

Statement Addendum

Client Name: William Tarbett
Date of Birth: 09/07/1991
Care Setting: Straff karen young person institution
Dates: 1998
Persons Involved:

Full Statement

I was very young when I was taken into the care system, and I only have vague memories of certain places. One of those places was Straff Karen Young Persons Institution, where the abuse began almost immediately. I remember being very young when I was placed there. I was upset, scared, and extremely emotional, especially as I had been separated from my siblings. I was constantly worrying about them and felt completely alone.

From the moment I arrived, there was no empathy shown towards me. The staff were horrible in their behaviour. They would scream and shout throughout the corridors, creating an atmosphere of fear and intimidation. I never felt safe.

The staff were also physically abusive. They would restrain me in ways that caused significant pain. I remember them sitting on me, making it difficult for me to breathe, and bending my arms and legs behind my back. These restraints would leave me in pain for days afterwards. I was very young and the smallest there, which made it even more frightening.

I was the youngest in the placement, surrounded by older children who were in high school while I was still in primary school. These older children would bully me, beat me, and torment me regularly. The staff allowed this to happen and did nothing to protect me. At times, it felt like they favoured the older children and even encouraged or enabled their behaviour towards me.

As punishment, I was locked in my room every night. In fact, every night we were locked in, and we were not allowed out, even to use the toilet. This was extremely distressing and degrading. I felt trapped and powerless.

There were also occasions where staff would punch and kick us while claiming they were restraining us. This blurred the line between restraint and outright physical abuse. I was left feeling confused, frightened, and physically hurt.

I did not have any visits from family members that I can remember, and I had no way of asking for help or telling anyone what was happening. I felt completely isolated and abandoned. The staff would call me names and torment me regularly, which had a deep emotional impact on me.

I was treated differently from the older children. They were favoured, while I was singled out and targeted. This made the bullying and abuse even worse. The food provided was poor, often cold and stale, and overall I was treated more like I was in a prison than in a place of care. Looking back, I believe I may have been even younger than I realise when I experienced some of these things.

The impact of this has followed me throughout my entire life. I have suffered deeply with feelings of rejection and being unwanted. I was constantly made fun of, which has left me with a lasting complex about myself. I struggle with anxiety, PTSD, and controlling my emotions. I also experience significant anger, which I believe is directly linked to what I went through.

I was in this environment for a long time, possibly over 10 years, being bullied, abused, and manipulated. After I left, I became seriously ill with meningitis, which has caused some memory issues. Despite this, there are many things I will never forget about what happened to me.

The impact on my mental health has been severe and long-lasting. I struggle to build relationships and trust people. I find day-to-day activities difficult, and I feel that I have been consistently failed by the systems that were meant to protect me. The experiences I went through have shaped my life in a negative way, and I continue to suffer the effects of that trauma every day.