

CHILDREN'S HOME IN KILLARNEY PLANNED

AN [REDACTED] for underprivileged children is to be started in the grounds of the Sisters of Mercy orphanage, in Killarney, the Bishop of Kerry, the Most Rev. Dr. Casey, said in Dublin last night.

The Department of Education has already examined the scheme and officers of the Department have visited the proposed site for the home.

Bishop Casey was speaking at a press conference in Veritas House to announce details of a seminar on residential child care to be held in Killarney from March 19th to 21st.

He said that the next step, in connection with the new home, was to consult the architects. The plan would then be presented to the Department for a final decision. The home, he said, would be for 15 or 16 children and would be based on the principle of breaking them into family groups with regard to age and sex.

The seminar, being organised by the Council of Social Welfare, is expected to be attended by some 200 people including representatives of the Departments of Health, Education and Social Welfare, superiors, administrators and staff of all reformatory and industrial schools in the country, university lecturers, and social workers.

It will also be attended by nurses and children's officers of health authorities, child care officers and the managers of adoption societies. The chairman will be Mr. Vincent Grogan, S.C., director of the Statute Law Reform Office, Dublin, and the opening address will be given by Dr. Casey, it was explained by Mr. K. U. Connally, chairman of the Council and Assistant Secretary, Department of Health.

Asked about the poor standards of some children's institutions and reformatories, Dr. Casey said that most of these circumstances were due to lack of money and an obvious disinterest by the general public. It was in this connection that Dr. Casey mentioned the new home. It was hoped that all such problems would be discussed at the seminar, he said, and that valuable recommendations would be made by the delegates for the improvement of the care of children in this country.

While it was impossible to forecast the outcome of the seminar, it was to be hoped that it would provide a stepping stone for improvements in the services presently provided.

The topics for discussion at the seminar are comprehensive. The opening address on Friday, March 19th, will concern "Current Trends in Residential Child Care" by the Rev. Sr. Winifred, deputy head, house mother and teacher at the Good Shepherd Convent, Monmouth.

This will be followed by a lecture on "Delinquent Youth" by the Rev. Sr. Lucey, social worker with delinquent and disturbed teenage girls, Convent of Our Lady of Charity, Lr. Sean MacDermott street, Dublin. "Children in Care"

will be discussed by the Rev. Sr. Geraldine, a teacher in the Special School for Disturbed and Delinquent Adolescents, Good Shepherd Convent, Limerick.

On the following day, the Rev. Sr. Stanislaus, a social worker, youth counsellor, and lecturer, the Kilkenny Social Services, Kilkenny, will lecture on "The Role of Religious in Residential Child Care." Dr. Paul McQuaid, consultant psychiatrist, Department of Child Psychiatry, Mater Hospital, Dublin, will discuss "Assessment and Referral" and Dr. Johnston D. Haldane, consultant psychiatrist, Department of Child and Family Psychiatry, Playfield House, Cupar, Fife, Scotland, will give an address on "Comprehensive Community Care."

On the final day, Antoin Uas. O Gormain, psychologist, Department of Education, Development Branch, will discuss the report on Reformatory and Industrial School Systems.

Mr. M. V. O'Mahony, solicitor, McCann, Fitzgerald, Roche and Dudley, will lecture on "The Legal Aspect of Child Care" and Brother Austin, S.S.C., manager, St. Patrick's Training School, Belfast, will give a talk entitled "The Living Situation."

The object of the seminar is to give those involved in child care an opportunity to discuss current trends and problems and to try, in a constructive way, to contribute to the improvement of the care of underprivileged children. It is intended to follow up the seminar with a series of further meetings to disseminate its conclusions and findings.