Street, Dublin, and attracted an audience of leading youth justice and children's rights advocates and researchers and included Oberstown Board members and staff, past and present.

Pictured below at the launch event in Dublin (left to right): Judge John O'Connor, Professor Ursula Kilkelly, Oberstown Chairperson, and Pat Bergin, former Oberstown Director.



### Social media

Oberstown continued to develop its use of Twitter (@Oberstown1) and LinkedIn to engage with external stakeholders, providing updates on developments on Campus and supporting recruitment campaigns. In November 2022, Oberstown opened an Instagram account, @oberstowncampus, during the Art Connects exhibition of young people's work.

### Engaging with the local community

Oberstown is committed to being a good neighbour and to maintaining strong relationships with its local community. The Catering team provided meals for Meals on Wheels for local senior citizens in 2022. In December, Oberstown's annual Seniors' Christmas Dinner at the Man O' War GAA club took place for the first time since 2019, with food and service provided by the Oberstown Catering and Household teams and members of the Senior Leadership Team.

**Ministerial visit** – James Browne TD, Minister of State at the Department of Justice, visited the Campus in March 2022. He was given a tour of the Campus by the Director, accompanied by Tony O'Donovan of the DCEDIY and members of the Senior Leadership Team, meeting young people, staff and the School Principal. Following the tour, the Oberstown team discussed matters of youth justice with the Minister. Pictured, in a residential unit kitchen, (left to right): Damien Hennon, Oberstown Director; Minister James Browne, TD; and Aaron Kelly, Unit Manager.



**Above** – On 1 December 2022, Oberstown provided a Christmas dinner for the Man O' War Senior Citizens' Group. This traditional event resumed in 2022 following cancellations in the previous two years due to COVID-19.



# Appendices

## Appendix 1

Implementation Review of Oberstown Strategic Plan 2022-2026

## Appendix 2

Board of Management Meeting attendance  
January - December 2022

Governance Committee attendance  
January - December 2022

Audit and Risk Committee attendance  
January - December 2022

Strategy Committee attendance  
January - December 2022

Sustainability Committee attendance  
January - December 2022

Young People Committee attendance  
January - December 2022

People & Culture Committee attendance  
January - December 2022

## Appendix 3

Board Fees Paid in respect of  
January - December 2022

Board members exempt from payment  
under OPOS (one person one salary)

# Appendix 1

## Implementation Review of Oberstown Strategic Plan 2022-2026

### Goal 1

We will provide the best possible child-centred, individualised, rights-based care and education to young people.

Action	Progress in 2022
1. Enhance and mainstream the participation and influence of young people in decision-making at all levels.	External review of the participation strategy commenced by the Board in Q4 with input from the Board, Deputy Directors, Advocacy Officer and young people. Regular schedule of minuted Campus Council Meetings throughout 2022. Updated and standardised Unit Charters operational and prominently displayed within Units. Weekly young people's Unit meetings established using standard agenda templates and monitored monthly.
2. Develop the CEHOP® model of care through the further integration of education and the enhancement of multi-disciplinary and trauma-informed approaches that ensure the complex and diverse needs of young people are met.	Evaluation of ACTS and FCAMHS support arrangements under way, informed by ongoing assessment of young people's needs. New on-site FCAMHS office established and new Psychiatric Nurse and Social Worker on the team. Four Oberstown SLT members completed Trauma Informed Practice in Health and Social Care module in DCU in Q4. Supervision training for managers commenced using a model suitable for trauma-informed and responsive care. Enhanced collaboration with Oberstown Campus School evident in delivery of a summer education programme by Activities team, teachers and RSCWs.
3. Advance the effectiveness of Oberstown placement planning, embedding the participation of young people and their families in decision-making, leading to improved outcomes.	Oberstown CMS upgraded to allow recording of young people's participation in placement planning meetings (PPMs). Monthly communication structure established between Deputy Director and Principal of Oberstown Campus School. All PPMs attended by Assistant School Principal.
4. Take all necessary measures, in partnership with key agencies, to ensure young people leaving Oberstown have access to the supports and services that meet their needs.	Stakeholder engagement plan approved with regular contact maintained. Partnership with Way 2 Work established leading to referrals. One young person completed a one-week training course and another young person secured employment following release. New partnerships established with Clipper Logistics for training and work experience, and with Candle Community Trust to provide referral pathways for education and in-reach support.
5. Embed the Children's Rights Policy Framework into practice in order to mainstream a consistent, rights-based approach to the care of young people.	Audit of the implementation of the CRPF completed and actions undertaken, including redesigned and updated mandatory training involving cross-functional teams. CRPF awareness raised through embedding in processes and procedures across Campus. For example, young people's programmes coordinated through Oberstown staff, PPMs and Oberstown Campus School.

