

WITNESS STATEMENT OF CRAIG DAVID PALMER

Application to The Scottish Redress Scheme

Applicant: Mr Craig David Palmer

Date of Birth: 27 July 1968

Application Reference: APP840995

Support Person Present: No

Background

1. My name is Craig David Palmer. My name in care was always Craig David Palmer.
2. My address is 104 Crossmill Avenue, Barrhead Glasgow, G78 1AX.
3. I make this statement in support of my application to The Scottish Redress Scheme.
4. The contents of this statement are true to the best of my knowledge and belief. Where I cannot remember exact dates or details, I have made this clear. I confirm I have provided as much detail as I am able to recall.
5. I understand that this statement will be considered as part of my application, together with my application forms and any supporting documents or records provided.
6. Where necessary, I have exhibited extracts of the supporting documents obtained to this statement to support my application.
7. I am happy for this statement to be submitted to the Scottish Redress Inquiry.
8. I do not need any support to conduct this statement today and I do not need anybody with me to complete the statement.
9. I understand the purpose of this statement and that it is in support of my Scottish Redress Application.

10. I was placed into care whilst under the age of 16. The care setting was based in Dunbartonshire.
11. I was approximately 5 days old when I went into care.
12. I know who placed me into care but not why I was placed into care.
13. The placements I was in were Children's homes.

Personal Background and Entry into care

14. I was taken into care when I was 5 days old. I was too young to know why or who placed me into care.
15. I know now that my mother had me at 16 years old and was probably too young to keep me.
16. I have a brother and sister. I didn't know about them until I found my mother at 25 years old. I know my younger sister was in the care system.

Detail Account of Each Placement

Crosslet Residential Nursery - 2/8/1968, 5 years

17. I was in Crosslet from 5 days old. I was here for approximately 5 years.
18. I have no memories of this care setting. **“EXHIBIT 1”**

Quarriers Home Number 11 - 1973-1974, 1 year

19. As far as I'm aware Quarriers was a clean house with other children, I don't remember much else about the house itself. **“EXHIBIT 2”**

20. I remember there were lots of people coming and going from the house all the time.
21. I know we still had to do school work as there was a school at the place. I shared a bedroom and we all shared the bathrooms.
22. There were no toiletries provided and I have no clear recollection of any clothing being provided.
23. There were rules such as getting out of bed at a certain time, making your bed and cleaning your own dishes. If your bed wasn't made they would strip it in front of you. I remember crying because of this.
24. Punishments occurred. I would be locked in cupboards and hit.
25. I experienced sexual, physical and emotional abuse during my time in Quarriers.
26. Some adults would come into the house now and then, they wanted to take you to places. I was taken and would be touched on my genitals. It seemed to be the same adult male.
27. I was hit as a punishment if I didn't want to go to these places. I was hurt and dragged.
28. I remember I wanted to find my mother and they would tell me I didn't have one when I did. They said I had nobody.
29. I was abused by adults, I don't know if they lived in the house but they came in and out.
30. One time I remember a person came into my bedroom. He got into bed with me and touched me on my genitals. I don't know if he got startled but he just got up and left. He threatened me to not tell anyone.
31. The abuse happened every now and again. It wasn't a regular occurrence im not sure, it just happened when it did.
32. I know this happened to multiple people. No one blinked an eye, I couldn't tell anyone because if I told someone I would be hurt.

33. I experienced fear, bedwetting and being constantly frightened because of all this.

34. Quarriers was the scariest and worst home I was in.

Foster Home in Bishopton - 1974-1978, 4 years

35. I don't remember anything from my foster placement, just that the people were alright.

“EXHIBIT 3”

Urquhart House - 1978, 4 years

36. I remember Urquhart House was a big house with 2 floors. **“EXHIBIT 4”**

37. I had my own bedroom but still shared a bathroom. There was a bathroom for the boys and a bathroom for the girls.

38. The daily routine consisted of getting up in the morning, getting washed, making your bed, getting dressed and going downstairs where we would line up for breakfast. If you were late to breakfast you didn't get anything.

39. The food was ok, but you had no choices. If you didn't like what was served you went without food.

40. They had a dress code of this grey set up but these were the only clothes provided.

41. There were no toiletries given out, we all shared a bar of soap.

42. The staff treatment was terrible, especially from the 2 women that ran the house.

43. I got along with some of the other children there.

44. There were set rules such as making your bed, you also had to watch tv with them. We would have to be downstairs at a specific time or you couldn't watch the tv. You also had to watch what they wanted to watch.

45. I experienced sexual abuse and physical abuse in Urquhart House.
46. I accidentally swore and as punishment they grabbed me by the ear in front of everyone else and pulled me into a room and shoved a bar of soap into my mouth and held it there.
47. They also used a wooden spoon as their preferred weapon. I would be slapped over the back of the head with the wooden spoon.
48. Random people would come in one at a time. I went out with this bloke and he touched me on my genitals. I fell asleep at one point but I'm not sure. I remember getting back home and telling my friend what he did to me. My friend said "he does this all the time".
49. The two women who ran the house were called Mary Chandler and Helen Stevenson.
50. The sexual abuse i endured was only the once, but the soap was regular, especially if you talked back. The wooden spoons were very regular.
51. The abuse would leave marks. You'd be covered in bruises and bumps.
52. I was wetting the bed because of my experience here.
53. I used to try and hide the sheets because if they found out you'd be in trouble. They would drag you out of your room and slap you.
54. I'd hide it so much I would go to school smelling of pee.
55. The abuse made me fearful and gave me sleep problems.
56. The abuse happened to other kids too.
57. I tried to tell the woman what happened with the man. She hit me over the head with the wooden spoon and told me to stop making up stories.

