

Supplementary Statement

Original statement was taken over the phone 29/10/2025 - finalised with client over the phone on 27/02/26

My father served in the army, and my mother hailed from Northern Ireland. When their relationship fell apart, I faced significant challenges as I was very close to my father, who returned to Scotland. Upon arriving in Scotland, I lived with my father and my grandmother. My father struggled with alcoholism, and my grandmother found it difficult to manage my behaviour, leading to intervention from social services.

Kerelaw

My negative experiences occurred at Kerelaw. I was here from 2001, aged 15. I endured physical violence from the staff, both during the day and at night. They would seize me by the throat and throw me onto the bed to subdue me. Older men would slap and shove me around. This abuse happened to me every other day, and I frequently witnessed it happening to other children. I could hear other children crying and screaming throughout the night.

On one occasion, I stumbled upon another child trying to hang themselves. The staff treated me horribly, using derogatory names like "bitch." They would blame me for being there, making me feel worthless.

I recall an incident where another girl held a knife to my throat, and the staff merely stood by, allowing it to happen. They did nothing to intervene and appeared indifferent to the situation. I felt as though I was living in a state of constant fear and anxiety while I was there.

I was subjected to strip searches and invasive inspections of my body. This would occur when we had ran away and were brought back to the home. The staff tried to justify the searches as to ensure we weren't bringing anything back with us but the police had already searched us and brought us back. I strongly believe it was a form of punishment and a way to humiliate you. They failed to protect me from emotional harm. I felt as though they attempted to control every aspect of my life, from meals to showering. They had the power to withhold meals, and at times, they would deny me showers as well.

I was often locked in my room for hours without any dinner. I recall one instance when I wet the bed, which I believe was a result of the anxiety surrounding the 9/11 tragedy. They didn't help me feel better about it. I was dragged by my hair, numerous times in Kerelaw and was frequently made fun off when upset.

I raised concerns with my social worker and other staff members about the way I was being treated but these concerns were dismissed. When I tried to raise these concerns again once I had left Kerelaw my social workers dismissed these concerns by saying aren't you glad your out now and basically implying that don't misbehave again and you won't have to go back there.

My family was too far away for visits; they were in Northern Ireland. I was separated from my brother and the rest of my family during my time in care. This separation affected my mental health, and I suffer from PTSD. I did escape from there once, specifically to be with my grandmother, knowing she would be alone for New Year's Eve. Upon my return, I was punished for a month, and just three weeks into that punishment, she passed away. The staff made me feel as if this was my fault and that I deserved the punishment, a thought that still haunts me. During my punishment, I was confined to my room for extended periods and faced isolation.

My time in care has had a huge impact on my life. I am currently in rehab due to developing alcoholism as a way of blocking out the trauma. I have had problems with anxiety depression all my adult life. Certain sounds, like an alarm, can still trigger me, causing my body to react with a flight response, and I find myself running from the noise. Recently a fire alarm went off at the facility I am at and I went into a total panic, frantically trying to get out with no regard for anybody around me as I just need to get away and feel safe.