## Goal 2

We will foster a culture of leadership, learning and resilience among our staff.

Action	Progress in 2022
1. <b>Adopt a strategic, evidence-based approach to workforce planning designed to ensure that Oberstown has the right people with the right blend of skills and experience in place to build a sustainable workforce to meet the evolving needs of young people and the organisation.</b>	Project ongoing scoping out priority roles to support the delivery of the service within each function. Senior Leadership Team developed a programme for delivery of KPIs, including a high-level review of the workforce and key roles required for development. Work under way to partner with key 3rd level institutes to support a graduate programme in 2023.
2. <b>Develop and embed a system of performance accountability at individual, team and organisational level through the design and roll-out of a performance achievement framework with an emphasis on continuous feedback, formal supervision, recognition, and coaching.</b>	Organisational capability review and design of a Performance Management system commissioned by the Board. External Learning & Development Consultant commenced design of mentoring programme for launch Q1-Q2 2023.
3. <b>Implement a Talent Management strategy that creates a culture of learning and development and sets out a clear vision for recruitment and succession planning.</b>	Steps taken to design a Talent Development Programme to incorporate the skills, knowledge and experience required at an individual, team and managerial level.
4. <b>Continue to enhance staff engagement, wellness and well-being in order to promote a positive organisational culture and enhance staff resilience, building on existing processes and supports.</b>	Review of blended working arrangements undertaken and discussion paper produced. Two Staff Engagement Groups established – Safety & Safety Intervention, and Systems & Processes. Incident Management training commissioned and piloted. Supervision training commenced. Reaccreditation to Ibec KeepWell Mark secured for Oberstown Working Well framework; Campus shortlisted for three Ibec KeepWell awards. 2023 Working Well action plan agreed. ISO 45003 – Psychological Health in the Workplace training completed; dates for audit 2023 booked.
5. <b>Implement an equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) strategy to foster a culture of respect and dignity at work and in the care we provide to young people.</b>	EDI strategy scoped in collaboration with Ibec and submitted to the Board People and Culture Committee. Reviewed a Dignity at Work programme with the Irish Centre for Diversity with a view to rollout in 2023.

## Goal 3

We will partner with families, communities, agencies and services to deliver the best possible outcomes for our young people.

Action	Progress in 2022
1. <b>Formalise engagement with the families of young people, promoting good communication and participation in decision-making to ensure the needs of young people are met in Oberstown and when they leave.</b>	Updated information handbook for Young People and Parents published. Parents consulted about STEPS+ careers platform. Consultation devised to gather parental input on PPM process, planned for early 2023. Parental attendance at PPMs recorded in minutes - update to enable recording on Oberstown CMS progressed.
2. <b>Leverage Oberstown's stakeholder network to promote a wider understanding of the rights of young people in conflict with the law and how their needs are met.</b>	Oberstown Director attended strategic and operational meetings on the Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027. Oberstown's stakeholder network and engagement extended. Oberstown featured in appropriate public events, eg the Activities Coordinator participated in a panel discussion at IMMA on the value of the arts in young people's lives.  Oberstown hosted a visit from the Netherlands-based Helsinki Committee and Giving Back Project, which works with young people to use their experience of detention to shape and influence the justice sector. Discussions ongoing on how Oberstown could implement a similar programme.
3. <b>Contribute actively to national and international debate about the importance of rights-based approaches to the care and education of young people in detention.</b>	Oberstown Director attended strategic and operational meetings on the Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027. New learning and information exchange relationships established with: Juvenile Detention Centre in Sonoma County California; Netherlands-based Helsinki Committee with a view to participating in EU wide project; two facilities in Scotland – St. Mary's Kenmure and Kibble; Children & Young People's Centre for Justice in the University of Strathclyde. Oberstown Director presented to the Garda, Train the Trainer Garda Youth and Adult Case Management Training Programme in the Garda College at Templemore. Oberstown Director and Deputy Director attended the North/South Justice Group meeting in Belfast. Deputy Director attended Restorative Justice Group in Northern Ireland Office Brussels. Northern Ireland Woodlands Detention Centre Senior Leadership Team visited Oberstown.
4. <b>Consolidate Oberstown's role as a good neighbour and positive contributor to the community, exploring opportunities for the advancement of our mutual interests.</b>	Oberstown initiated an agreement with the neighbouring Man O' War GAA Club to allow its members to use the Oberstown Electric Vehicle Charging Station located near the entrance to the staff car park. Oberstown staff hosted a Christmas dinner in the GAA club for the local Man O' War Senior Citizens' Group. Oberstown young people and staff prepared care packages for local senior citizens. Oberstown hosted a fundraising coffee morning for local community organisations. Collaboration with the Lusk Community Council included the Art Connects exhibition during Fingal Inclusion Week, November 2022.
5. <b>Work with key external partners and agencies to ensure the timely delivery of key actions under the Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027, especially with regard to the care of young people who are transitioning from Oberstown.</b>	Oberstown Director engaged with Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027 Working Group to identify opportunities for participation at the operations level.

## Goal 4

We will ensure that our governance, practices and decision making, at all levels, are transparent, data-driven and evidence based.

Action	Progress in 2022
1. <b>Promote the highest level of compliance with the standards of good governance at Board level and throughout the organisation.</b>	Project ongoing scoping out priority roles to support the delivery of the service within each function. Senior Leadership Team developed a programme for delivery of KPIs, including a high-level review of the workforce and key roles required for development.
2. <b>Develop a comprehensive and robust system of reporting on organisational performance and strategy delivery, that enhances management and Board level capability.</b>	Work ongoing to improve the quality of executive reporting to the Board. New executive slot introduced at Board. Performance Committee established to oversee performance of Director.
3. <b>Develop a data and evidence-driven approach to decision-making, with enhanced systems for recording, approval and evaluation.</b>	Review of the Oberstown CMS was undertaken by the IT project lead and relevant stakeholders (Unit managers, RSCWs, activities, etc.). Results analysed and discussed with the CMS developers. PBIs have been developed and included in the schedule for development.
4. <b>Establish a research advisory group to ensure that the care of young people in Oberstown is developed in line with the latest evidence and best practice.</b>	Template for the roles, responsibilities and potential membership of the research advisory group devised. Steps taken to explore the optimal model for research advisory.
5. <b>Continue to enhance public confidence in the quality of care provided to young people in Oberstown by promoting organisational transparency in line with our vision and values.</b>	Review of the Oberstown website conducted in Q4 2022 with a view to upgrading the website in 2023. Communications and engagement activities continued in support of the Oberstown strategy. Review of public affairs/public relations arrangements ongoing.

## Goal 5

We will promote the sustainable development of the Oberstown Campus and the organisation.

Action	Progress in 2022
1. <b>Map the development of Oberstown's services against the needs of young people and the demand for places to inform future decisions around funding, capacity and occupancy of the Campus.</b>	Capital Programme 2022-2026 developed and presented to the Board. Discussions taking place as to how best to scope needs of young people and map against service development opportunities.
2. <b>Develop a comprehensive plan to promote the sustainable development of Oberstown's physical Campus.</b>	Sustainability Committee established by the Board. Capital programme 2022-2026 developed. Sustainability included as a key priority for all renovation and capital projects.
3. <b>Implement projects designed to enhance environmental and energy sustainability on Campus in line with the Government's Climate Action Plan.</b>	Cross-campus environmental working group/Green Team established with monthly meetings. Gap-to-target analysis of Oberstown's 2030 energy efficiency and decarbonisation targets undertaken by the campus with support from SEAI. Climate Action Roadmap planned for consideration by Sustainability Committee. Regular communications established on Oberstown Workvivo to raise awareness and share ideas and embed environmental and sustainability thinking into daily working practices.
4. <b>Promote enhanced safety and security of all persons on the Campus by embedding a system of annual audits, inspections and reviews.</b>	Gap analysis, audits and inspections conducted on a regular basis against the backdrop of maintaining ISO 45001 certification. New format of internal accountability established through weekly Operational Team Meeting.
5. <b>Adopt a 10-year plan for the renewal of internal spaces on Campus, ensuring that the fabric of our buildings is maintained to the highest standards.</b>	Stakeholder consultation on preventative works completed as part of a new facilities management tender. Findings fed into tender specification. FM tender completed and evaluation of tenders submitted by three companies performed by Oberstown with support from an external consultant.

# Appendix 2

**Table 1**  
**Board of Management Meeting attendance**  
January – December 2022

Name	Jan 13	Feb 18	Mar 25	Apr 24	May 27	Jun 23	Jul 21	Sep 14	Oct 21	Nov 18	Dec 15	Total Attended
Ursula Kilkelly	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	11
Brian Arnold	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	11
Bernadette Costello	•	•	◦	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	11
Elizabeth Davey <sup>1</sup>								◦	•	•	◦	4
Jennifer Gargan	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	◦	10
Donal McCormack	•	•	•	•	◦		•	•			•	8
John McDaid	•	•		•	•	•		•			•	7
Laoise Manners	•	•	•	•		•	•		•	•	•	9
Craig Mulligan	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	10
Liz O'Neill <sup>2</sup>								•	•	•	•	4
Martin Quigley <sup>3</sup>								•	•		•	3
Dymphna Sherry <sup>4</sup>								•	•	•	•	4
Eamon Clavin <sup>5</sup>	•	•		•	•	•						5
Elizabeth Howard <sup>6</sup>	•	•	•		•	•						5
Denis O'Sullivan <sup>7</sup>	•	•	•	•	•	◦	•		•	•		9
Emer Woodfull <sup>8</sup>	•		•	•	•							4