Raisdale - 1983-1985, 2 years

58. Raisdale was an adolescent transitional unit for teens learning how to live after care.

“EXHIBIT 5”

59. It was a lone building and I had my own room here. There were shared bathrooms but toiletries were provided as well as clothing.

60. We got pocket money and allowance here and the food was great, they had their own chef.

61. The staff here were brilliant, they treated you like human beings. The other kids were brilliant too.

62. I met my partner while here.

63. There were basic rules but if you broke them you weren't hurt you were just warned.

64. The bed wetting stopped when I was in Raisdale.

65. My time here was heaven, it was brilliant. It brought my confidence up a bit.

66. I was able to have a nicer new start.

People Involved, Reporting and Institutional Knowledge

67. The main people involved in the abuse were Mary, Helen and all of those at Quarriers.

68. Other children were affected by the abuse. There was one person who told me about his abuse.

69. I think the local authorities knew what was going on and I don't know why I was just left there.

70. Any complaints were discouraged. All of them were. I would be threatened if I told someone.

71. I have not made a report to the Police about this abuse but I was approached by them a long time ago because someone made a complaint about the abuse from the adults but I didn't say anything as I wasn't ready to bring it up back then.

Movement Between Placements and Leaving Care

72. It was never explained to me why I was being moved. One day they'd just say you're going here with no warning.

73. I ran away from Quarriers when I was about 7 years old. I hid in a bush.

74. I also ran away from Urquhart House a few times but you'd be caught and brought back.

75. I was 17 years old when I left the care system. I was housed in Barrhead and put into a flat just left to do my own thing. **“EXHIBIT 6”**

76. There was no aftercare. There was no help at all when i left, i was just handed my paperwork they didn't tell me anything about my family.

77. I used the paperwork to put an advert in a newspaper. 2 weeks later my mother sent me a letter.

78. Finding my mother was the best thing that ever happened to me. I also found my siblings, we still keep in touch.

Impact On Life Past/Present/Future

79. I am very wary of people, I never get close to anyone. I knew it wouldn't happen again when I left but at the same time I was always fearful it could.

80. I always wanted to speak up, I told some of my kids and they were understanding.

81. I used to experience panic attacks, nightmares and flashbacks. Not so much anymore but it's always been in my head. It sticks with you.
82. I have self harmed in the past and thought about taking my own life when I first left care. I really struggled. I didn't cope well.
83. My posture is bad from my days at home's.
84. I sometimes struggle with where I am sleeping.
85. I did turn to alcohol and substance use for a few years but this is not ongoing now.
86. My abilities with parenting are fine because I give my kids the life I wanted but it does sometimes affect my intimacy.
87. When me and my partner first got together i found i didnt feel secure in myself.
88. It affected my trust massively.
89. My experience knocked my confidence. I am more confident now because of my relationship. My depression however makes it difficult for me to get into conversations, I don't feel comfortable.
90. I can't go to a gym or anywhere with lots of people, I also can't be in a room with someone else alone. I take my partner with me to the doctors as I struggle there.
91. It has had a big impact on my whole life, I don't know what would have been different if it hadn't happened.

Support and treatment

92. I have had counselling for my mental health, I did find it helpful.
93. I do have struggles with flashbacks. I was always told in care ive got nothing. It was always a fear factor for me.
94. I have been diagnosed with Anxiety, Depression and terminal COPD. **“EXHIBIT 7”**

95. I was prescribed Metazapine for my mental health problems. **“EXHIBIT 8”**

Supporting Evidence & Records

96. I understand that records and documents may be considered alongside this statement.

I have exhibited, as necessary, documents to this statement.

97. I have also provided a bundle of evidence in addition to this statement, these are all of the relevant documents my legal representatives have been able to obtain on my behalf, from relevant institutions, local authorities, and medical practices.

98. Some records may be incomplete, missing, or unavailable due to the passage of time.

Where records are missing, I ask that my own account still be considered carefully. I have done all in my power, with the assistance of my legal representative, to obtain and provide as much evidence as possible.

99. I have had my legal representative to redact any information that's not relevant to my Scottish Redress Application.

Difficulties with Memory and Gaps in Evidence

100. The events described happened many years ago. Some dates, names and details are difficult for me to remember.

101. My memory has also been affected by the trauma of what happened to me.

102. Where I have used approximate dates or descriptions, I have done so honestly and to the best of my recollection.

103. I have not intentionally exaggerated or included anything that I do not believe to be true.

Previous claims, applications or payments

104. I have not previously made any civil claim, criminal injuries claim, Redress application, complaint, police report, inquiry statement or claim to another scheme about this abuse.

105. I have not received any payment, apology, settlement or decision, or signed any waiver/discharge.

Why Am I Applying to the Scottish Redress Scheme

106. I know it's not going to help but I want everyone to know it was happening. I don't want to see it happen to anyone else because times have changed now.

107. Having the acknowledgment would mean everything to me. An apology would be fine. Hey treated everyone wrong,, there was no 'care'.

108. They called it care but no one actually cared.

Final Statement

109. I have never made a previous civil claim, criminal injury claim, Redress application, advance payment application, complaint, police report, inquiry statement, or claim to another scheme about this abuse.

110. I have never received any payment, apology, response or settlement in respect of my Scottish Redress claim or the abuse.

111. I have never signed any waiver, settlement agreement, discharge or acceptance form in respect of my Scottish Redress claim or the abuse.

112. I have tried to provide a full and honest account of my experiences to the best of my knowledge and belief. I ask that Redress Scotland consider this statement, my application forms and the supporting evidence I have submitted when determining my application.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Name: Mr Craig David Palmer

Signed:

Dated: