



**FOLKETINGETS
OMBUDSMAND**

Thematic report 2021

Children and young people in secure residential institutions

Contents

3 July 2022

Doc.No. 22/01642-
3/KHH/Ini

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1. Introduction

Children and young people in secure residential institutions was the theme of those monitoring visits (within the theme) that the Ombudsman carried out in the children's sector in 2021 in collaboration with the Danish Institute for Human Rights and DIGNITY – Danish Institute Against Torture.

In order to elucidate the year's theme, the Ombudsman carried out monitoring visits to Denmark's eight secure residential institutions, of which two have special secure wards. At the same time, the Ombudsman visited the institutions' in-house schools. Two visits were carried out physically, while six visits were carried out virtually, due to COVID-19. The monitoring visits focused especially on:

- Use of physical force, solitary confinement and search of person and room
- House rules and drugs tests
- Education in in-house schools
- Health services.

2. What have the thematic visits shown?

2.1. Main conclusions

- The visited institutions were generally reflective in relation to the use of physical force and other restrictions of the right to self-determination, and the monitoring visits left the overall impression that the institutions were focused on handling conflicts in a pedagogical, constructive and dialogue-based way.
- The deadline for recording and reporting use of physical force and other restrictions of the right to self-determination was to a wide extent not observed, just as the report forms in several instances did not contain an adequate description of the course of events in connection with the use of physical force or the grounds for why the restriction was necessary.
- Several of the institutions did not in connection with the placement inform children, young people or custodial parents etc. of their rights in relation to the use of physical force and other restrictions of the right to self-determination.
- In practice, the institutions find it difficult to handle the distinction between mandatory and voluntary house rules.

- In relation to the in-house schools, there were a number of problems with agreements etc. between the institution and municipalities that did not fully comply with legislative requirements. There were also challenges with regard to observing the rules on teaching the full range of subjects and number of teaching hours and observing the rules on exemption from lessons in subjects, mandatory tests and the examinations of the Folkeskole (the Danish primary and lower secondary school).
- Not all children and young people were offered screening for uncovering a possible need for a psychiatric evaluation.

2.2. General recommendations

On the basis of the monitoring visits, the Ombudsman generally recommends that the secure residential institutions

- ensure that the deadline is observed for recording the use of physical force and other restrictions of the right to self-determination, and that the deadlines are observed for reporting to and informing the relevant authorities and custodial parents etc.
- ensure that report forms on the use of physical force contain an adequate description of the course of events in connection with the use of force, including a description of how the child or young person was effectively conducted or manually restrained, together with the grounds why the intervention was necessary
- ensure that staff are sufficiently familiar with the Act on Adult Responsibility, including the rules on use of force in schools, and that the institutions have written guidelines on the use of physical force and other restrictions of the right to self-determination
- ensure that – in connection with the placement – children, young people and custodial parents etc. are informed of their rights in relation to the use of force or other restrictions of the right to self-determination, including the right to complain. In this context, the Ombudsman recommends that the institutions consider drawing up written material on rights, including the right to complain, that can be handed out on arrival.
- ensure that it is the manager or deputy manager who decides to place a child or young person in solitary confinement, and that in the absence of the manager it is clear to the staff who has been designated as deputy.
- ensure that the institution's guidelines on solitary confinement describe the key requirements in the applicable rules, including that it must be possible for the child or young person to contact staff during the entirety of

the solitary confinement, and that a psychiatric specialist (or a general medical practitioner) must be summoned, if the child or young person suffers from a mental disorder.

In relation to the in-house schools, the Ombudsman generally recommends that the institutions

- in collaboration with the relevant municipality ensure that the basis for the in-house school in the form of agreements etc. complies with the applicable rules
- ensure that all pupils are taught the full range of subjects and number of teaching hours, and that exceptions therefrom are only made if a pupil – based on a concrete and individual assessment – is exempted from lessons in one or more subjects or has the teaching hours reduced according to the relevant applicable rules
- ensure that exemptions from mandatory tests and Folkeskole examinations are decided in accordance with the rules, and that there is documentation for this.

In relation to health, the Ombudsman generally recommends that the institutions

- ensure that all children and young people who on arrival has not already undergone a psychiatric evaluation are offered screening in order to uncover a possible need therefore
- are focused on identifying children and young people who have or are at risk of developing withdrawal symptoms, and that the institutions ensure that relevant treatment of withdrawal symptoms takes place.

The Ombudsman discusses follow-up on the general recommendations with, respectively, the then Ministry of Social Affairs and Senior Citizens (now Ministry of Social Affairs, Housing and Senior Citizens), the Ministry of Children and Education and the then Ministry of Health (now Ministry of Interior and Health). The Ombudsman will also follow up on the general recommendations in connection with future monitoring visits.

The Ombudsman has started a number of own-initiative investigations on the basis of the monitoring visits. One is an investigation of some institutions' use of pedagogical measures that implies, among other things, complete or partial exclusion from association with others. Another investigation concerns a possible connection between the rules on door alarms and locking of rooms at night. And a third investigation concerns the possibility of effecting a

reduction in the number of teaching hours in in-house schools pursuant to a provision in the Folkeskole Act which, according to its text, concerns special schools and special classes. Find further details on this below in item 3.5, item 8.2 and item 11.3.

2.3. Background for the choice of theme and focus areas

In the children's sector, the secure residential institutions, including the special secure wards, have strict regimes compared with other institutions.

Children and young people can be placed in secure residential institutions for reasons relating to criminal, welfare or immigration law.

The placement can take place with a view to observation, treatment or to prevent the child or young person from self-harming or harming other people. The placement can also be a substitute for pre-trial detention or as part of serving a sentence. Special secure wards are aimed at children and young people who have made placement in a secure residential institution unsafe due to previous violent or psychologically deviant behaviour.

In a secure residential institution it is thus allowed to have outer doors and windows constantly locked, there must be TV surveillance in all indoor communal areas and there must be door alarms at the rooms of the children and young people. In addition, these institutions can implement the most wide-ranging measures pursuant to the Act on Adult Responsibility for Children and Young People in Out-of-Home Care (Consolidation Act No. 764 of 1 August 2019), including solitary confinement. On that background, the Ombudsman considers children and young people in secure residential institutions to be an especially vulnerable group whose rights can come under pressure.

