

Statement Addendum

Client Name: Duane Harding
Date of Birth: 28/06/1990
Care Setting: seafield children's home ardressan in ayre
Dates: 2001
Persons Involved:

Full Statement

I was very young and I was scared. I was taken away from my family, and I remember that moment clearly because it was the start of everything changing for me. I remember being taken to Seafield in Ayr, and from that point on, my life went completely upside down. This is something I remember very clearly, and it is something I will never, ever forget.

I have scars on my body, including a surgical scar, and I do not even know where it came from. I was never told about any operation, and to this day I know nothing about it. I know very little about my childhood because of what happened to me, but I do know that when I was taken there, I was given no empathy or comfort at all. I was just a very young, frightened child.

When I arrived, I was dragged to my room. I don't remember the names of most of the staff members, but I do remember one lady who was kind to me. She stood out because kindness was so rare in that place.

I was made to go to school there, and I was beaten. The school teacher was called Mr McDowall. He was very aggressive, very strict, and extremely nasty. He would beat me and restrain me. I remember him putting my arms up behind my back and kneeling me in the head, even while people were walking past. This was done openly, without anyone stepping in to stop it.

Staff would sit on me, causing me pain while I cried and screamed, struggling to breathe as they took my breath away. I felt completely powerless. Other children were told to beat me, and the staff allowed this to happen. They would laugh and torment me while it was happening, treating it like entertainment.

The staff themselves would hurt me physically. They gave me carpet burns on my head, punched me, and slapped me around. They would push me whenever they got the chance in the corridors. There was no safety anywhere in that place.

This had a severe impact on me mentally. I was isolated and secluded, often locked away in my room for long periods of time. I was humiliated constantly. Staff would make fun of me, call me names, and encourage other children to bully me for their own amusement. It felt like I was being deliberately targeted and broken down.

The food was also very poor. It was cold, stale, and unpleasant, but we still had to eat it. The education we received was extremely poor, and the behaviour of both the staff and other children made it impossible to learn properly. I feel that I was deprived of a proper education during this time.

The staff were consistently nasty and spoke to me in a degrading and disgusting way. I was bullied every single day. This was not occasional—it was constant, and it became my normal reality for the entire time I was there.

I was there for three and a half years, suffering daily torment and abuse. The impact of those years has stayed with me for my entire life. I have never been able to escape what happened to me there.

As a result of this, I suffer from anxiety and post-traumatic stress. I struggle with sleep and often relive what happened to me. I have been prescribed medication for my anxiety, which shows the ongoing severity of the impact.

I find it very difficult to build relationships and to trust people. I have always felt left out and different from others. I struggle to control my emotions, and even now I find it hard to communicate properly with people.

What happened to me at Seafield in Ayr has affected every part of my life. I have never truly felt safe since that time. The trauma I experienced as a child has stayed with me into adulthood and continues to impact my mental health, my relationships, and my ability to live a normal life.

This is something I will carry with me forever.