

Statement Addendum

Client Name: Linda Salmond
Date of Birth: 02/10/1971
Care Setting: Rimpleton house - glen water
Dates: 1986- 1987
Persons Involved:

Full Statement

I was placed in Rimpleton after my parents fought for me to be moved somewhere closer to home. At the time, that was very important to them, and to me as well, because being far away had already been extremely difficult. When I first arrived at Rimpleton, it initially seemed like it might be a better environment than where I had previously been. However, from the moment of my arrival there was very little comfort, reassurance, or compassion shown towards me. Instead of being welcomed or helped to settle in, I was sent straight to my room. Being sent to our rooms was something that happened a lot while I was there, and it quickly became clear that this was a common way staff dealt with situations rather than supporting or speaking with us.

Food was always technically available, and compared to some places I had been before the food itself was better. However, we were not allowed to help ourselves or have any real independence around meals. Even basic things felt controlled, which added to the feeling of not being trusted or treated with dignity.

The atmosphere between the children living there was often very tense. There were frequent arguments and fights between young people, and it created a very stressful environment. At times I found myself caught up in these situations. I never liked conflict and I was not someone who went looking for trouble, but there were occasions where I had to defend myself. What made this harder was that staff would sometimes stand by and allow these situations to escalate rather than stepping in properly or protecting us.

One night something happened that made me feel deeply uncomfortable and frightened. A male carer came into my room during the night. I remember him creeping around quietly while I was in bed. I froze because I felt so uncomfortable and unsafe. I could sense him standing over me and looking at me while I was lying there. I pretended to be asleep because I did not know what else to do and I was scared of what might happen if I moved or spoke. Eventually he left the room, but the experience left me feeling extremely shaken and vulnerable. I did not sleep properly after that because I felt scared in the very place where I was supposed to feel safe.

The next day I reported what had happened because I knew it was not right. Even though I spoke up, the

experience stayed with me and affected how safe I felt there afterwards.

At Ribleton we also had locked shower rooms that we had to share with other girls. Privacy was very limited and it often felt uncomfortable. At times staff would prod at me physically when interacting with me, and the way some of them spoke to us was not respectful. I often felt like we were spoken to in a dismissive or harsh way rather than being treated as young people who needed support.

Because of these things, I felt uncomfortable a lot of the time while living there. Even though it was closer to home and in some ways felt like a relief compared to where I had been before, it still did not feel like a safe or supportive place. Over time my mental health began to deteriorate. Living in an environment where there was constant stress, conflict, and a lack of compassion had a serious impact on me emotionally.

At first I had hoped that Ribleton might be a place that would help me and give me some stability, almost like a chance to feel saved from everything I had already been through. But as time went on, it became clear that even there we were not always treated the way we should have been. The lack of care, the fear I experienced, and the constant tension all contributed to my mental health getting worse.

Eventually, during my time there, I fell pregnant and I left Ribleton.