In 2017, the Ombudsman paid monitoring visits to six of the eight secure residential institutions. [Read the thematic report from 2017.](#)

With the theme in 2021, the Ombudsman wanted to update his knowledge of conditions for children and young people in the secure residential institutions and special secure wards and to follow up on the results from of the monitoring visits in 2017.

Furthermore, on 1 January 2019 a number of new rules were introduced in the Act on Adult Responsibility, applicable to secure residential institutions and special secure wards, including on the following:

- Mandatory written house rules and the option of using force and stipulating suitable reactions to transgressions of the mandatory house rules
- Reduction or loss of pocket money
- Restriction of the access to external communication
- New powers on body search of children or young people
- Possibility of using door alarms at the entrance to the rooms.

On that background, the Ombudsman also wanted to learn about the application of the new rules in the Act on Adult Responsibility.

Lastly, the Ombudsman wanted to examine whether the children and young people attending the secure residential institutions' in-house schools are getting the schooling they are entitled to according to legislation. The Ombudsman also wanted to shed light on the children's and young people's access to health services and the institutions' medicines management.

2.4. How did the Ombudsman proceed?

2.4.1. Material and information in connection with the visits

Prior to the monitoring visits, the Ombudsman received information on a range of the institutions' conditions and specific reports on the use of force and other restrictions of the right to self-determination with a view to shedding light on, among others, the chosen focus areas.

Immediately prior to the monitoring visit, the Ombudsman informed the children and young people of the visit with a view to speaking with as many children and young people as possible. During the monitoring visits, the visiting teams interviewed a total of 55 children and young people aged 13-17 years.

Furthermore, the visiting teams spoke with a number of the children's and young people's relatives, primarily parents (65 relatives in total). In addition, the visiting teams spoke with the institutions' staff, including teachers at the in-house schools and those responsible for medicines, and the monitoring teams also obtained information about the institutions in connection with discussions with management.

2.4.2. The legal basis for monitoring visits

The monitoring visits were carried out as part of the Ombudsman's general monitoring activities in accordance with the Ombudsman Act and as part of the Ombudsman's work to prevent that people who are or who can be deprived of their liberty are exposed to for instance inhuman or degrading treatment, cf. the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT).

The Ombudsman's work of preventing degrading treatment etc. pursuant to the Protocol is carried out in cooperation with the Danish Institute for Human Rights and DIGNITY – Danish Institute Against Torture.

The Danish Institute for Human Rights and DIGNITY contribute to the cooperation with medical and human rights expertise. This means, among other things, that staff with expertise in these areas participate on behalf of the two institutes in the planning, execution and follow-up regarding monitoring visits.

In addition, the Ombudsman has a special responsibility for protecting the rights of children according to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, among other things.

The Ombudsman's Special Advisor on Children's Issues participates in all visits to the child sector.

2.4.3. List of visits in 2021

On the Ombudsman's website, there is a summary of all monitoring visits carried out in 2021, including the recommendations given to the individual institutions: [Monitoring visits in the children's sector, 2021](#)

3. Use of physical force

3.1. The rules

In all actions concerning children, the best interests of the child shall be the primary consideration. This appears from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

According to the Act on Adult Responsibility, staff at secure residential institutions can use physical force against a child or young person when certain specified conditions are met.

However, the use of physical force must only be used as an exception. And the use of physical force must never take the place of care and socio-pedagogical measures. In addition, the use of physical force must always be in reasonable proportion to the aim and must be exercised as gently and as briefly as conditions allow, and with the greatest possible regard for the personal integrity of the child or young person. This follows from the general principles for the use of force etc. in the Act on Adult Responsibility.

USE OF PHYSICAL FORCE

Who and what

Staff can manually restrain or conduct a child or a young person to another room.

When

Physical force can be used when the child or the young person exhibits a behaviour, including persistent harassment, which *endangers the child or the young person or others at the location*.

Physical force can also be used when the child or young person *breaks mandatory house rules* and use of force is necessary in order to stop it.

Documentation and hearing

The institution must *record and report* use of physical force.

The child or young person must be *informed of the contents of the report* and be given the *opportunity to comment on the episode*.

Information

On arrival at the institution, the child or young person and the custodial parents must be *informed of their rights in relation to the use of force and other restrictions of the right to self-determination*, including the right to complain.

The rules in the Act on Adult Responsibility apply to all children and young people who are placed in a secure residential institution.

The rules also apply to children and young people placed at a secure residential institution who attend the in-house schools of the secure residential institution. However, this does not apply to the rules on using physical force to put an end to a violation of the house rules, as the in-house schools are not subject to the rules of the Act on Adult Responsibility regarding mandatory house rules.

3.2. Extent of the use of physical force

The visits generally left the impression that the institutions were reflective in relation to the use of physical force and other restrictions of the right to self-determination, and that they were focused on handling conflicts in a pedagogical, constructive and dialogue-based way with a view to preventing

the use of force etc. They used, among other things, Low Arousal, diversion, staff changes and risk assessments of the young people.

At the time of the visits, the secure residential institutions each had between 10 and 20 places. Prior to the visits, the Ombudsman obtained information about, among other things, the number of physical force incidents in the period 2018-2020. The forwarded information shows that the annual number of physical force incidents varied a great deal from institution to institution, and it was not possible to find an immediate correlation between the size of the institution and the number of force incidents. The annual number of force incidents per institution varied in 2020 from 2 to 115 force incidents.

Several of the institutions informed the Ombudsman that many force incidents were centred on one or a few children or young people.

3.3. Examples of reports

The institutions must record the use of physical force on a specific form. The form appears from Appendix 1 a of the Executive Order on Adult Responsibility for Children and Young People in Out-of-Home Care (Executive Order No. 810 of 13 August 2019).

In connection with the monitoring visits, the Ombudsman obtained the five most recent report forms on the use of physical force. The review of the reports formed a basis for discussions between the visiting teams and the visited institutions during the monitoring visits.

With the exception of one institution, the institutions generally used the correct form to record the use of physical force.

3.3.1. Observance of deadlines for recording and reporting the use of physical force

If force has been used towards a child or a young person, the manager of the placement institution (or the deputy manager) must, pursuant to the rules on adult responsibility, put the incident on record within 24 hours. The short deadline is primarily out of regard for the legal rights of the children or young people, but also out of regard for the staff involved in the incident.

Then the manager (or deputy manager) of the placement institution must without undue delay, meaning as quickly as possible within 24 hours once the recording has been completed, send a copy of the report form to the placing municipality and inform the custodial parents. By the end of the month, a copy of the report form must be sent to the local social supervisory authority, and a possible municipal or regional operator must be informed. If the use of force has taken place in an in-house school, the use of force must

in addition be reported to the municipality of location (the municipality in which the school is placed).

