

Statement Addendum

Client Name: Kathleen Greenhill
Date of Birth: 23/02/1977
Care Setting: Fornethy Institution Scotland
Dates: 1985
Persons Involved:

Full Statement

I was 8 years of age when I was taken from my happy, healthy home for no reason that I understood. I remember feeling confused, scared, and completely powerless. One day I was in a place where I felt safe and loved, and the next I was removed without explanation. I did not understand why this was happening to me, and that confusion has stayed with me for years.

I was placed into a care home where I was frightened from the very beginning. From the moment I arrived, I felt unsafe. The environment was chaotic and hostile. The other children were distressed and acted out, which I now understand may have been due to their own trauma, but at the time it made everything feel even more frightening and unpredictable.

When I arrived, I was exposed to abuse straight away. The home was full of fear. The children were described as “feral,” and the staff were constantly shouting, swearing, and showing aggression. I witnessed staff being stressed, losing control, and physically hitting other children. I have vague memories of being beaten badly myself. The staff would beat me black and blue. This was not a one-off incident—it was ongoing. I was bullied not only by the staff but also by other children, and there was no protection or support.

We were treated like human punch bags. The staff were cruel and showed no kindness or care. Basic needs were not consistently met. Food was not always provided, and when it was, we were often forced to eat food that was horrible and distressing to us. They would laugh and torment us while we struggled. If I refused to eat, I was punished severely.

One of the punishments I remember clearly was being taken to dark, cold rooms and left there alone for long periods, sometimes all night. I was secluded and locked away many times. I remember the fear of being isolated like that, hearing other children screaming, and feeling completely abandoned. Those memories have stayed with me and still affect me deeply.

I will never forget the time a girl in the home started her period. We were never educated about anything like

that, so I didn't understand what was happening. She was crying, and I was frightened for her. I screamed for help, thinking something was seriously wrong. Instead of helping us, the staff dragged us away by our hair and beat us badly. I still didn't understand why we were being punished. That moment has stayed with me because it showed me how unsafe we were, even when we asked for help.

I tried to write home to my mum, desperate for someone to know what was happening. The staff told me I was lying. I still have that letter to this day. It represents how desperate I was to be heard and how I was silenced.

I remember being dragged out of bed daily and beaten by staff. They would call me a "stupid little bastard" and drag me through the corridors. I was often secluded from everyone else, isolated, bullied, and constantly tormented. There was no one to protect me, no one to comfort me, and no one to believe me.

There were also concerns among the children that we were being drugged. There are large gaps in my memory from that time. There are things I cannot remember at all, and other things that make me feel physically sick when I try to think about them. I sometimes "blank out," and this has affected me into adulthood. I am also deeply afraid of what I might not remember, including the possibility that I may have been sexually assaulted. That fear has stayed with me because of how vulnerable and unprotected I was.

I was beaten, bullied, denied care and empathy, and forced to eat food as punishment. I was left in cold, dark corridors, secluded and locked away repeatedly. When I think about these experiences now, I feel physically sick. The trauma has affected me both mentally and physically.

As a result of what I went through, I now suffer with anxiety, depression, and PTSD. These conditions have had a severe and lasting impact on my life. For many years, I turned to drugs as a way to block out the pain and memories. I became clean around 5 years ago, but when I did, the memories came rushing back. This caused serious problems for me and has made it very difficult to cope.

What happened to me as a child has changed my whole life. I still take medication to manage my mental health. I struggle daily with the effects of the trauma I experienced. It has affected my relationships, my sense of safety, and my ability to trust others.

I will never, ever forget what happened to me in that place. I was terrorised, beaten, and made to feel worthless. The impact of that abuse is something I continue to live with every day.