

# Statement Addendum

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**Client Name:** Mary Menzies  
**Date of Birth:** 29/06/1964  
**Care Setting:** petruca childrens home  
**Dates:** 1976-1978  
**Persons Involved:**

## Full Statement

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I was moved to Petruca Children's Home. I spent approximately two years there. Again, I did not know anyone. No one made me feel welcome. I felt unwanted, invisible, and different. The emotional neglect was overwhelming.

The staff there were aggressive in their tone and manner. We were spoken to harshly and sometimes called nasty names. It felt like we were treated like animals rather than children who needed care and support. While we were given food and basic necessities, that was the bare minimum. There was no warmth, no nurturing, no guidance. The way staff communicated with us was demeaning and dismissive.

At that time, I was struggling deeply with my emotions. I was a child who had been uprooted and traumatised, but instead of understanding, I was picked at daily. I was bullied, both emotionally and verbally. There was no one to confide in. I began to internalise the belief that I was unwanted and unworthy.

At around 14 years old, I was placed back into Rimpleton House, this time in the long-term unit. The second placement was worse than the first. By then, I was older, but I felt even more broken.

The long-term unit had its own school on the grounds. We were rarely allowed out. It felt like being imprisoned. I had no normal teenage life. I was isolated from the outside world. The teachers and some of the other children bullied me. They would make comments that no one wanted me. Hearing that repeatedly reinforced the deep sense of rejection I already carried.

Eventually, I was placed in a locked unit — a room on its own with just a table — where I would be kept until 3pm. During this time, I received no education. I would only be let out after school hours. I felt like I was being punished simply for existing. Being locked alone for hours intensified my anxiety and distress. I felt forgotten and worthless.

The physical restraints became more frequent and more aggressive. Staff would bend our arms back painfully and force us to the ground. They would sit on us to stop us moving. The pain in my arms, back, and body was constant. The restraints were daily at times. It was humiliating and terrifying.

Staff would stand outside the showers waiting for us to come out and call us names. There was no privacy or dignity. At night, staff would sit outside my bedroom door, which felt intimidating and threatening. I never felt safe enough to properly sleep.

We were also put into what was called "Brent," where we would be locked in all day and only let out once a day. I was placed in there regularly during school time. It was isolating and traumatic. Being confined like

that made me feel like I was being punished in a prison, not cared for in a children's home.

If we did not eat the food provided, we were sent to bed hungry. There was no understanding or support around food or emotions. It was control and punishment.

By the time I was 16–17 years old, I could not cope anymore. I had endured years of emotional abuse, physical restraint, neglect, isolation, and humiliation. I was told I could not leave until I was 18, but I had reached breaking point. I went to stay with a friend from school and their parents. Instead of supporting me properly, they simply allowed me to go and left it at that. After years of control, suddenly there was no guidance at all. I had never been taught life skills, emotional regulation, or how to feel safe.

The impact of my time in care has been severe and lifelong.

As a child and teenager, I developed extreme anxiety. I lived in constant fear — fear of being restrained, fear of being locked away, fear of being humiliated. I struggled to sleep because night times reminded me of staff sitting outside my door. I felt constantly on edge.

As an adult, I continue to suffer from severe anxiety and symptoms of PTSD. I struggle to sleep properly. I am hyper-aware of my surroundings and easily overwhelmed. I can become very emotional, and situations that remind me of being controlled or trapped trigger intense panic.

One of the deepest impacts has been my fear around my own children. Because I was taken from my parents without understanding why, I have lived with a constant fear that my children could be taken from me. This fear has followed me throughout my life and has caused significant distress. It affects how I parent and how I trust authorities.

I was never given proper emotional support, therapy, or guidance to process what happened to me. Instead, I was left to carry trauma that began in childhood and continues into adulthood.

Being restrained, humiliated, isolated, and told in different ways that I was unwanted has shaped my self-worth. I have struggled with confidence, relationships, and trusting people. The physical abuse caused pain at the time, but the psychological abuse has lasted far longer.

I entered care as a frightened child who did not understand what was happening. Instead of being protected and supported, I experienced neglect, emotional cruelty, physical force, isolation, and punishment. The trauma from those years continues to affect my mental health, my sleep, my relationships, and my sense of safety in the world.