Review of the received report forms showed that none of the institutions fully observed the deadlines for recording and reporting the use of physical force.

On that basis, the Ombudsman recommended to seven of the eight institutions that they observe the deadlines for recording and reporting the use of physical force.

One institution was recommended to ensure that the custodial parents be informed following a physical force incident, and that this be included in the report form.

On that basis, the Ombudsman generally recommends that the institutions ensure observance of the deadlines for recording use of physical force and the deadlines for reporting to and informing the relevant authorities and custodial parents etc. of uses of force.

Some visited institutions had raised the question of how to understand the deadline for reporting to the social supervisory authority ('by the end of the month'). On that basis, the Ombudsman raised the question with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Senior Citizens so that the Ministry could consider perhaps clarifying the deadline in the guidance notes to the Act on Adult Responsibility.

3.3.2. Documentation of the use of force

A report must contain a description of what happened in connection with the use of force and the grounds for why the intervention was necessary.

An adequate description of the course of events in connection with a use of force and a precise account of how the child or young person was conducted or manually restrained are prerequisites for being able to assess whether the use of force was in accordance with the rules in the Act on Adult Responsibility.

Some of the report forms that the Ombudsman received did not contain an adequate description of the course of events or of how the use of force was carried out, for instance how the child or young person had been conducted or manually restrained. Furthermore, some reports did not contain any information on what basis the child or young person was assessed to endanger themselves or others.

The Ombudsman recommended to three institutions that they ensure that the report forms will in future contain an adequate description of the course of

events in connection with the use of physical force and grounds for the measure.

The Ombudsman generally recommends that the institutions ensure that report forms on the use of physical force contain an adequate description of the course of events in connection with the use of force, including a description of how specifically the child or young person was conducted or manually restrained, together with grounds for the necessity of the measure.

3.3.3. Inclusion of the child and young person

Children and young people who have been involved in a use of physical force or other restrictions of the right to self-determination must be informed that the episode has been put on record and of the contents of the report on the episode. They must also be given the opportunity to comment on the episode. This follows from the legislation on adult responsibility.

The visits left the general impression that after a use of force the institutions spoke with the children and young people about the episode. A review of the report forms also showed that in most cases, the child or young person had had the opportunity to comment on the episode, but for several institutions, it did not appear clearly from the report form whether the child or young person had been made aware that the episode had been put on record and been informed of the contents of the report.

The Ombudsman gave no recommendations regarding inclusion of the children and the young people. However, he did point out to several institutions that – in addition to being given the opportunity to comment on the episode in connection with use of force and other restrictions of the right of self-determination – the children and young people must be informed that the use of force etc. has been put on record and of the contents of the report on the episode.

3.4. Knowledge of rules etc.

Children and young people placed in secure residential institutions must be treated with dignity, consideration and in accordance with their rights. To ensure this, it is crucial that staff are familiar with the rules that apply to the use of physical force towards the children and the young people.

Use of physical force must be applied as gently and briefly as circumstances allow and with the greatest possible consideration for the child's or young person's personal integrity. This presupposes among other things that staff know what restraining holds to use in connection with use of force.

Written guidelines on use of physical force can in this connection provide support and help in the daily work.

During the monitoring visits, the visiting teams generally got the impression that the institutions were focused on ensuring that staff were familiar – for instance through training courses – with the rules of the Act on Adult Responsibility. However, according to a number of the institutions, there had been challenges in completing relevant training courses on for instance restraining holds for a period due to COVID-19.

The majority of the institutions had written guidelines on the use of physical force. However, the visiting teams got the impression in a number of institutions that staff were not sufficiently aware that the rule of the Act on Adult Responsibility regarding the use of force in connection with violation of house rules does not apply to the in-house schools.

The Ombudsman recommended three institutions to ensure that staff are familiar with those rules of the Act on Adult Responsibility that apply to the use of force in the in-house schools.

Furthermore, the Ombudsman recommended three institutions to ensure that the internal guidelines on the use of physical force describe the central requirements of the applicable rules, while one institution was recommended to continue the work of drawing up written guidelines on the use of physical force.

In the light of this, the Ombudsman generally recommends that the institutions ensure that staff are sufficiently familiar with the Act on Adult Responsibility, including the rules on the use of force in schools, and that the institutions have written guidelines on the use of physical force and other restrictions of the right of self-determination.

3.5. Pedagogical measures

In the work with the children and young people, the institutions use various pedagogical measures. In a number of institutions this includes complete or partial exclusion from association with others, for instance as a consequence of undesirable behaviour on the part of the child or young person.

Thus, some of the institutions use timeout where the child or young person stays in his or her room for upwards of a couple of hours, until he or she has calmed down or changed behaviour. Furthermore, some institutions use behavioural programmes where the child or young person is typically separated from the other children and young people and must for instance reflect on the behaviour which has prompted the programme or must carry out certain activities with an adult. The programme can last a number of days. In a number of cases, the children and young people in two institutions

also had to use a call button and wait for staff to arrive before they were allowed to leave their rooms.

In connection with the visits, there was a discussion with the institutions regarding the various measures but no recommendations were given in this regard, as the Ombudsman instead has discussed the pedagogical measures at a meeting with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Senior Citizens. Subsequently, the Ombudsman has started an own-initiative investigation regarding two institutions' use of the aforementioned forms of pedagogical measures.

3.6. Information on rights

In connection with placement in a secure residential institution, the manager must inform the child or young person and the custodial parents (or the representative of the unaccompanied underage foreign national) of their rights in relation to the use of force and other restrictions of the right to self-determination. Their rights include the right to complain to the National Social Appeals Board or the municipal council, respectively. This follows from the legislation on adult responsibility.

The visits showed that several institutions had not in connection with the placement informed the children, young people and custodial parents etc. of their rights in relation to the use of force etc. In other instances, the information given was not adequate.

The Ombudsman gave three institutions a recommendation aimed at ensuring that, in connection with the placement, custodial parents, guardians and personal representatives are informed of their rights in relation to the use of force and other restrictions of the right to self-determination, including the right to complain to the National Social Appeals Board or the municipal council, respectively. For one of the institutions, this recommendation also included information for the children and young people.

