

Binder1_Redacted - Evidential Review

Applicant: Leon James Gratton **Date of birth:** 17 March 1975

Source: Binder1_Redacted.pdf, 106 PDF pages. The source is a scanned, partly handwritten and partly redacted Lothian Regional Council social-work file.

Review scope: Placement and eligibility; physical, sexual and emotional abuse; neglect; disclosures; institutional knowledge; frequency/pattern; psychological and medical effects; substance use; education and life impact; contradictions; and a page-reference schedule.

Important evidential distinction. The file contains direct descriptions of physical and emotional abuse in Leon's family home by his mother and her partner, Raymond. No direct allegation or record of physical, sexual or emotional abuse by residential staff at Comiston Children's Unit or Moredun Adolescent Unit was located. The records strongly prove that Leon was in care, but the explicit assault evidence in this binder does not itself establish abuse occurring in those care settings.

Overall conclusion: Strong placement/eligibility evidence exists for both residential settings before 1 December 2004. The file also supplies contemporaneous evidence of family violence, emotional distress, school disruption, drug use as a coping mechanism, homelessness/aftercare difficulty and conflicting administrative dates. It should be read alongside any applicant statement or separate evidence alleging abuse in care.

Identity and placement chronology

Date/period	Care setting/event	Evidence and consequence	PDF pages
21-22 Jan 1991	Reception into care; Comiston Children's Unit	Family breakdown and safety concerns. Records variously give receipt into care as 21 Jan and placement/admission as 22 Jan. Section 15 is checked.	11-15, 40, 60, 73-74, 93, 102
24 Jan 1991 onward	Comiston Children's Unit	Key-worker review, family work, schooling and unit rules. Continued residence confirmed.	19-20, 40-44, 94-100
11 May 1991	Temporary overnight at Maybury, Livingston	One-night stay while recorded as in care under Section 15.	59
19 Jun 1991	Transfer/admission to Moredun Adolescent Unit	Care-history summaries and later reviews confirm residence.	47-48, 53, 55, 60, 101-102
17-18 Oct 1991	Moredun discharge / leaving care	Asked to leave after smoking hash. Records give the incident/return home as 17 Oct and formal discharge as 18 Oct.	34, 55, 60, 101
After 18 Oct 1991	Aftercare / family / Aberdeen / council tenancy	Returned home briefly, went to an aunt in Aberdeen, experienced homelessness and was later offered a council flat.	34-35, 60

Findings against the requested categories

Category	Finding	Key pages
1. Placement and eligibility	Strong direct evidence. Leon James Gratton, DOB 17 Mar 1975. Comiston Children's Unit followed by Moredun Adolescent Unit, controlled by Lothian Regional Council Social Work. Section 15 is recorded. Social workers/key staff include George Coates, Abina Chisholm, Peter Mucha, Neil Fleck and others listed on pages 103-104.	40, 55, 60, 65-76, 93-106
2. Physical abuse	Direct contemporaneous disclosure of repeated assaults by mother and assaults by Raymond in the family home: arm across throat; punching; two front teeth knocked out. Not recorded as occurring in residential care.	13-14
3. Sexual abuse	No direct evidence located. Page 13 mentions a 29-year-old man's friendship with Leon but expressly states there was no evidence beyond friendship; this is safeguarding context, not proof of sexual abuse.	13
4. Emotional/psychological abuse	Mother reportedly continually put Leon down and called him stupid; screaming/yelling and rejection are recorded. Leon did not envisage a safe and stable home relationship. These entries concern family treatment, not residential staff.	13-14, 41, 94
5. Neglect	No direct record of neglect within either unit. Page 55 may warrant safeguarding scrutiny because 16-year-old Leon was asked to leave after a drug incident and planned to stay with a friend; Housing contact was offered and declined. Page 60 records aftercare and later council accommodation.	55, 60
6. Disclosures and complaints	Leon disclosed assaults and emotional treatment to social-work staff during the 21-22 Jan 1991 assessment. The response was reception into care, reviews, family meetings and support/counselling referrals. No complaint against residential staff was found.	11-15, 40-44

