

Statement Addendum

Client Name: Stewart Mcfarlane
Date of Birth: 09/06/1971
Care Setting: Craig Residential School, Crosshouse, Kilmarnock, Ayrshire, Scotland
Dates: 1980
Persons Involved:

Full Statement

I was taken out of school in 1980 for reasons that were never explained to me and placed in Craig Residential School in Cross House, Kilmarnock, Ayrshire, Scotland. From the moment I arrived, my life changed forever—it was absolute hell. I was terrified, not just for myself, but for my brother too. They split us up from the very beginning, and that separation left me feeling helpless and alone.

The staff would assist us to the showers, but it was anything but assistance. They watched us shower, forced us to undress, and told us they had to “wash us.” I was a young boy, and it made me feel completely exposed and unsafe. I was forced to get dressed in front of them, and they made me believe this was normal, though deep down I knew it was wrong. They would point out my body parts and touch me, and I felt powerless to stop it.

We were always starving. Food was scarce and insufficient. I remember sneaking out to a shop one day just to try to eat something, and for that, I was beaten and then starved for even longer. It felt like we were locked away and forgotten. I would sit in the gardens trying desperately to protect my brother, while other children and the staff would beat us. It was like being trapped in a real-life version of the film *Scum*. I was secluded, locked away, and utterly helpless.

Over the years, I tried to talk about what happened, but I often blamed my parents instead, because I couldn't fully comprehend the cruelty I had endured. My mental health has been affected profoundly ever since. I struggle to trust people, and I find it almost impossible to build meaningful relationships. We were forced to fight other children, and staff would push and hit us constantly. I wasn't a bad boy, yet every day I felt terrorized.

Education was nonexistent. Every day, I was made to copy letters from the blackboard. There was no real teaching, no support, no encouragement—only neglect and abuse. I felt abandoned, like nobody cared about my wellbeing or my future. From a young age, I was treated as if I were less than human. The staff screamed at us, beat us, and treated us like animals they despised. I was always bruised, black and blue, and I lived in constant fear.

Everyone was scared. Nobody felt safe enough to speak up. Punishments were brutal—beatings, being locked in a room, and nights spent terrified and alone. I couldn't sleep because I was afraid. I would be taken to an empty room and made to sit there all night, all I wanted was my family and to make sure my brother was safe. Even now, thinking about it, I break down. I suffer in silence, carrying the trauma with me every day.

The neglect was so extreme that sometimes I was so hungry I ate toothpaste because there was nothing else to eat. That is how abandoned and forgotten we were. My brother was my only source of comfort, but even he was taken from me when they separated us into different dormitories. It was devastating, leaving me feeling even more isolated.

During the six weeks I was there, family visits were completely stopped. I felt completely cut off from the world I knew, abandoned and powerless. Nobody cared how I felt. I felt intimidated, bullied, humiliated, neglected, and utterly alone.

The impact of what I experienced has stayed with me my entire life. The abuse and humiliation I endured have had lasting effects on my mental health. I struggle to trust anyone, I find it difficult to form relationships, and I live with constant depression, anxiety, and PTSD. I still cannot read or write properly because the education I should have had was stolen from me. The trauma from Craig Residential School is life-threatening in its consequences, and it continues to shadow every part of my life.

Even today, I still suffer. I break down when I think about it. I live with the fear, the helplessness, and the scars of being so thoroughly abused and neglected. My life was forever altered, and the mental and emotional impact continues to affect me every single day.