In addition, the Ombudsman gave two institutions a recommendation to ensure that the written information to the children and young people about the Act on Adult Responsibility and their rights in relation to the use of force and other restrictions of the right to self-determination contains an adequate description of the applicable rules.

On that background, the Ombudsman generally recommends that institutions ensure that, on arrival at the institution, the children, young people and custodial parents etc. are informed of their rights in relation to use of force and other restrictions of the right to self-determination, including the right to complain. In this context, the Ombudsman recommends that institutions

consider drawing up written material on rights, including the right to complain, that can be handed out on arrival.

4. Solitary confinement

4.1. The rules

It follows from the Act on Adult Responsibility that children and young people in secure residential institutions and special secure wards can be placed in a specially segregated solitary confinement room when certain conditions are met. Solitary confinement must be carried out in compliance with the general principles for the use of force, cf. above under item 3.1.

SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

When and where

Solitary confinement can be used when there is *imminent danger that the child or young person will self-harm or harm other people*.

The solitary confinement must take place in a room especially designed for that purpose.

Who

A decision on solitary confinement can only be made by *the manager or the deputy manager*.

Duration and supervision

Solitary confinement must be *as brief and gentle as possible*. It must not exceed 2 hours in a secure residential institution and 4 hours in a special secure ward.

The child or young person must be able to summon staff during the whole period of solitary confinement. There must be *continuous supervision* of the child or young person.

Immediately after a decision is taken to place a child or young person with mental disorders in solitary confinement, a psychiatric specialist must be called in, or, if this is not possible, a general medical practitioner.

Documentation and hearing

The institution must *record and report* the use of solitary confinement.

The child or young person must *be informed of the contents of the report* and be given the *opportunity to comment*.

4.2. Extent of solitary confinement

Six out of the eight secure residential institutions have solitary confinement rooms. Prior to the visits, the Ombudsman obtained information on, among other things, the number of solitary confinement placements in the period 2018-2020. It appears from the information received that the number at the institutions in 2020 varied from none in three of the institutions to, respectively, 3, 9 and 29 solitary confinement placements in the three other institutions. In a number of instances, the solitary confinement placements concerned the same person.

4.3. Examples of reports

Solitary confinement must be recorded on the same report form – and the same deadline for reporting etc. apply – as with the use of physical force, cf. item 3.3.1 above.

In connection with the monitoring visits, the ombudsman obtained the five most recent report forms on solitary confinement. A review of the reports formed the basis for discussions between the visiting teams and visited institutions during the monitoring visits.

The institutions generally used the correct form to record and report solitary confinement.

4.3.1. Observance of deadlines for recording and reporting solitary confinement

The review of the forwarded report forms showed that none of the institutions fully observed the deadlines for recording and reporting solitary confinement.

The Ombudsman gave four institutions a recommendation to observe the deadlines for recording and reporting solitary confinement, while one institution was recommended to ensure that it is documented that recording and reporting solitary confinement has happened within the deadline.

On that basis, the Ombudsman generally recommends that the institutions ensure that the deadlines for recording a solitary confinement and the deadlines for reporting to and briefing of the relevant authorities and custodial parents regarding the solitary confinement are observed.

4.3.2. Documentation of solitary confinement

In one institution, the Ombudsman gave a recommendation that the institution ensure that reports on solitary confinement contain an adequate description of and grounds for the use of force.

4.3.3. Inclusion of the children and the young people

The review of the report forms on solitary confinement showed that the institution in most cases gave the children or young people the opportunity to comment on the episode. There were, however, several instances where it did not appear clearly from the form whether the child or the young person had been informed that the episode had been put on record and of the contents of the report on the episode.

The Ombudsman did not give any recommendations regarding inclusion of the children and young people. He did, however, point out to several institutions that the children and young people – in addition to being given the opportunity to comment – must also be informed that the episode has been put on record and of the contents of the report on the episode, cf. also item 3.3.3 above.

4.4. Knowledge of rules

During the monitoring visits, the visiting teams got the general impression that managements were focused on ensuring knowledge of the rules on solitary confinement. Furthermore, the majority of the relevant institutions had internal guidelines on solitary confinement.

However, in a number of institutions the visiting teams got the impression that there was some uncertainty as to who can decide to place a child or young person in solitary confinement.

The Ombudsman gave three institutions a recommendation to ensure that it is the manager or the deputy manager who makes the decision to place a child or young person in solitary confinement, and that in the manager's absence it is clear to staff who has been designated as deputy.

In addition, the Ombudsman recommended to two institutions that they ensure that the internal guidelines on solitary confinement describe the central requirements in the applicable rules. Two other institutions were recommended that it appear from the guidelines that it must be possible for the child or young person to contact staff during the entire period of solitary confinement and that a psychiatric specialist (or a general medical practitioner) must be summoned if the child or young person has a mental disorder.

On this background, the Ombudsman generally recommends that the institutions ensure that it is the manager or the deputy manager who makes the decision to place a child or young person in solitary confinement, and that in the manager's absence it is clear to staff who has been designated as deputy.

Furthermore, as appears under item 3.4, the Ombudsman generally recommends that the institutions have written guidelines on the use of physical force and other restrictions of the right to self-determination. In this context, the Ombudsman recommends that the institutions ensure that internal guidelines on solitary confinement describe the central requirements of the applicable rules, including that it must be possible for the child or young person to contact the staff during the whole period of solitary confinement, and that a psychiatric specialist (or a general medical practitioner) must be summoned if the child or young person has a mental disorder.

In connection with the monitoring visits, a number of institutions flagged that – as appeared during monitoring visits in 2017 – there continue to be difficulties in getting a specialist doctor or an emergency services doctor to the institution in connection with the solitary confinement of a child or young person with a mental disorder.

On that background, the difficulties with getting a doctor were discussed at a meeting with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Senior Citizens. The Ministry indicated that it would include the health authorities in a discussion of the problem.

4.5. Conditions during solitary confinement, including supervision etc.

Six out of eight visits took place virtually, and, in relation to the theme, the visiting teams have only inspected the solitary confinement rooms of a single institution (four rooms in total). The solitary confinement rooms had TV surveillance for which there is no authority in the Act on Adult Responsibility. The Ombudsman therefore recommended that the institution cease using TV surveillance of children and young people placed in solitary confinement.

