

Acknowledgements

This book is an account of a process of change undertaken while we held leadership roles in Oberstown Children Detention Campus, where we sought to fulfil the goal of advancing children's rights in detention. Viewed from our different perspectives, bringing together the theory and practice of advancing children's rights in detention has truly been a learning experience for us both. While the goal was clear and simple, its completion was complex and daunting at times, demanding vision, trust, skills, partners, resources and time. Throughout the process of writing this book, we recalled the support we received from many individuals and organizations in our respective worlds. So many people helped us to respond to the challenges, to shoulder the responsibility, to continuously imagine what was possible.

At the heart of the Oberstown journey was the passion we share – and shared with others – for young people and their right to be treated with dignity and respect, wherever they are. So, to all those young people who trusted and challenged us over the years, thank you for helping us to shape detention for young people in Ireland, now and into the future.

We hope this book will provide an insight into the theory and practice, the policy and legislative requirements and the skills and resilience required to put in place a child-centred model of care in detention, in line with a children's rights approach. We are grateful to Bristol University Press for their interest in this project from the beginning, and to Helen Davis for her enthusiasm throughout. The book was only made possible with the generous support and solidarity of the wider Oberstown family, Ursula's academic colleagues at University College Cork and beyond, and the stellar research assistance of Rose Wallace, Chelsea Carr and especially Laura Lanigan.