

## Supplementary Statement

**Name:** Yvonne McCracken

**DOB:** 01/04/1977

**Application Number:** APP462986

**Name of Care Home/s:** Arnview', Mitchell Street Children's Home, Cardross Park Assessment Centre, & Kerelaw Residential School

**Reason for going into care:** Neglect from family

**Age in care:** 2/3 years of age until 16 years old

### **Arnview**

I went into care at the age of 2 or 3 to a place called 'Arnview' but I don't recall much here.

### **Mitchell Street**

I was aged approximately 4 years old when I was sent to Mitchell St children's home. I recall a largely built, teenage boy of around 15 years old, entering the bedroom at nighttime where me and my sister were sleeping, prompting us to hide from him in a cupboard. Other people would stay there but no checks were made on us to ensure safety, as we would go into the other rooms at night. I ran away from here and informed my grandmother, then shortly thereafter, I was relocated to my grandmother's home until I was approximately aged 13 years old. My sister went to stay with my mother, so we were separated. My Grandmother gave me a good life, but I would still sleep in a cupboard there too. It felt safer because of the fear from the home at Mitchell Street, but at times I would wet the bed. I experienced feelings of fear and neglect from the staff, as they did not ensure my safety in that environment.

### **Cardross Assessment Unit**

I spent some time in Cardross Assessment Centre aged approximately 12/13 but do not recall much of when placed here. I ended up here for solvent abuse and was out of parental control, I was then sent back to Mitchell Street for a couple of months after Cardross Assessment Centre which terrified me as I had spent my whole childhood in fear because of this place.

### **Kerelaw**

I was in Kerelaw from approximately 13 years old for 3 years until just before my 16th birthday. Matt George, the art teacher, informed me that it was permissible to engage in sexual relations with my boyfriend in the classroom, provided that no one else was present. It appears he was attempting to build my trust, but he may have been watching

us through the doors or window. I did engage in sexual intercourse with my boyfriend in the classroom and became pregnant at the age of 15. This boy was attending day classes and was not a full-time resident, which meant that neither of us received proper care or any safeguarding. The staff had documented the dates of the girls' menstrual cycles and when they requested sanitary items. They were unaware of my pregnancy until one staff member noticed I was three months overdue for my period.

Subsequently, a pregnancy test was conducted at the local GP's office, and I ultimately gave birth.

John Muldoon served as my primary worker. I told him he reminded me of my dad due to having a similar appearance to him, and I confided in him regarding my drug use. He appeared to initially try to earn my trust saying I shouldn't be in there, but once I became vulnerable and felt secure with him, he abruptly changed his demeanour. He once restrained me, bent me over a chair, and rubbed himself against me. This sudden shift in behaviour was alarming. Ultimately, I ended up in tears, and the encounter was quite forceful. The act of doing this in a secluded office was extremely intimidating, as he lay on my back and rubbed against me for approximately ten minutes, which felt very intense, and I was unable to push him off.

There were comments made suggesting that it was no surprise I was in that situation, given the way I was treated, and they would often curse at me. Once I became pregnant, the staff's treatment of me changed to a more negative approach. Male staff members would provoke me with remarks to elicit a reaction. John Muldoon, would observe girls during showers, creating an environment devoid of privacy, leading to unwanted voyeurism that made me feel uncomfortable. He would also enter my room at night and cuddle with me, but only when no one else was around.

During the West Pennine Way holiday trip, male staff encouraged me to enter the lake while I was in my underwear, which became see-through. They were accompanied on the trip by male staff members, including Matt George and the PE teacher. Some children in the home were using drugs. The staff permitted smoking, allowing up to five cigarettes a day. Male staff, including John Muldoon, would spy on other girls while they were changing. The manager also got a resident girl of 16 pregnant while working there. The female staff were generally pleasant and posed no issues. However, I recall going to a female staff member's house to help hang flower baskets and another male staff member's house to assist with a house move, which made me feel as though we were being exploited.

Once, I was grounded and prohibited from home visits, which resulted in the cessation of my pocket money and any privileges. I was grounded for approximately two weeks, likely due to my defiance. Matt George frequently took me out, and in retrospect, I believe he groomed me. He would give me massages in class, under my shirt, touching my skin in a very invasive manner. He would take me back to his house and treat me to

ice cream, as he resided near the beach in Largs. He often spoke about my friend Grace, having previously cornered Grace outside the bathroom in his home, discussed her inappropriately and asked Grace for oral sex.

Following my experiences, I suffer from trauma stemming from my past and my time in care, feeling as though I failed as a child within the entire system. To cope with this, I turned to drugs and have only recently begun to find a more positive direction in my life. My mental health has deteriorated, leading to suicidal thoughts and attempts, resulting in me being sectioned for a month due to being a danger to myself. I have been prescribed various medications to address my trauma and utilize Reiki for self-healing and to cultivate positive energy. I have 18 months abstinence now from drugs and I am slowly trying to be in a better place. I have never addressed this with anyone other than you, and it took me a lot to come forward, I am on a journey to get myself in a better place and I feel like sharing this with you will help me to get closure. I have a picture on my windowsill of me before any of this happened, I can look into the eyes of myself in that picture and really see myself, I feel sorry for the little girl in that picture and what she had to go through. It has destroyed my relationships, it has destroyed my health, and I can only hope to be able to look forward now.