4.6. Information on rights

As appears above under item 3.6, the Ombudsman generally recommends that the institutions ensure that children, young people and custodial parents etc. – in connection with the child's or young person's placement in the institution – are informed of their rights in relation to the use of force and other restrictions of the right to self-determination, including the right to complain. In this context, the Ombudsman recommends that the institutions consider drawing up written material on rights, including the right to complain, that can be handed out on arrival.

5. Search of person and room

5.1. The rules

It follows from the Act on Adult Responsibility that secure residential institutions and special secure wards can search a child or young person placed in the institution, or search their rooms, provided certain conditions are met. A search of person and room must be carried out in compliance with the general principles for the use of force, cf. above under item 3.1.

SEARCH OF PERSON AND ROOM

When

Specific reasons:

A search of person and room can be carried out when there are *specific reasons to assume* that the child or young person is in possession of items, where such possession means that order or security cannot be maintained.

Furthermore:

A search can also be conducted of what items a child or young person has on him- or herself or in own room when the child or young person is *placed in the institution, before or after visits and before and after absence* from the institution. In these cases, a search can be carried out without a specific reason. It is a condition that the search is necessary in order to ensure that considerations of order or security can be observed.

Who

A decision to search a person or a room is made by *the manager or whoever has the authority to do so*.

How

Before a search, the child or young person generally has the right to be *informed of the reason* for the search. Metal detectors, scanners or the like can be used during the search.

Search of person:

The search may be carried out by *patting the outside of clothes and examining pockets and shoes*. The child or young person may be required to take off his or her coat, headgear and shoes. In addition, an *external body inspection may be carried out in the form of examination of the body's surfaces and a search of the clothes*. The child or young person may be required to take his or her clothes off.

Search of room:

When going through the child's or young person's things in the room, the child or young person must generally be offered to *witness the search* or immediately afterwards be offered *a review of the search and its result*.

Documentation and hearing

The institution must *record and report* a search of person and room.

The child or young person must be *informed of the report* and its contents and be given *the opportunity to comment*.

Items found during the search can be confiscated if deemed necessary for considerations of order and security. A list must be compiled if items belonging to the child or young person are confiscated. The child or young person must be informed of the confiscation and receive a copy of the list.

5.2. Extent of search of person and room

Prior to the visits, the Ombudsman obtained information about the number of searches of person and room in 2019 and 2020. It appears from the forwarded information that the number in 2020 varied considerably between the institutions – from 19 searches to as much as 236 searches.

According to the information, the institutions typically carry out a search when there are items missing from the kitchen or workshop or when young people get items into the institution from the outside, for instance because the items have been tossed over the fence of the institution. Also changes in the young people's behaviour can give rise to a search, for instance if the young people appear to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs. In addition, a search may be carried out on arrival, after visits, etc.

According to the information, most of the institutions rarely or never use metal detectors, scanners or the like in connection with a search.

5.3. Examples of reports

The same deadlines for reporting etc. searches of persons and rooms apply as for use of physical force, cf. item 3.3.1 above. Which form to use for the report depends on whether it is a search based on suspicion of possession of items (the report form in Appendix 1 a of the Executive Order on Adult Responsibility) or a search in connection with arrival, visit or absence (the report form in Appendix 1 c of the Executive Order on Adult Responsibility).

In connection with the monitoring visits, the Ombudsman obtained the five most recent report forms on searches of persons and rooms. The review of

the reports formed a basis for discussions between the visiting teams and the visited institutions during the monitoring visits.

The institutions used forms to report the searches but the Ombudsman found that not all the institutions used the two forms (1 a or 1 c) correctly.

On that background, the Ombudsman gave a recommendation to three institutions that the institutions use the correct form in the Executive Order on Adult Responsibility for recording and reporting searches of person and room.

5.3.1. Observance of deadlines for recording and reporting searches of person and room

The review of the report forms showed that none of the institutions fully observed the deadlines for recording and reporting searches of person and room.

On that basis, the Ombudsman gave seven out of eight institutions a recommendation to observe the deadlines for recording and reporting searches of person and room.

Furthermore, the Ombudsman gave two institutions a recommendation to ensure that custodial parents are informed following a search of person and room, and that this appears from the report form.

On that background, the Ombudsman generally recommends that the institutions ensure that the deadlines for recording a search of person and room and the deadlines for reporting to and briefing the relevant authorities and custodial parents etc. are observed.

5.3.2. Documentation of search of person and room

Some of the received report forms did not contain an adequate description of the course of events etc. in connection with the search. There was for instance no account of the considerations of order and security that made the search necessary.

The Ombudsman gave two institutions a recommendation with the aim of ensuring that the report forms will in future contain an adequate description of the course of events in connection with a search of a person and room and a reason for the measure.

5.3.3. Inclusion of the child and the young person

The review of the report forms on searches of persons and rooms showed that the institutions in most instances gave the child or young person the opportunity to comment on the episode. However, it did not appear clearly

from the report form in the individual case whether the child or young person had been informed that the episode had been recorded and of the content of the report.

The Ombudsman recommended to one institution that the institution ensure that children and young people following a search of person and room are informed that the episode has been put on record and of the content of the report, and that they are given the opportunity to comment on the episode. Furthermore, the Ombudsman pointed out to several institutions that – in addition to being given the opportunity to comment – the children and young people must also be informed that the episode has been put on record and of the content of the report, cf. also item 3.3.3 above.

5.4. Knowledge of the rules

During the monitoring visits, the visiting teams received the general impression that managements were focused on ensuring a knowledge of the rules on search of person and room.

A number of institutions had internal guidelines on search of person and room. However, the guidelines were in several instances not adequate or clear in relation to central elements in the rules. Among other things, they did not clearly state that a list must be made of the confiscated items belonging to the child or young person, and that the child or young person must be given a copy of the list. Some institutions did not have internal guidelines but stated, among other things, that staff apply the legal basis or are informed of the rules via training courses.

The provisions on search of person and room contain detailed rules, and it may therefore be appropriate to have internal guidelines in this regard, similarly to guidelines on the use of physical force and solitary confinement.

On that background, the Ombudsman recommended to three institutions that they consider drawing up internal guidelines on search of person and room.

In addition, the Ombudsman gave three institutions a recommendation with the aim of ensuring that the institutions' internal guidelines on search of person and room describe the central requirements in the applicable rules.

As appears above under item 3.4, the Ombudsman generally recommends that the institutions have written guidelines on the use of physical force and other restrictions of the right to self-determination, including search of person and room.

