

WITNESS STATEMENT OF MR LEON JAMES GRATTON

Application to the Scottish Redress Scheme

Applicant: Mr Leon James Gratton

Date of Birth: 17/03/1975

Application reference number: APP288097

Background

1. My name is Mr Leon James Gratton.
2. My address is 3 Makgill Row.
3. My date of birth is 17 March 1975.
4. My Scottish Redress application reference is APP288097.
5. I make this statement in support of my application to the Scottish Redress Scheme.
6. My statement interview took place by telephone on 7 August 2026. Daniel Asprey was the interviewer and MMA Legal was recorded as the legal representative or organisation.
7. I confirmed that I was comfortable and happy to continue and that I understood the purpose of the statement and agreed that it could be used for my Scottish Redress application and supporting evidence.

Life Before Care

8. I grew up in Wester Hailes, Edinburgh, with my mother and my mother's partner, Raymond Jordan.
9. I described home life as hell, with constant arguments. I did not identify mental-health issues or social-work difficulties before I entered care.
10. I did not have siblings from whom I was separated.
11. I did not identify any other childhood health, learning need, vulnerability or name history that needed to be recorded.

Entry into Care

12. I put myself into care because I could not deal with my mother any more and I was scared for my life.
13. I was about 14 or 15 years old when I first entered care. I felt scared and apprehensive.

Care Placement Chronology

14. I was placed at Comiston Children's Home in Oxgangs from 21 January 1991 until 19 June 1991, when I was 14. The placing authority recorded in my questionnaire is Lothian Regional Council Social Work.

15. I was then placed at Moredun Adolescent Unit in Edinburgh from 19 June 1991 until 18 October 1991. The placing authority recorded is Lothian Regional Council Social Work.

Comiston Children's Home

16. Comiston was a big house with many other children. It was clean, but I described it as having many damaged children. I was there for about five or six months.
17. I was given basic hygiene items to wash and cereal every day. Bedtime was before 10.00 pm and I had to get up before 8.00 am.
18. I was not provided with clothing. There was a family meeting every week.
19. One of the other children attacked me and tried to choke me. Staff pulled the child off me and the child was removed from the home.
20. There were not many punishments. Cigarettes could be taken away. If someone was acting 'crazy', they could be locked in a meeting room.
21. I identified emotional abuse. I remembered a worker called Coral. When girls ran away, they sometimes returned with cuts on their wrists. I said that Coral would tell girls to 'do the job properly', referring to the cuts on their wrists.
22. I remembered that one of the girls was having a bath and that a worker recorded in my questionnaire as Adam Mccage threw a radio into the bath with her. I had to fish it out with my hand.
23. One of the workers would dig their knuckles into my ribs.
24. I also said that Jimmy Cairns would tell us about being raped in the street by his dad and that nothing happened. I did not give further detail about this in my interview.
25. The incidents happened once or twice a week and became worse. I said that this was the reason I was moved to Moredun, although I also said that I was not told why I was moved from Comiston to Moredun.
26. My behaviour changed. I did not attend school, skipped school all day and drank.
27. I recorded the names Jimmy Kearns and Adam Mccage in connection with workers who would get me to score dope for them. Elsewhere in my questionnaire, the main people identified are recorded as Andrew Mccaig and Jimmy Cairns. I have preserved those names as they were recorded because I gave no further clarification of the spellings.
28. I told my friends what was happening and they would come round while it was happening. I have not seen them for many years.

Moredun Adolescent Unit

29. Moredun was a residential unit that was supposed to move me towards getting my own house.
30. I worked in the morning until 4.00 pm. I smoked a lot of dope and had to buy my own food.
31. Workers took my money for food so that they could buy food for me because I was not getting enough nutrients.
32. No clothing was provided. I had my own clothes and could wash them using the washing machine and tumble dryer.
33. Some of the other children were all right and some were not. I said the same about the staff.

34. I did not identify abuse at Moredun. I said that I was kicked out for smoking dope.

People Involved, Reporting and Institutional Knowledge

35. Across the placements, the main people I identified were recorded in my questionnaire as Andrew Mccaig and Jimmy Cairns.

36. Other children were affected. I said that it was definitely happening and referred to us being taken to school on drugs.

37. I did not believe that the wider institution knew what was happening. I said that only Andrew and Jimmy knew.

38. When we spoke up, we were ignored.

39. I tried to raise what was happening, but nothing happened. I also tried to speak to my mother, but she would not listen.

Movement Between Placements and Leaving Care

40. I was not told why I was moved from Comiston to Moredun.

41. I was removed from Moredun because I was considered too old for it.

42. I ran away a couple of times.

43. I left care before I was 16. I stayed with my mother until I obtained a flat.

44. I tried to find other places, but I was not accepted because I was too young.

Impact on My Life

45. At the time, I did not feel safe. I had no confidence, hardly slept and was placed in a psychiatric care unit when I was 18. I said that the experience affected all aspects of my life.

46. I began abusing substances and alcohol while I was in care, and the abuse became worse and worse.

47. I was isolated for most of my life.

48. I was married to a social worker. I did not find her helpful and felt that she tried to blame my family for my problems.

49. My finances have been poor for years. I said that I have had no education.

50. I am scared to leave my house and constantly look over my shoulder.

51. I experience paranoia and anxiety and described myself as schizophrenic. I therefore avoid most situations.

52. I have nightmares and stay awake every night struggling to sleep because I feel as though I am going to die.

53. I wake from nightmares about people raping me.

54. I believe that, if this had not happened, I would be healthy and working and would be able to stop abusing drugs.

55. At the end of my interview, I also said that I was raped in the street on the way back from my grandad's. I did not provide further details about that incident in the interview.

Support and Treatment

- 56. I have received support from a mental-health hospital and a psychiatric care unit at the Royal Edinburgh.
- 57. I reported diagnoses or conditions of diabetes, high cholesterol and a mild cardiac infarction. My questionnaire also contains a further condition written as 'phycsitsiphrenia'. I have not altered that wording because no clarification was recorded.
- 58. I currently receive one hour of help each day from people who assist me to cook, clean and tidy up.
- 59. I can contact my stepdad or my nurse for support.

Evidence and Supporting Information

- 60. I said that records are kept which may support my statement.
- 61. I referred to records of self-harm and substance abuse and gave the names Amanda White and Weston House. I did not provide further explanation of those names in the interview.
- 62. I did not identify letters, photographs, reports, inquiry evidence, apologies, decisions or previous correspondence.
- 63. I did not identify another person who could provide a supporting statement.
- 64. I did not identify any missing or incomplete records and said that an evidence bundle had not already been obtained.

Previous Claims, Applications or Payments

- 65. I tried to make a claim when I was 28, but I had no evidence and could not do anything about it.
- 66. I have not received a payment, apology, settlement or decision and have not signed a waiver or discharge.

Why I Am Applying to the Scottish Redress Scheme

- 67. I am applying because I think people should know how shocking it was there and in every other care home where it was happening.
- 68. Acknowledgement would give me 'a bit of sanity left'.
- 69. When asked if there was anything else I wanted Redress Scotland to understand, I said there was not.

Final Statement

- 70. At the end of the interview, I said that I felt better after discussing these matters and felt able to end the call.
- 71. I confirmed that the next steps had been explained to me.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true to the best of my knowledge and recollection.

Name: Mr Leon James Gratton

Signed: _____

Dated: _____