

# Statement Addendum

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**Client Name:** Shona Halliday  
**Date of Birth:** 06/11/1975  
**Care Setting:** Cruton Care Home  
**Dates:** 1990  
**Persons Involved:** The staff and children

## Full Statement

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In around 1990, when I was 15 years old, I was placed in Cruton Care Home in Billy Inrel. I remember arriving there feeling confused, frightened and alone. Nobody sat me down to explain where I was, what the rules were, or what was going to happen to me. There was no effort made to settle me in or make me feel safe. I was simply placed there and expected to cope.

Almost immediately I realised I had gone from one bad situation into another. There was one particular member of staff who was extremely aggressive and intimidating. The way she spoke to us was brutal. She screamed at us constantly and treated us like we were worthless. She would physically drag us or push us around and used her size and authority to frighten us.

She had a saying she repeated often. She would say that if we “farted, coughed or sneezed,” she would be “down on us like a ton of bricks.” That phrase stuck in my mind because it showed how little tolerance she had for us. It meant we were always living in fear that even the smallest thing would lead to punishment or humiliation.

Whenever we crossed paths in the corridors, she would push or prod me as she walked past. It felt deliberate, like she was trying to provoke me. I tried my best to stay away from her whenever I could, but that wasn't always possible in a place like that. What made it worse was that other staff members saw this behaviour and did nothing to stop it. They stood by and allowed it to continue.

During my time there, I was taken out with other residents to a shopping centre. One of the younger girls began shoplifting. When she was caught, she blamed me. I was taken to a local police station and placed in a police cell. Sitting alone in that cell was terrifying. I was only 15 years old and felt completely helpless. I had no adult there supporting me or standing up for me. I remember feeling like my life was completely out of control and that no one cared whether I was treated fairly or not.

After that incident, the staff at the home used the police as a way to threaten me. They would tell me they would have me arrested or sent to prison. They knew that being put in that cell had frightened me badly, and they used that fear against me. Whenever they mentioned the police, it sent me straight into panic mode. I lived with constant anxiety that I would be blamed for something again and taken away.

The same staff member who treated me badly also told me that I would end up in prison one day. What hurts me even more is that she said this to me on my 15th birthday. Instead of hearing something kind or supportive on my birthday, I was told I would end up in prison and called a “stupid bitch.” She rarely used my

name at all. Instead, she would call me things like “lady,” “Mrs.,” or simply insult me. The way she spoke to me made me feel like I was something dirty or disgusting.

I remember the way she looked at me as well. It was as if she had already decided I was a bad person, even though I was just a frightened child trying to survive in an environment I didn’t understand.

Food was always technically available, but it often wasn’t nice or something we could eat easily. Meals were unpleasant, and many of us would go hungry because we simply couldn’t eat what was provided.

The other children in the home were also allowed to treat me badly. They stole from me, and nothing was done about it. I was forced to share a bedroom with a girl who would try to attack me during the night. I remember having to physically kick her away from me just to protect myself. The staff knew this was happening, but they still made us share the same room. It felt like they were waiting for me to react so they could punish me.

One of the most disturbing experiences I went through there happened one night when a boy from the home came into my bedroom. I was lying in bed when he exposed himself and placed his penis on me. He asked me to perform a sexual act on him. I was shocked and terrified. I screamed and shouted, and he ran away. I remember feeling completely violated and frightened. It was one of the most horrific and humiliating moments of my life. I felt like nowhere in that place was safe, not even my own bed.

The environment in the home was chaotic and disturbing in other ways as well. I remember one of the girls there being only 14 years old and already pregnant by one of the boys in the home. That alone showed how little supervision and protection there really was.

I also witnessed other children being beaten and restrained by staff members. One boy in particular, who I believe may have been autistic, was often targeted because he was vulnerable. Staff would pin him down and sit on him until he struggled to breathe. Watching that happen was terrifying. I was too scared to speak out or get involved because I believed the same thing could easily happen to me.

Living in that environment made me feel like my life was completely hopeless. Every day I was scared. I didn’t trust the staff, I didn’t feel safe around the other children, and I felt completely alone.

I stayed there for only a few months, but those months felt endless. The fear and stress I experienced during that time have stayed with me for the rest of my life.

I’ve struggled with anxiety and depression for as long as I can remember. Trusting people doesn’t come easily to me—if it ever did, it’s long gone now. I suffer with it badly, every single day, and the scars of my past are something I carry with me constantly. I’ve been on antidepressants since I was eighteen, and even with them, the weight of what happened in my life never truly goes away.

Looking back, I can see just how much I was failed. The people who were supposed to care for me in the care system didn’t. Instead, I was picked at, belittled, and hurt—both physically and mentally. There were moments when I felt completely invisible, moments when the abuse was so relentless that I couldn’t see any way out. Every harsh word, every shove, every punishment left marks that went far deeper than skin-deep. I remember the fear in the evenings, the nights I lay awake feeling unsafe, alone, and utterly unheard. Those feelings of abandonment never truly left me—they only grew heavier as I got older.

The impact on my life has been profound. I struggle to let people in, always expecting disappointment or harm. I question my own worth constantly, and even now, I carry the echoes of being failed and picked on like a shadow that never fades. It’s something I’ll never fully understand or forget, no matter how much time passes or how much help I seek. The anxiety, the depression—they aren’t just moods. They’re reminders of a life where I was left to fend for myself, where my pain wasn’t seen, and where the world felt cold and unsafe.

I try to live my life, to move forward, but it's always there. The memories, the abuses, the neglect—they shape how I see myself and how I relate to others. I'm cautious, I'm guarded, and sometimes it feels like the hurt is stitched into the very fabric of who I am. Every decision, every relationship, every moment of vulnerability is weighed down by the echoes of my past. And yet, I survive. I endure. But the journey hasn't been fair, and it has left scars that will never truly disappear.