5.5. Information on rights

As appears above under item 3.6, the Ombudsman generally recommends that the institutions ensure that – in connection with the child or young person being placed in the institution – children, young people and custodial parents etc. are informed of their rights in relation to the use of force and other restrictions of the right to self-determination, including the right to complain. In this context, the Ombudsman recommends that the institutions consider drawing up written material on rights, including the right to complain, that can be handed out on arrival.

6. House rules

6.1. The rules

The manager of a secure residential institution and special secure ward must lay down a written set of house rules, setting out detailed rules and guidelines for residing in the institution (mandatory house rules). It appears from the Executive Order on Adult Responsibility what a set of mandatory house rules must contain.

In addition, other rules can be laid down in a set of house rules (voluntary house rules). These rules must be driven by objective considerations and must not go further than what the purpose of the placement institution dictates. There must not be a disproportionate restriction of the rights of the children and young people.

Generally, the established house rules must apply to everyone residing in the institution, unless there are objective reasons for making exceptions.

HOUSE RULES

Mandatory part

Mandatory house rules must as a minimum contain rules on:

1. wake-up time between 06:00 and 09:00 on weekdays
2. wake-up time between 08:00 and 11:00 on weekends
3. bedtime between 21:00 and 23:00 on weekdays
4. bedtime between 22:00 and 24:00 on weekends
5. quiet in the rooms between bedtime and wake-up time, cf. No. 1-4
6. mandatory participation in classes, treatment and other scheduled activities
7. good behaviour in communal areas, meaning behaviour that does not cause inconvenience to the community or to the safety or security of the children and young people placed in care, and a behaviour

without unacceptable language usage and where violent, offensive or noisy behaviour is unacceptable

8. ban on consuming and possessing alcohol and euphoriant drugs
9. smoking ban, with the exception of specified outdoor areas within the institution's premises
10. visits, including time period, duration and good behaviour on the part of the visitors.

Wake-up times and bedtimes may be departed from in holiday periods.

Additionally, the house rules must contain rules to the effect that telephone conversations and other electronic communication must only take place in specific areas of the institution and during specific time periods.

The house rules may also contain rules that the children and young people placed in the institution must hand over their own mobile telephones and other electronic communication devices to the staff who will store them during the placement.

Information

The house rules must be *written down*. The children and young people must be made aware of the house rules.

Appropriate reactions

Staff can stipulate appropriate reactions to violations of mandatory house rules. The reaction must have a pedagogical and educative purpose and must be laid down in accordance with, among other things, the general principles for use of force and other restrictions of the right of self-determination.

Reduction or loss of pocket money

On grosser or repeated violations of the mandatory house rules, the child or young person may have his or her pocket money reduced or lose it for a period of time. A decision to do so must be made by the placing municipality.

6.2. Implementation of mandatory house rules etc.

In connection with the monitoring visits, the visiting teams focused on whether the institutions had included the mandatory house rules in their house rules, and whether the other house rules were driven by objective considerations.

The visiting teams received the general impression that the institutions informed the children and young people of the house rules, and that the house rules were also handed out in most cases to the children and young people on arrival.

Furthermore, it was the general impression that there was a great deal of focus on ensuring compliance with the house rules through dialogue with the children and the young people instead of using reactions, and that any reactions regarding violations of the mandatory house rules were adapted to individual considerations for the children and young people. The institutions did not seem to make use of the possibility of asking the municipality to make a decision on reduction or loss of pocket money.

The Ombudsman gave no recommendations concerning the institutions' house rules but did point out to a number of institutions that they should review the house rules with a view to ensuring, among other things, that the mandatory rules are in accordance with the statutory authority given by the Executive Order on Adult Responsibility.

The completed visits generally showed that the distinction between the mandatory house rules and the voluntary house rules was in practice difficult to handle, and that the implementation of the mandatory rules presents challenges, not least when the institutions make textual adaptations to the mandatory rules in the house rules. In addition, the visiting teams saw that the same reactions were used for violations of, respectively, mandatory and voluntary house rules.

The challenges of implementing the mandatory house rules have been discussed at a meeting with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Senior Citizens.

7. Drugs tests

7.1. The rules

According to the Act on Adult Responsibility, secure residential institutions and specially secure wards can use drugs tests when certain conditions are met.

When

Staff can use a drugs test when a child or young person suffers from *drug abuse* or there are *specific reasons to assume that the child or young person has ingested drugs*.

General consent

Before a drugs test is taken, the child or young person must have given a general consent to the use of the test. For children under the age of 12, the custodial parents must have given a general consent.

The consent must be *informed, voluntary and explicit*. A general consent can always be *withdrawn* by the child or the young person and by the custodial parents.

Voluntary participation in specific test

The participation of the child or young person in the drugs test must be voluntary in the specific situation. The child or young person must not suffer any negative consequences if he or she will not submit to the test.

Briefing

The custodial parents and the placing municipality must always be informed that a drugs test has been used in a specific situation and be informed of the result of the test. The briefing can take place orally.

7.2. The use of drugs tests

The majority of the institutions do not keep statistics of the drugs tests they carry out but, according to their information, most of the institutions use drugs tests to a limited extent.

During the monitoring visits, the visiting teams received the general impression that the institutions were focused on ensuring that drugs tests are used in accordance with the rules thereon, including that a general consent for a drugs test is given to a relevant extent, for instance in connection with the placement. It was also the general impression that in the specific situation the test is only carried out if the child or young person participates voluntarily.

There was also a general focus on the requirement that the custodial parents and the placing municipality be informed when a test has been carried out and of the result of the test.

The Ombudsman recommended to one institution to ensure that, to a relevant extent, a general consent is obtained to the use of a drugs test from the children and young people placed in the institution, either on arrival or during the placement, if the need to use tests arises. The institution was also recommended to ensure that the child's or young person's placing municipality is informed that a drugs test has been used and of the result of the test.

A number of the institutions had internal guidelines concerning drugs tests. However, it was found that the guidelines of some of these institutions were not adequate on all points in relation to central requirements in the applicable rules.

On that background, the Ombudsman recommended that two institutions ensure that the internal guidelines on drugs tests describe the central requirements in the applicable rules.

8. Door alarms and locking of doors at night

8.1. The rules

In secure residential institutions and special secure wards, door alarms must be placed at the entrance to the rooms of the children and young people placed in the institution. Door alarms must be used in compliance with the general principles of the use of force, cf. item 3.1 above.