Category	Finding	Key pages
7. Institutional knowledge/failure	No previous staff complaints, disciplinary proceedings, police investigation of residential staff, inspection concern or management cover-up was located. The discharge circumstances on page 55 are a possible safeguarding issue but not proof of institutional abuse.	55
8. Frequency/duration/pattern	Mother's assaults are described as occurring on more than one occasion. Drug use is described as escalating/persistent and occurred during both the pre-care period and Moredun placement. The binder does not quantify a pattern of abuse in care.	11-14, 47, 55, 60
9. Mental-health impact	Emotional distress, anger, confusion, inability to sleep, school impact and depression are recorded. A Young People's Unit/counselling assessment was sought. Drugs were sometimes used to relieve depression/confusion.	40-42, 47
10. Physical/medical consequences	Two front teeth allegedly knocked out by Raymond. Initial care medical records describe generally satisfactory health and no contemporaneous injury requiring treatment; no dental treatment record for the assault was found.	14, 65-71, 87-92
11. Substance use/coping	Hash and other drug use from adolescence; persistent drug use in Moredun; alcohol/soft drugs reportedly used at times to relieve depression and confusion. Drug use led to discharge. No broader addiction-treatment record is in this binder.	11-12, 47, 55, 60, 94-95, 101
12. Education/relationships/life impact	School non-attendance, lateness, truancy and work affected by sleep disturbance appear alongside positive attainment reports. After discharge Leon experienced instability/homelessness, sought leaving-care support and later obtained a council tenancy. Employment was also positively maintained for a period.	22-29, 34-35, 40-41, 47, 60
13. Apparently contradictory evidence	Important inconsistencies: 21 versus 22 Jan 1991 care/admission; page 34 states 22 Jan 1992; page 93 gives DOB as 17 Mar 1991; other records consistently give 17 Mar 1975. Positive entries include 'settled quite well', satisfactory health, generally adequate clothing and good school capability. Page 13 expressly limits the sexual safeguarding concern to friendship.	13, 22-29, 34, 40-41, 60, 93, 101-102
14. Page-reference schedule	A consolidated schedule follows. PDF page numbers are used first; internal page numbers are recorded where clear.	Following pages

Detailed page-reference schedule

The short extracts below are factual paraphrases to avoid overstating unclear handwriting. 'Direct' means the entry directly records the fact/disclosure; it does not mean that every allegation was independently proven.

