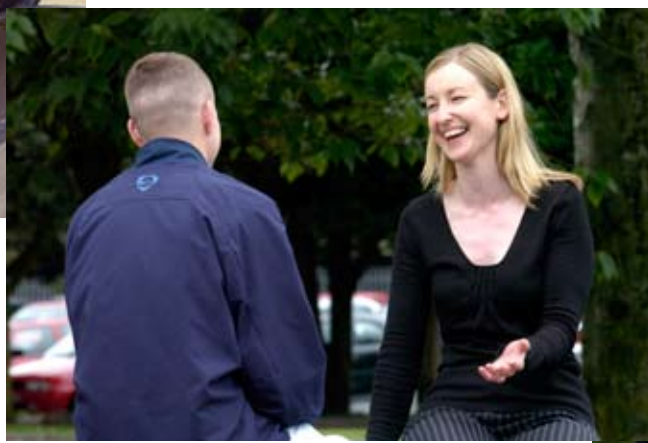


Care

Although Kibble was originally designated a reformatory school, the care and protection of children was also part of its remit and a concern from the beginning, as our early records demonstrate. Admission records have numerous cases of children being admitted for care and protection, rather than because of any serious wrongdoing on their part. Although there are many cases of deliberate maltreatment or neglect on the part of parents, in some cases this was due to very difficult circumstances such as the death of one or both parents, poverty, or very large families, resulting in overcrowded and sometimes squalid home conditions; in some instances there was a combination of several of these factors. The care aspects of the service developed gradually over the years as understanding, attitudes and policies changed, and the service moved increasingly from a justice-based model to one grounded on a welfare basis.



Oral history contributors who were at Kibble during the 1940s and 1950s have told us of unofficial care extending well beyond their time at Kibble, largely due to the professional and personal dedication of Peter Gardner who followed his father, George, as Headmaster from 1952 till 1982. There are many further examples of this extended, informal aftercare in our written records. Some former pupils continued to visit Kibble as much as fifteen years after leaving the centre and were provided with food, clothing, footwear, accommodation and/or money when necessary. In addition, former Kibble boys were regularly welcomed at Christmas dinners and celebrations.

The development of formal through and aftercare was a lengthier and more gradual process, as highlighted in minutes of Approved Schools Association meetings. These minutes document the heavy workload of Aftercare/Welfare Officers and their calls for recruitment of more officers and a more structured system of aftercare. Concerns were raised at the Association's Annual General Meeting in 1935 that aftercare visiting could not be carried out efficiently 'unless and until an adequate staff is provided in each school'. However, concerns continued to be expressed as late as 1952 at the 'serious overloading of the Welfare Officers'. Subsequent moves to develop liaison and collaborative working between the Probation Service and Welfare Officers from 1954 were welcomed unanimously by all parties.

Implementation of specialised psychological services in the Approved Schools system was also a lengthy process. There was recognition of the need for such services as early as 1947; however the first dedicated Approved Schools' educational psychologist was not appointed until 1952. This service was expanded in 1961 with the appointment of two regional psychologists, followed shortly afterwards by a third.

Kibble's care services have become increasingly diverse and specialised in recent years, offering an interconnected array of preventative and rehabilitative specialist services for young people at risk. These services span community outreach, residential care, social welfare, intensive fostering and throughcare (support in transition to independent living for care-leavers). Kibble also has a Safe Centre, which is a secure children's home with education.

