

**Name:** James Milne

**DOB:** 22/07/1957

**Name of Care Home/s:** St Maragaret's Children's Home, Elie Fife

**Reason for going into care:** Father wasn't coping and not properly cared for

**Age in care:** Approximately 14 years of age

### **Personal Statement**

As a child, I was placed at St Margaret's, and my time there was filled with fear and trauma. From the start, the environment was hostile and degrading. The staff arranged fights among the children for their amusement, compelling us to box each other even if we were unwilling. If you declined, they ridiculed you, labeling you a "wimp," ensuring that everyone heard, which made you feel small and ashamed. Refusing to fight resulted in punishment: you could be confined indoors while others played outside or lose other minor privileges. The message was unmistakable, fight or face humiliation and exclusion. This was also for their entertainment. Even worse than the forced fights was the conduct of the man who managed the home. We referred to him as "Uncle Dave," and I believe his name was Dave Murphy. He singled me out when I was alone, never in the presence of others. Over about eight or nine months, there were three distinct instances when he sexually assaulted me. He grabbed my private parts three times, attempted to kiss my neck, and rubbed my leg. Each time, I pulled away and told him to stop. I made it clear that I wanted nothing to do with him, but he disregarded my wishes and tried again later. Each incident left me feeling shaken and physically ill. I felt frightened, trapped, and powerless. Knowing he was in charge of the home, I didn't feel safe confiding in any adult. Since he only approached me when we were alone, I also feared that no one would believe me. The mix of forced fighting, public humiliation, and ongoing sexual assaults created a daily atmosphere of fear and shame. I never felt secure in a place where I should have been protected.