DOOR ALARMS

How

Door alarms must be placed at the entrance to the rooms of the children and young people. The alarms must be able to register whether anybody goes in or out through the rooms' doors but not who it is. Staff will be alerted when the door to a room is opened.

Who

A decision to use door alarms – meaning whether to switch on/activate the installed door alarms – is made by *the manager or the deputy manager*.

When

Door alarms can be used when it is *necessary in order to ensure that house rules or security considerations are observed*.

In addition, door alarms must always be used in certain specified situations, among other things when it is necessary for the sake of the child's or young person's own safety or when there has been physical conflict between the children and young people, which makes continued presence in communal areas unsafe.

The duty to use door alarms does not apply in periods when secure residential institutions and special secure wards have permission to lock the doors at night.

Documentation

There is *no duty to record and report* the use of door alarms.

According to the Executive Order on Adult Responsibility, the social supervisory authority can give secure residential institutions and special secure wards permission to lock the rooms of the children and young people at night for considerations of order and security.

8.2. Use of door alarms

The monitoring visits left the general impression that door alarms are used to a limited but varying extent, depending on, among other things, the physical setting and the specific composition of the group of children and young people placed in the institution. One institution informed the Ombudsman that the introduction of the rules on indoor TV surveillance has reduced the need for using door alarms.

On the basis of information received in connection with the monitoring visits of a varying practice on the part of the social supervisory authorities, the Ombudsman has started an own-initiative investigation towards the Ministry of Social Affairs and Senior Citizens on whether there may be assumed to be a correlation between the rules on door alarms and the locking of doors at night.

9. Access to external communication

Children and young people who have been placed in secure residential institutions and specially secure wards due to reasons pertaining to criminal law (surrogate custody, serving a sentence or a youth sanction) may be subject to restrictions in the access to communication and the internet. The relevant rules do not apply to children and young people who have been placed at the institution for welfare reasons or for reasons pursuant to the Aliens Act.

However, the house rules in secure residential institutions and special secure wards may contain rules that the children and young people placed in the institution must hand over their own mobile telephones and other electronic communication devices to staff who will store it during the placement. All the secure residential institutions had a rule on handing over telephones etc. on arrival.

When implementing such a rule, it must, however, be taken into account that the children and young people placed in the institution due to reasons of

welfare or pursuant to the Aliens Act must have access to conduct telephone conversations and have other electronic communication without that communication being overheard or monitored by staff or other children and young people placed in the institution.

The monitoring visits in the secure residential institutions showed that all institutions to a certain extent allowed access to telephone communication for the children and young people placed in the institution for reasons of welfare or pursuant to the Aliens Act. Most institutions also allowed access to the internet. In some institutions, the children and young people had access to their own telephone in a separate room and at certain specific times. In other places, the children and young people had, within certain limits, access to communication via equipment in the institution. The Ombudsman pointed out to one institution that, aside from telephone access, the children and young people placed in the institution for reasons of welfare or pursuant to the Aliens Act should also to a certain extent have access to the internet (other electronic communication).

10. Use of door frame scanner etc. for visitors

To check visitors, one of the institutions used a door frame scanner installed in the door frame of the visiting room. If the scanner reacted, the visitors would be checked by for instance patting their pockets, and they might be asked to take their shoes off or to empty their pockets, and a hand-held scanner might also be used.

The Ombudsman has taken a position on a secure residential institution's use of a door frame scanner etc. in a previous case ([FOB 2020-20](#), published on the Ombudsman's website, in Danish only). The responsible ministry stated in connection with this case that, when an opportunity arises, the ministry would create the authority for the secure residential institutions to use door frame scanners to check visitors and their effects.

As such authority has not been created yet, the Ombudsman recommended to the institution using scanners to check visitors that it cease this practice.

The Ombudsman informed the Ministry of Social Affairs and Senior Citizens thereof in a meeting.

11. Education in in-house schools

11.1. The rules

A child is entitled to education. This follows from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, among other things.

The rules on primary and lower secondary school education appear from the Danish Folkeskole Act (Act on the Danish Municipal Primary and Lower Secondary School) with related executive orders and guidelines. Among other things, an executive order has been issued on special education and other kinds of special pedagogical assistance under the Act in day-care and placement institutions.

Children and young people attending an in-house school are entitled to the same education as children and young people attending a Folkeskole (a Danish primary and secondary state or municipal school). This means that they must be taught the full range of subjects of the Folkeskole and the number of hours laid down in the Folkeskole Act, unless they can be exempted from lessons in one or more subjects or have their class hours reduced in accordance with applicable rules.

11.2. Agreements etc. with municipalities, including PPR services

All eight secure residential institutions have an in-house school, and the Ombudsman's monitoring visits included all these schools. Seven of the eight institutions are run by the regions while the last institution is run by a municipality.

In relation to the in-house school, the region-run secure residential institutions must have entered into an agreement with the municipality of location. There are a number of elements that such an agreement must contain as a minimum, including regulation of the Pedagogical Psychological Counselling services (PPR – Pædagogisk Psykologisk Rådgivning services).

The monitoring visits showed that there are generally challenges of ensuring that the agreements live up to the minimum requirements for their contents.

Thus, the Ombudsman gave a recommendation to six institutions with the aim that the institutions, in cooperation with the municipality of location, ensure that the agreement is in accordance with the applicable rules. The municipality-run institution was recommended to ensure, in cooperation with the municipality, that there is approval of the in-house school in accordance with the applicable rules.

The Ombudsman generally recommends that the secure residential institutions, in cooperation with the relevant municipality, ensure that the

basis for the in-house school in the form of agreements etc. is in accordance with the applicable rules.

In relation to the PPR services, the visiting teams found that different models are used in this respect. In some places, the PPR services are run by the region instead of the municipality while in one of the institutions, according to the received information, an in-house psychologist was in charge of the PPR services.

In continuation of a previous year's monitoring visits, the Ombudsman has started an own-initiation investigation on the PPR services at an independent institution with an in-house school. In connection with the investigation, the Ministry of Children and Education has made a general statement on the rules for PPR services. The Ministry has stated that it is the municipality of location that has the final responsibility for PPR services to placement institutions etc. in the municipality, and that this also includes the cost connected with PPR. In addition, the Ministry has stated that it depends on the general framework of administrative law pertaining to delegation to what extent others than the municipality can be in charge of parts of the PPR services. A [news item](#) on the case has been published on the Ombudsman's website, in Danish only.