PDF page	Date	Author/job	Setting	Category	Factual extract/relevance	Weight
7-10	15-21 Jan 1991	K. Alexander / duty social work staff	Home / referral stage	Placement context; distress	School absence, police contact, family breakdown and arrangements leading to residential admission.	Corroborative
11-12	21 Jan 1991	K. Alexander, social worker; J. Fletcher, senior worker	Home / admission assessment	Placement; family violence; substance use	Mother requested reception into care, saying she could no longer cope and might physically harm Leon. Records violent conflict and escalating drug involvement.	Direct disclosure; corroborative
13	21-22 Jan 1991	Social work assessment / George, RSSPCC contact	Home / pre-placement	Physical and emotional abuse; sexual safeguarding	Raymond reportedly punched Leon after Leon smashed a chair over him. Leon said his mother continually put him down and called him stupid. A relationship with a 29-year-old man was discussed, but the record expressly says there was no evidence beyond friendship.	Direct disclosure; contradictory evidence
14	21-22 Jan 1991	Social work assessment	Home / pre-placement	Physical and emotional abuse; injury; disclosure	Leon said his mother had assaulted him on more than one occasion and once held him on the floor with her arm across his throat. Raymond allegedly punched Leon and knocked out two front teeth. Mother and Leon were recorded screaming and yelling; Leon wished to enter care.	Direct evidence relating to family home
15	22 Jan 1991	Duty social work staff	Comiston Children's Unit	Admission	Bed arranged at Comiston; Leon collected with clothes and taken there at about 5:30 pm. He was initially apprehensive but settled with his key worker.	Direct placement evidence
19-20	24 Jan / 13 Mar 1991	Review staff; names partly unclear	Comiston Children's Unit	Continued residence and planning	Review material confirms ongoing placement, family contact work and plans while Leon remained resident.	Direct placement evidence
22-29	Jan 1990-Jan 1991 school reports	Forrester High teaching staff	School while at home / in care period	Education and contradictory evidence	Attendance concerns and missed work appear alongside reports that Leon did well, was capable, applied himself and could achieve good grades.	Impact and contradictory evidence
34-35	10 Apr 1992	L. Fraser, social worker; T. Gent, senior worker	Aftercare	Homelessness; aftercare; date discrepancy	Records return home on 17 Oct 1991, departure the next day to Aberdeen and homelessness. It states he came into care on 22 Jan 1992, conflicting with the 1991 records and evidently requiring clarification. Leaving-care grant and support were considered.	Impact and contradictory evidence
39	11 May 1991	Emergency Duty Team / Comiston	Comiston Children's Unit; Maybury overnight	Temporary leave	One-night overnight arrangement at Maybury, 80 Raeburn Rigg, Carmondean, Livingston.	Direct placement/leave evidence
40	13 Mar 1991	George Coates, social worker	Comiston Children's Unit	Placement; mental health; education; contradiction	DOB 17 Mar 1975; placement dated 22 Jan 1991; Group A children's home. Says Leon settled quite well, but had barricaded himself in his room twice, had school non-attendance/lateness and emotional distress linked to family history.	Direct placement; impact; partly contradictory
41	Mar 1991	George Coates, social worker	Comiston Children's Unit	Psychological impact; education; support	Unable to sleep because of family thoughts, affecting schoolwork. He did not see a safe and stable future relationship at home. Counselling assessment was requested. Clothing was described as generally well provided.	Impact; contradictory; positive care evidence
42	13 Mar 1991	George Coates, social worker	Comiston Children's Unit	Review conclusion	Return home considered extremely difficult and possibly dangerous; continued placement, Group B or supported accommodation discussed.	Direct placement; professional opinion
43-44	26 Mar / 24 Jan 1991	Review chair and participants	Comiston Children's Unit	Review decisions	Records continued placement and family/contact work; no immediate return home.	Direct placement evidence
45-46	Apr-Oct 1991	Neil Fleck / review participants	Comiston and Moredun units	Behaviour; transfer; contradiction	Records incidents attributed to Leon and planning around transfer/residence. These describe Leon's behaviour and are not evidence that staff abused him.	Contradictory evidence
47-48	7-9 Oct 1991	George Coates, social worker	Moredun Adolescent Unit	Substance use; mental health; continued placement	Persistent drug taking in the unit. At times alcohol or soft drugs were reportedly used to relieve depression and confusion. Leon wanted to remain but declined specialist counselling.	Direct impact; coping evidence
50-51	1991, date partly unclear	Review staff	Moredun Adolescent Unit	Review and positive evidence	Review records employment, improved confidence and family relationships, with a plan for continued support.	Impact and contradictory evidence
53	14 Jun 1991	Ian Birtles / George Coates	Moredun Adolescent Unit	Residence and activity	Memo confirms residence at Moredun and arrangements for a resident trip.	Direct placement evidence

