

## **Supplementary Statement**

**Name:** Kevin Coburn

**DOB:** 30/08/1975

**Name of Care Home/s:** Tenterfield Children's Home in Haddington, Various Care facilities throughout Edinburgh, Rossie Farm, Rimpleton House in Glenrothes, Hillside School, Aberdour (Formerly known as St John Bosco's)

**Reason for going into care:** Absconding Learning difficulties at school, I started getting bullied. They say I was a delinquent at home.

**Age in care:** 13 -16 years old

### **Statement**

I experienced abuse at home before going into care. Although I was attending school, I struggled with learning difficulties and was badly bullied. Because of this, I began running away from home. My parents were abusive; they would hit me and sometimes put tape over my mouth. Eventually, Broxburn Social Work decided that I should go into care. I remember being taken there with my father in the car. During the journey, he repeatedly punched my legs. When we arrived, I was physically thrown through the front door.

### **Tenterfield Children's Home in Haddington**

At the age of thirteen, I was placed in Tenterfield Children's Home in Haddington. The building looked like something from Downton Abbey. We stayed in dormitories, and there was no schooling provided. The staircase was large and grand, and at the bottom was the office with the dining room next to it. If you were cheeky or did not follow instructions, you would be denied dinner or locked in a cupboard for hours with no toilet. This happened to me several times. On one occasion, I had tape over my face and kicked the door in distress. When the staff opened it, they hit me on the back of the head and locked me in again.

The staff frequently used brown tape, wrapping it around our faces. If we tried to remove it, they would strike us. This happened to me regularly. One woman in particular, used to shove soap in my mouth and then tape it shut. We had no toilets in our rooms, and the showers were communal. I often witnessed other children being abused as well. The staff used a bamboo stick to hit us. I was smacked, kicked, and punched regularly. Violence was a normal part of life there.

At that age, I had obsessive-compulsive tendencies. I liked to keep my bed tidy and hated being dirty. My bed was always made. I had already been abused at home, so I thought going into care would help, but the abuse only became worse. I never went home on weekends because I did not want to. I also wet the bed, and the staff would humiliate me for it.

### **Various Care facilities throughout Edinburgh**

After that, I was moved between several different places, though I cannot remember much about some of them.

### **Rossie Farm**

At Rossie Farm, I was not there long. I do not recall much abuse, but the environment was extremely strict, almost like a small secure unit. The man in charge was the father of my social worker. Nothing major happened that I can remember, but there was still no education provided.

### **Rimbleton House in Glenrothes**

I was sent to Rimbleton House in Glenrothes. There was some form of “schooling,” but it was not real education. We were given bits of paper and left to doodle all day. I had my own room there, but showers were still communal and lacked privacy. The staff sometimes tried to send me home on leave, but I resisted. I once had an altercation with a staff member after having a drink. We argued, and instead of calming things down, he headbutted me with force and dragged me to another part of the building. I was then locked in a separate unit for an unspecified amount of time. Staff would check on you occasionally, but you could be kept there for as long as they wished.

### **Hillside School, Aberdour (Formerly known as St John Bosco’s)**

I was later placed in Hillside School in Aberdour, where I stayed until I was sixteen. It had a dormitory-style setup, though there was one single room in our unit. The showers were communal and often cold. It resembled a boarding school, with basic schooling during the day, but it was not proper education. The staff were extremely violent. If there was any disagreement, they would grab you from behind, put their arm around your neck, and slam you to the floor. One man named Leo was particularly brutal. He would kneel on your back, pull your arms behind you, and hold you down. I called it “the turkey.” It happened regularly to me and others. If you struggled, he would punch you in the ribs. It was pure torture.

The staff were cruel and violent, often leaving us with bruises and lumps. They were careful to avoid hospital visits to conceal the abuse. They would also call me names like “thick” or “stupid,” telling me that even though I was a certain age, I had the brain of a small child. I needed help with learning but was humiliated instead of supported.

### **After leaving Care**

When I left care at sixteen, I could not read or write. I went to live with my uncle. I have struggled my entire life as a result of my childhood. I have been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder due to the abuse I suffered. I began using drugs at around nineteen to numb my emotions and feel normal. I was never offered any support when I left care, and I have lived with the effects of trauma ever since.

I am now fifty years old and still dealing with the consequences. I take several medications, including antidepressants and treatment for PTSD. I see both a psychiatrist and a psychologist. I continue to struggle with reading and writing because I never received proper education or support. I am dyslexic and experience anxiety in confined spaces, which stems from being locked in rooms and cupboards as a child. Despite everything, I am still trying my best to heal and move forward.