**Notes**

1. Elizabeth Davey's term commenced 18 July 2022.
2. Liz O'Neill's term commenced 20 July 2022.
3. Martin Quigley's term commenced 18 July 2022.
4. Dymphna Sherry's term commenced 18 July 2022.
5. Eamon Clavin's term ended 23 June 2022.
6. Elizabeth Howard's term ended 30 June 2022.
7. Denis O'Sullivan's term ended 25 November 2022.
8. Emer Woodfull's term ended 30 June 2022.

**Legend:**

- Attended
- Attended online

**Table 2**  
**Governance Committee attendance**  
January – December 2022

Name	Jan 17	Mar 3	May 4	Oct 10
Ursula Kilkelly (Chair)	•	•	•	•
Eamon Clavin	•	•	•	
Jennifer Gargan	•	•	•	•
Eamon Clavin <sup>1</sup>				
Martin Quigley <sup>2</sup>				•

**Notes**

1. Eamon Clavin's term ended 23 June 2022.
2. Martin Quigley's term commenced in October 2022.

**Table 3**  
**Audit and Risk Committee attendance**  
January – December 2022

Name	Mar 4	Mar 16	May 11	Jun 24	Sept 2	Nov 7	Dec 15
Bernadette Costello (Chair)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
John McDaid	•	•	•	•	•		•
Ursula Kilkelly	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Jennifer Gargan <sup>1</sup>						•	•

**Notes**

1. Jennifer Gargan's term commenced 7 November 2022.

**Table 4**  
**Strategy Committee attendance**  
January – December 2022

Name	Jan 12	Feb 4	Mar 9	Apr 12	May 11	Sept 6
John McDaid (Chair)	•	•	•	•	•	•
Eamon Clavin <sup>1</sup>	•	•	•	•	•	
Jennifer Gargan	•	•	•	•	•	•
Ursula Kilkelly	•	•	•	•	•	
Laoise Manners	•	•	•	•		
Denis O'Sullivan	•	•	•		•	•

**Notes**

1. Eamon Clavin's term ended 23 June 2022.

**Table 5**  
**Sustainability Committee attendance**  
January – December 2022

Name	Oct 6	Dec 7
Brian Arnold (Chair)	•	•
Laoise Manners	•	•
Dymphna Sherry	•	•

**Table 6**  
**Young People Committee attendance**  
January – December 2022

Name	Apr 25	Jun 23	Sept 14	Nov 18
Jennifer Gargan (Chair)	•	•	•	•
Ursula Kilkelly	•	•	•	•
Liz O'Neill <sup>1</sup>				•
Emer Woodfull <sup>2</sup>	•			

**Notes**

1. Liz O'Neill joined the committee in October 2022.
2. Emer Woodfull's term ended on 30 June 2022.

**Table 7**  
**People & Culture Committee attendance**  
January – December 2022

Name	Jan 6	Apr 12	Oct 19	Dec 7
Ursula Kilkelly (Chair)	•	•	•	•
Craig Mulligan	•	•	•	•
Emer Woodfull <sup>1</sup>	•	•		
Donal McCormack <sup>2</sup>				•

**Notes**

1. Emer Woodfull's term ended on 30 June 2022.
2. Donal McCormack joined the committee in October 2022.

# Appendix 3

**Table 1**  
**Board Fees Paid in respect of**  
**January – December 2022**

Name	Amount €
Brian Arnold	5,985.00
Bernadette Costello	5,985.00
Elizabeth Davey	2,738.00
Jennifer Gargan	5,985.00
Elizabeth Howard	2,992.00
Dymphna Sherry	2,738.00
Emer Woodfull	2,992.00

**Table 2**  
**Board members exempt from**  
**payment under OPOS\***

Ursula Kilkelly
Eamon Clavin
Donal McCormack
John McDaid
Laoise Manners
Craig Mulligan
Liz O'Neill
Denis O'Sullivan
Martin Quigley

**Notes**

- \* One person one salary

The Oberstown  
website,  
[www.oberstown.com](http://www.oberstown.com),  
provides extensive  
information on the  
Campus and its work  
with young people,  
including:

- Oberstown's mission, Board and management
- Campus statistics
- Publications and resources
- Information for visitors
- Careers information
- News and media resources

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Design: Simon Farrell Design Studio. Photography: Keith Atkins, Jenny Barker, Robbie Reynolds

[WWW.OBERSTOWN.COM](http://WWW.OBERSTOWN.COM)