Further to the monitoring visits to the secure residential institutions, the Ombudsman has written to the relevant municipalities that the Ombudsman assumes that the municipality will ensure that PPR services in relation to in-house schools, and the agreements with the institutions on the running of the in-house schools, are in accordance with the statements from the Ministry of Children and Education on the rules on Pedagogical Psychological counselling services.

11.3. Teaching a full range of subjects and number of teaching hours, exemption from subjects and exemption from tests and examinations

As was the case in 2017, the Ombudsman's monitoring visits in 2021 show that it is still a challenge for in-house schools in secure residential institutions to observe the rules on teaching a full range of subjects. Furthermore, there were challenges with observing the rules on exemption from lessons in subjects and from mandatory tests and the Folkeskole examinations.

It was the visiting teams' general impression that the challenges were mainly due to the children's and the young people's educational level and other circumstances in the form of, among other things, addiction and mental disorders. In addition, it presented a difficulty for the institutions because the young people were typically only in the institution for a short time.

Furthermore, it was the impression that the institutions are familiar with the rules on exemption from subjects etc. but seldom make use of them. In this connection, the institutions stated that exemption is subject to a difficult process in the light of the short period of time that the young people are placed at the facilities.

The Ombudsman recommended to all eight institutions that they ensure compliance with the rules on teaching the full range of subjects, and he recommended to six institutions that they comply with the rules on teaching the full number of hours. In addition, one institution was recommended to ensure that one-to-one lessons comply with the applicable rules.

In addition, the Ombudsman recommended to six institutions that they ensure compliance with the rules on exemption from lessons in subjects while one of the other institutions was recommended to ensure that a decision on exemption from lessons in subjects is made on the basis of a PPR assessment. Furthermore, the Ombudsman recommended to all eight institutions that they ensure compliance with the rules on exemption from mandatory tests and Folkeskole examinations.

The Ombudsman generally recommends that it is ensured in relation to in-house schools that all pupils are taught the full range of subjects and number of hours, and that exemption from this is only made if – based on a specific and individual assessment – a pupil is exempted from lessons in one or more subjects or has the class hours reduced according to the applicable rules.

Additionally, the Ombudsman generally recommends that it is ensured that decisions on exemption from mandatory tests and the Folkeskole examinations are made in accordance with the rules, and that this is documented.

In a meeting with the Ministry of Children and Education, the Ombudsman gave a general account of the continued challenges for the in-house schools in the secure residential institutions and special secure wards.

During the monitoring visits, it came to the Ombudsman's attention that two municipalities with regard to two in-house schools had decided to approve an application for reduction in the number of teaching hours according to a provision in the Folkeskole Act, which according to its text concerns special schools and classes.

The Ombudsman has started an own-initiative investigation on the subject.

12. Health

12.1. General

A child has a right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, access to facilities for the treatment of illnesses and rehabilitation of health. This follows from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

During the visits, the visited institutions accounted for the children's and young people's access to health services, including treatment by general medical practitioner, dentist and specialist doctors. The visits generally left the impression that the institutions were focused to a relevant extent on the children's and young people's health-related conditions and their access to health services, and that the institutions followed up on any medical challenges in an appropriate way.

A number of the institutions stated that the children and young people typically keep their own general medical practitioner during the placement, which can present challenges in relation to getting them seen by a doctor if there is no arrangement with a doctor in the local area.

The Ombudsman recommended to two institutions that they consider making an arrangement with a local doctor who can assist with the treatment of the children and young people as long as they are residing in the institution in question. In addition, one of these institutions was also recommended to consider how to ensure to a greater extent that children and young people have access to regular dental check-ups.

12.2. Screening etc.

Children and young people placed in a secure residential institution or a special secure ward and not already having undergone a psychiatric evaluation must be offered a screening with a view to uncovering a possible need for a psychiatric evaluation. This appears from the Executive Order on Adult Responsibility.

In connection with the monitoring visits, the visiting teams discovered that a number of institutions do not offer such a screening in all relevant instances. The impression was that there were doubts on, among other things, whether unaccompanied underage foreign nationals must be offered screening.

The Ombudsman gave a recommendation to five of the institutions with the aim of ensuring that children and young people are offered a screening to uncover a possible need for a psychiatric evaluation if they have not already undergone such an evaluation on arrival at the institution.

The issue of screening has been discussed at a meeting with the then Ministry of Social Affairs and Senior Citizens. The Ministry has expressed its agreement with the Ombudsman in that everyone – also unaccompanied underage foreign nationals – must be offered screening.

In the light of this, the Ombudsman generally recommends that the secure residential institutions ensure that all children and young people are offered a screening to uncover a possible need for a psychiatric evaluation if they have not undergone such an evaluation on arrival at the institution.

Some of the institutions indicated that they experience challenges in relation to receiving untreated young people with severe mental problems. One of the institutions stated that they do not always feel equipped to receive these young people, and that the condition of several of the young people are not sufficiently evaluated. At the same time, some institutions experience challenges regarding cooperation with the emergency psychiatric services when the institutions contact them.

The Ombudsman recommended to two institutions that the institutions consider discussing the possibility of a cooperative agreement with the child and adolescent psychiatry services on, among other things, admissions and discharges.

In a meeting, the Ombudsman has drawn the attention of the then Ministry of Social Affairs and Senior Citizens to the challenges experienced by the institutions in relation to receiving and working with children and young people with severe mental problems.

12.3. Medicines management, addiction etc.

Correct medicines management is crucial to patient safety, and the Danish Health Authority has issued national clinical guidelines on drawing up instructions and on prescription and management of medicines.

No recommendations were given to institutions regarding their medicines management, but two of the institutions were given recommendations concerning their instructions on medicines management.

The secure residential institutions and special secure wards can receive children and young people who may have taken drugs or who have an actual addiction and who are therefore at risk of experiencing withdrawal symptoms during their placement. On this background, it is important that the institutions take this into account.

The Ombudsman recommended to three institutions that they ensure that the institutions are focused on identifying – perhaps through a drugs test – young

people who on arrival have, or are at risk of developing, withdrawal symptoms, and to ensure that treatment of the withdrawal symptoms take place. In addition, one institution was recommended to consider drawing up written guidelines on detection and treatment of drug abuse etc., including withdrawal symptoms.

The Ombudsman generally recommends that the secure residential institutions are focused on identifying children and young people who have or are at risk of developing withdrawal symptoms, and that the institutions ensure that relevant treatment of withdrawal symptoms takes place.

Yours sincerely,



Niels Fenger