

**For information  
on 23 May 2017**

**Legislative Council House Committee  
Subcommittee on Children's Rights**

**Correctional Home Services**

**Purpose**

This paper briefs Members on correctional home services.

**Background**

2. Since 2007, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) has co-located remand home, place of refuge, approved institution (probation home) and reformatory school in a residential training complex, namely the Tuen Mun Children and Juvenile Home (the Home), which aims at creating synergy among various services, enabling shared use of the facilities by different categories of residents to achieve economies of scale and providing a safe and healthy living environment for them.

**Service Objectives**

3. The Home renders short-term/transitional care, protection and/or supervision to children and juveniles encountering difficulties in their lives, and fulfils its statutory duties by way of social work intervention, providing residential training services for children and juveniles with behavioural adjustment problems as well as children and young offenders. Having regard

to the needs of individual residents, the SWD offers personalised training programmes with a view to improving family relationships and facilitating ongoing contact and interaction with the community. This would enable the residents to reintegrate into the community upon discharge as soon as possible and lead a positive life with confidence and discipline.

### **Statutory Functions**

4. All services provided by the Home must be executed in accordance with statutory requirements or court directives, as follows:

	<b>Function</b>	<b>Ordinance</b>	<b>Target Group</b>
(i)	Remand Home: to detain children and young persons, convicted or not convicted, who are not released on bail	Juvenile Offenders Ordinance (Cap. 226)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persons aged 10 to under 16</li> </ul>
(ii)	Place of Refuge: to provide residential service for children and juveniles in need of care or protection	Protection of Children and Juveniles Ordinance (Cap. 213)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persons aged 8 to under 18</li> <li>• Wards of Director of Social Welfare aged 8 to under 21</li> </ul>
		Immigration Ordinance (Cap. 115)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illegal immigrants aged under 18</li> </ul>
		Child Abduction and Custody Ordinance (Cap. 512)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persons aged 12 to under 18</li> </ul>
(iii)	Approved Institution	Probation of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persons aged 10 to</li> </ul>

	(Probation Home): to provide residential training for persons placed under a probation order for a period not exceeding 12 months	Offenders Ordinance (Cap. 298)	under 16
(iv)	Reformatory School: to provide residential training for children and young offenders for a period of not less than 1 year and not more than 3 years	Reformatory Schools Ordinance (Cap. 225)	• Males aged 10 to under 16

5. The Home makes segregation arrangements for the residents admitted under various ordinances to fulfil the standards and requirements of statute and relevant international covenants. In addition to gender segregation, the Home adopts segregation in the daily operation of individual sections, including segregating the non-convicted residents from the convicted ones, and the residents detained due to involvement in offences from those under protection due to their behavioural or emotional problems.

### **Service Highlights**

#### *Daily care and training*

6. With a total of 388 residential places, the Home provides 24-hour care, nursing and supervisory services through its social workers and nurses. There are also visiting doctors providing general medical services. Those

residents who have special physical, mental or psychological issues are referred to specialist doctors and/or clinical psychologists for assessment and follow-up services.

7. Based on the lengths of stay and training objectives of the residents, the Home formulates daily schedules to help them develop disciplined and healthy living habits. To help the residents improve their behaviour and rebuild their sense of lawfulness, the Home has in place a system of reward and punishment with an emphasis on “rewards”. Those with positive behaviour and performances are given such positive encouragement as praises, bonus points, small gifts, snacks, outdoor activities, home leave, etc. Those with negative behaviour or in breach of regulations are imposed deduction of bonus points or rewards, or are assigned additional duties, such as sorting clothing supplies, performing simple cleansing duties, etc.

8. The Home also has a Disciplinary Board which handles repeated or serious infringements of regulations by residents (such as intentional damage of the facilities of the Home). The Disciplinary Board will devise a follow-up plan for the residents having regard to their needs to help improve their behaviour. Written records are made of the infringements of regulations concerned and the punishments so meted out. Moreover, the SWD may also submit a report to the Court regarding any infringement of regulations by residents for review of their residential training arrangements.

#### *Education and vocational training*

9. The educational and vocational training services at the Home are currently provided by the Youth College of the Vocational Training Council (VTC). The Home assesses the academic level and learning needs of every resident at admission and formulates an appropriate learning plan in discussion with the resident and having regard to his/her length of stay, so that suitable

academic subjects and skill training can be arranged for the resident. Apart from generic academic subjects, the VTC provides diversified skill training courses, including air-conditioning and refrigeration, bakery and pastry making, hair-dressing, beauty care, physical fitness training, computer usage and animation production, multi-media design, automobile maintenance, etc. Upon completion of the courses, the VTC conducts assessments and issues certificates to the qualified residents. The certificates would be useful for them to pursue further studies, continue learning or seek employment upon discharge. In parallel, the VTC organises career talks and visits to facilitate the residents' life planning and allow them to make post-discharge plans based on their ages, personal interests and strengths.

#### *Hobbies and development activities*

10. The residents of the Home may take part in a range of arts, cultural and recreational activities, such as music appreciation, reading, handicraft workshops, ball games and group games, for the pursuit of healthy hobbies, enhancement of personal capabilities and development of potential. Besides, the residents of the approved institution and reformatory school are allowed to participate in various outdoor activities, such as marathon, football, orienteering, etc., after adjusting to and settling in the Home.

#### *Personal counselling*

11. To assist individual residents in handling such issues as personal behaviour and emotions, peer interactions and family relationships, the Home enhances their self-understanding, social skills, emotion management and positive thinking through case and group counselling. The caseworkers of the Home follow up on the progress and needs of each resident, and formulate, execute and review his/her personalised training programmes through discussions and conference meetings with his/her welfare officer or probation

officer. The aim is to inspire the residents to overcome difficulties and to build self-confidence and discipline in preparation for reintegration into the community.

#### *Family relationship and community connection*

12. The Home encourages parents or guardians to support the residential training of the residents by means of visits, letters and telephone calls. Case counselling and parent-child activities are conducted to help the residents re-establish positive communication and improve relationships with their families. In particular, the residents of the approved institution and reformatory school are arranged to spend time with their families at weekends when their behaviour has become stable after moving in for a period of time. This would facilitate their getting effective family support upon discharge.

13. The Home arranges for various community organisations, including non-governmental welfare organisations, religious bodies, volunteer groups and tertiary institutions, to run a variety of group and supportive activities in the Home for the establishment of meaningful community connection for the residents. The Home also encourages the residents of the approved institution and reformatory school to participate in community activities and voluntary services to nurture their communication skills, leadership and self-value, which would be conducive to their reintegration into the community.

#### **Service Quality and Monitoring**

14. The SWD attaches great importance to the quality of correctional home services. It provides regular on-the-job training for the staff of the Home to strengthen their professional knowledge and skills, and discusses with the front-line staff through work improvement teams to enrich the contents of

the services. Views from community partners are also solicited for ongoing service improvement.

15. The Home is also monitored under the Service Performance Monitoring System of the SWD and is required to provide services in line with the Service Quality Standards, including devising a mechanism and procedures for handling complaints, as well as taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the residents are free from abuse. The Home is at the same time subject to unannounced visits by Justices of the Peace on a monthly basis.

### **Advice Sought**

16. Members are invited to note the content of this paper.

Social Welfare Department

May 2017