

Statement Addendum

Client Name: Alexander Mcphee
Date of Birth: 22/10/1961
Care Setting: clark house- 42 molbourne road - largs
Dates: 1966- April 1971
Persons Involved:

Full Statement

At the age of 5–6 years old, I was placed into care. This happened when I was 6 years old after my mum's boyfriend tried to murder her. Following this traumatic event, I was taken away and placed into Clark House, located at 42 Melbourne Road, Largs. This place housed over 26 children, all living in just two dormitories. From the very beginning, the environment felt overcrowded, unsafe, and frightening.

While I was there, we were beaten by staff every single day. The abuse was constant and became a normal part of life for us, even though it should never have been. I remember clearly that the gardener at the home tried to sexually abuse me by putting his hands down my pants. I was just a child and didn't fully understand what was happening, but I knew it was wrong and it left me feeling scared, confused, and ashamed.

There was a staff member called Redina who was extremely violent towards us. She would beat us badly and showed no care or compassion. Another staff member I remember is Mr Andrews. The overall treatment we received from staff was harsh, controlling, and cruel. We were treated like we were in the army—constantly shouted at, controlled, and punished. The staff would mentally torment us, deliberately upsetting and intimidating us, which left us feeling constantly on edge and frightened.

Although food was provided, it was often poor quality and unpleasant. There were also deeply humiliating experiences, such as being dressed in girls' clothing, which felt degrading and embarrassing. At that age, we didn't fully understand why this was happening, but it made us feel ashamed and confused about ourselves.

I was separated from my two brothers while we were in Clark House. We were not allowed to build or maintain a relationship with each other, and this was extremely painful. Instead of supporting us as siblings, the staff isolated us and allowed bullying to take place. We were constantly bullied—not only by staff but also by other children. The staff encouraged this behaviour and often played the children against one another, creating a hostile and unsafe environment.

We lived in a constant state of fear—always in “fight or flight” mode. Punishments were severe and abusive.

We were locked in our dormitories as punishment, and I remember Mrs Forbes, the matron, who would beat us with belts, slippers, and her hands. The pain from these beatings would last for days. We would be left crying and screaming, but no one came to help us.

On one occasion, I was hit with a rolling pin by the cook. I genuinely feared for my life while living there. The abuse I experienced affected me both physically and mentally. I felt unsafe at all times and had no one to turn to for comfort or protection.

Bathing was another traumatic experience. The staff would supervise us and force us into cold baths, where three or four children had to bathe together at the same time. This was humiliating, degrading, and something I will never forget. It stripped us of any sense of privacy or dignity.

Punishments included being beaten, being made to stand outside in the dark all night, being locked in cupboards, and being verbally and physically bullied. The other children in the home were also deeply affected by the environment—we were all traumatised, and this led to frequent fighting and aggression. The staff did nothing to protect us; instead, they allowed and encouraged this behaviour.

I lived in Clark House for approximately 5–6 years. During that time, I was terrorised daily and witnessed my siblings, especially my younger brother, being bullied and beaten. Watching him suffer and not being able to protect him has stayed with me throughout my life. I have carried a deep sense of guilt for many years because of this.

My younger brother continues to suffer to this day. He experiences symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and severe anxiety. He has sleepless nights, nightmares, and struggles to build relationships or trust people. He has never been able to maintain long-term relationships with women, which I believe is directly linked to the sexual abuse and violence he experienced from female staff in the home. The trauma has had a lasting and devastating impact on his life.

The abuse we experienced has also had a profound effect on me. I struggle with my mental health, including anxiety, fear, and difficulties trusting others. I often relive the memories of what happened in that home, and they continue to affect my daily life. I find it difficult to form stable relationships and to feel safe, even now. The experiences I went through as a child have shaped who I am today and have caused long-term emotional and psychological harm.

After 5–6 years in care, we were eventually sent back home to our mum and her violent boyfriend—the same environment we had been removed from. We were once again subjected to bullying, beatings, and abuse. The system knew about the risks but still allowed us to return to that situation. We remained there until we were old enough to leave again.

I strongly believe that the system failed us completely. We were placed in a care environment where we were abused, neglected, and traumatised, and then returned to an unsafe home where the abuse continued. The lack of protection, support, and intervention has had lifelong consequences for me and my siblings. The impact of these experiences have caused life long term impacts i suffer with ptsd and anxiety depression i dont trust women or cant build relationships we was impacted from the whole system in everyway