

Statement Addendum

Client Name: William Argue
Date of Birth: 15/04/1960
Care Setting: KERELAW
Dates: 1972
Persons Involved:

Full Statement

This was the worst time of my life. When I was placed in Kirkland Park, I knew straight away that it was very different from anywhere I had been before, and it felt extremely frightening. On arrival, I could see that the environment was chaotic and unsafe. The children were running around, fighting, and behaving in what I can only describe as a feral manner. There were four separate units within the facility, each run by a house master.

My house master was Mr Scott. He was very loud, aggressive, and intimidating. He would scream and roar at us constantly, and we obeyed out of fear. The other children in the unit were also very aggressive. I was picked on and physically assaulted on a daily basis. The older boys in particular were brutal towards me. They would laugh at me, torment me, and act with arrogance, knowing that the staff would allow this behaviour. I felt completely unsafe and unprotected.

There were also staff members who were physically abusive. I clearly remember Mr Matt George, who was an art teacher. He would beat me regularly, leaving me bruised and black and blue. He would use his knuckles to strike me on the head. I also witnessed him assaulting other children frequently. Violence from staff was normalised in this environment.

The staff would restrain us in extremely painful ways. They would sit on top of us, restricting our breathing, and bend our arms and legs back behind our bodies, causing significant pain. I also remember being assaulted by the head teacher, Mr George. He would sit on me and repeatedly strike my back. Another staff member, Mr Cruickshank, was also involved in these assaults. On some occasions, Mr Cruickshank would hold me down while Mr George used my own belt to whip my back and the backs of my legs. This happened repeatedly and left visible red marks and injuries.

There were also times when staff would stand on my legs, causing such severe pain that I was unable to walk properly for days afterwards. This happened to me on multiple occasions, approximately six times that I can remember. After these incidents, I was made to sign a large book, which I believe was used to record these events, although I did not understand why at the time.

Food was provided, but it was often cold and stale. Mr Scott enforced strict routines, controlling how we ate and behaved at all times. We were often locked in our rooms and secluded for long periods—sometimes for

hours, and sometimes for an entire day—without access to sunlight or the opportunity to play.

I attended school within the grounds, but the environment there was also negative. Staff were unkind and unsupportive, and the behaviour of other children, combined with favouritism shown by staff, made it very difficult to learn. This had a lasting impact on my education.

I also witnessed sexual abuse occurring to another boy while I was there. This is something that has stayed with me and continues to affect me to this day. I remember seeing inappropriate touching of pupils by a staff member, which I found deeply disturbing.

There were also incidents where staff would drag us into the shower rooms while we were naked and whip us with towels. This was degrading and humiliating. I remember a staff member called Mr Tudip, who was a large and intimidating man. He would force us to stand facing a wall with a box placed over our heads for hours at a time. On one occasion, I was not allowed to go to the toilet during this punishment, and I ended up having an accident in front of the other children. They laughed at me, and I felt completely humiliated. Despite this, I was still beaten afterwards.

The staff often allowed other children to laugh at and torment me. They showed clear favouritism, which made the situation even worse. Some staff members also knew my family, and they would use this against me by calling my family members names, including my uncle, in order to upset and provoke me. This caused me additional emotional distress.

I remained in this environment until I turned 16. By that point, the damage had already been done. My mental health had been severely affected. I now suffer from significant mental health conditions, including post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, and constant worry. I experience nightmares related to what I went through.

These experiences have had a lifelong impact on me. I struggle to trust anyone and find it extremely difficult to build relationships. I often feel isolated, with no one to talk to about what I have been through. The abuse I suffered has affected every aspect of my life, and I continue to live with the consequences every day. I firmly believe that my life will never be the same because of what I endured.