

# Statement Addendum

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**Client Name:** Laura Prowse  
**Date of Birth:** 01/09/1987  
**Care Setting:** MARGARET AND GORDON- FOSTER FAMILY  
**Dates:** 2002  
**Persons Involved:**

## Full Statement

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I was placed here for temporary foster care whilst my previous foster family were dealing with a cancer diagnosis. What was meant to be temporary ended up becoming a full-time placement for me and my four siblings. From the moment we arrived, it was made very clear to us that we were not all wanted. They openly said they had only agreed to take two of us, and this immediately caused tension and conflict. This made me feel unwanted, rejected, and like a burden from the very beginning.

They treated all of us differently and would tell us that it was our fault that they had ended up with four of us instead of two. Hearing this repeatedly as a child had a deep emotional impact on me. It made me feel guilty for something completely out of my control and contributed to long-term feelings of worthlessness and low self-esteem that I still struggle with today.

We were not allowed to leave our bedroom freely. We were heavily restricted in everything we did. Even small, normal things were controlled — for example, we were not allowed to put a butter knife into the jam, and if we did, we would be punished and treated badly. They would take our belongings away, call us names, and speak to us in a very harsh and degrading way. Their words were extremely hurtful, and they often reduced us to tears. This constant verbal abuse has stayed with me and has affected how I view myself as an adult.

I witnessed my siblings being mistreated regularly. I know that my brother, in particular, suffered a lot of physical abuse in that home, which was extremely distressing and traumatic for me to witness. As the eldest, I already felt responsible for protecting them, but in that environment, I felt completely powerless. Watching this happen has had a lasting impact on me, and I still carry feelings of guilt and helplessness.

There was a separate living room in the house that we were not allowed to use. We were kept apart and made to feel like we did not belong in their home. If we went into their living room, we would be accused of things we had not done. This created a constant atmosphere of fear and anxiety, where we felt like we were always going to be blamed or punished.

Growing up in that environment made it extremely difficult to feel like a normal child. We were treated more like we were in the army than in a family home. We were forced to clean our rooms and the house and complete chores before anything else, regardless of our age. There was no warmth, no care, and no

understanding — just strict rules and control. We were not treated like children at all.

They constantly called us names and deprived us of a normal childhood. We spent most of our time confined to our bedrooms, which became the only place we felt some sense of safety. Even though we were isolated, that space felt safer than being around them. This isolation has had a long-term effect on my ability to feel comfortable around others and has contributed to ongoing anxiety and trust issues.

They would find any excuse to sanction and punish us. It was made very clear that they did not want me there. I was spoken to differently compared to the others, and so was my sister. It felt like they only wanted the two younger siblings because they believed they could manipulate and control them more easily. I was often singled out, laughed at, and treated unfairly. This targeted treatment has had a lasting impact on my confidence and sense of identity.

The punishments I received were extremely harsh for a young child. At times, I was not allowed to eat as a form of punishment. In the kitchen, I was not allowed to help myself to food — I had to ask, and even then, I was often refused or treated differently from the others. This created a very unhealthy relationship with food and added to my feelings of neglect and deprivation.

Eventually, I reached a point where I could not cope any longer, and I left. At that time, I was already struggling severely with my mental health, but I was suffering in silence. I did not feel able to ask for help or speak out about what was happening. I felt trapped, alone, and unheard.

The impact of this experience has stayed with me into adulthood. While it has made me resilient in some ways, it has also caused significant and lasting damage. I now suffer from anxiety and PTSD, and I struggle to build relationships and trust people. These experiences have affected my entire life — how I see myself, how I interact with others, and how I cope with everyday situations.