PDF page	Date	Author/job	Setting	Category	Factual extract/relevance	Weight
55	17 Oct 1991	C. Pomfret, social worker; B. Webb, assistant co-ordinator	Moredun Adolescent Unit	Discharge; safeguarding concern	After several warnings, Leon was found smoking hash and asked to leave. Staff offered to contact Housing; he declined and planned to stay with a friend. He left belongings at the unit.	Direct discharge evidence; possible safeguarding concern
59	11 May 1991	P. Linnett, social worker; A. Tullis, assistant co-ordinator	Comiston Children's Unit	Temporary overnight leave	Confirms a one-night overnight stay at Maybury while still in care under Section 15.	Direct placement/leave evidence
60	1992 leaving-care application	Lothian Regional Council Social Work	Comiston then Moredun; aftercare	Placement chronology; discharge; homelessness	Received into care 21 Jan 1991; discharged 18 Oct 1991 after nine months. Initially at Comiston, later Moredun. Discharge followed drugs in the unit; return home and later stay with aunt in Aberdeen; council flat offered.	Direct placement/aftercare evidence
65-72	21-22 Jan 1991	Lothian Regional Council staff; Dr John Crispin	Comiston Children's Unit	Admission, identity, medical	Reception-into-care, consent and medical records confirm Leon Gratton, DOB 17 Mar 1975, home address, admission date and Comiston placement. Initial medical records no injury requiring treatment and generally satisfactory health.	Direct placement/medical evidence
73-74	5 Mar 1991	George Coates, social worker	Comiston Children's Unit	Placement background and support referral	Letter confirms admission on 21 Jan 1991 after family breakdown and seeks assessment/support from the Young People's Unit.	Direct placement/impact evidence
75-76	28 Apr / 3 May 1991	George Coates and related staff	Comiston Children's Unit	Transfer planning	Referral and review correspondence concerning Leon while resident at Comiston.	Direct placement evidence
78-79	Mar 1991	Young People's Team	Comiston / supported accommodation planning	Support and future planning	Invitations concerning supported accommodation assessment/introductory sessions.	Corroborative planning evidence
87-92	22 Jan 1991	Parent, unit staff, medical staff	Comiston Children's Unit	Consent and medical	Duplicate/related parental consent and medical examination records confirming reception into care and health status.	Direct placement/medical evidence
93	22 Jan 1991	Care History Project / Abina Chisholm named	Comiston Children's Unit	Admission; legal basis; discrepancy	Admission form: social-worker referral, Section 15, family stress/at risk, respite care. DOB field appears as 17 Mar 1991, conflicting with repeated DOB 17 Mar 1975.	Direct placement/contradictory evidence
94-95	24 Jan 1991	P. Mucha, key worker; Abina Chisholm; Comiston staff	Comiston Children's Unit	Review; emotional harm; drug rules	Records severe distance between Leon and his mother, concerns for safety at home, mother putting him down, work on family meetings and unit rules concerning drugs.	Direct/corroboration evidence
96	3 May 1991	George Coates, social worker	Comiston Children's Unit	Review outcome	Letter records a successful return home being rejected and a decision that Leon move toward independence after the present accommodation.	Direct review evidence
97-98	23 May 1991	Leon Gratton; Peter Mucha; Jimmy Cairns; George Coates	Comiston Children's Unit	Residential agreement	Contract confirms continuing residence, expectations, school/employment arrangements, social work and key-worker support.	Direct placement evidence
99-100	1991	Residential and social work staff	Comiston / Moredun	Contact and leave chronology	Contact sheets record visits, phone calls, overnight arrangements, moves and support activity. Individual handwriting is variably legible.	Corroborative chronology
101	19 Jun-18 Oct 1991	Care history summary	Moredun Adolescent Unit	Placement and discharge	Records Moredun admission 19 Jun 1991 and discharge 18 Oct 1991, with 'drug abuse' noted.	Direct placement evidence
102	22 Jan and 19 Jun 1991	Care history summary	Comiston then Moredun	Transfer chronology and legal basis	Records Section 15, Comiston admission 22 Jan 1991 and Moredun admission 19 Jun 1991. Discharge boxes are incomplete.	Direct placement/incomplete records
103-104	1991	Social work staff and key contacts	Comiston / Moredun	Staff and agency identities	Lists social workers, residential staff, school/medical contacts and significant others.	Corroborative placement evidence
105-106	1991	Social work records	Comiston / Moredun	Identity and addresses	Personal detail sheets confirm Leon James Gratton, DOB 17 Mar 1975, home and unit addresses; page 105 records both Comiston and Moredun as home addresses.	Direct identification/ placement evidence

Internal page numbers and document limitations

Clear internal numbers include: PDF 11 and 15 (form 1194/1195 sequence); PDF 40-42 (review pages 1-3); PDF 55 and 59 (261); PDF 60 (2037); PDF 65-71 (RIC form sequence 169-171); PDF 93 (642); PDF 94 (1186); PDF 101-102 (1184); PDF 103-104 (1183); PDF 105 (1191); PDF 106 (1182). Many other pages have no clear internal number or it is cropped/unclear.

The file is image-only, extensively scanned, partly handwritten and partly redacted. Some names and dates remain uncertain. The highlighted copy marks the evidential passages identified in this review; highlighting is intentionally broad on handwritten pages so surrounding context is preserved.

Suggested evidential follow-up

1. Obtain any separate complaint, incident, punishment, restraint, medical or police records for Comiston Children's Unit and Moredun Adolescent Unit if abuse in care is alleged.
2. Address the date discrepancies expressly in the applicant statement: reception into care on 21 Jan 1991; placement/admission at Comiston on 22 Jan 1991; transfer to Moredun on 19 Jun 1991; incident/return on 17 Oct and formal discharge on 18 Oct 1991.
3. If reliance is placed on the family-home assaults, make clear that they explain the reason for care and psychological impact but are not, on the face of this binder, abuse occurring in a qualifying care setting.
4. Seek dental/medical corroboration for the two front teeth, and any later mental-health or addiction records linking symptoms or coping to childhood experiences.