

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

Graham HADDOW

Support person present: No

1. My name is Roderick Graham Haddow. I am known by my middle name Graham. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1955. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.
2. In 1977 I qualified as a primary school teacher and a PE teacher. I also have 18 years' experience working in different care home settings.

Gilshochill Assessment Centre, Maryhill, Glasgow

3. In 1977 I started at Gilshochill as a PE and general studies teacher. This was my first job after qualifying as a teacher. I was there for about two and a half years until it closed in May or June 1980.
4. It is important to compare Gilshochill and Larchgrove. They were both assessment centres and the same type of boys were resident at both. The boys had to go to children's hearings and then the centres for assessment. This could last anywhere between 3 and 6 weeks. It might even be extended depending on the circumstances.
5. Gilshochill was a very caring establishment. The social work and teachers were all fully trained. There was a ratio of 1 teacher to 8 children. The person in charge was Liz Jack.
6. The kids at Gilshochill were both troubled and troublesome. There were some very angry kids. Parents were actively involved with the children. It was a structured

school day with various subjects. There were educational assessments for the boys. No uniform was worn.

7. As a teacher I worked 9am to 4pm daily, and one night a week when I was involved in activities with the kids. These activities mainly involved sports. My memory was that Gilshochill was a good place to work. The teachers were all on first name terms with the pupils.

Larchgrove Assessment Centre, Springboig, Glasgow

8. I started at Larchgrove Assessment Centre around 1981. I immediately noticed a difference between Larchgrove and Gilshochill. There were small windows and the front door was locked. The bigger windows had reinforced glass. It was a more modern building.

Staff

9. I noticed that the care workers, with care in inverted commas, had keys on their belts. I remember thinking that this was prison- like. All the staff were referred to as "Mr", "Mrs" or "Miss" by the boys. I think that there were three of us staff that moved to Larchgrove after Gilshochill closed. We were not made to feel welcome by the care staff at Larchgrove but the teachers there did welcome us.
10. At Larchgrove I worked days. Teachers were also expected to work one evening shift a week until about 10pm. Care staff were also expected to work an extra shift per week. It was never said, but I think that the extra shift in the evening was to boost earnings. It was a "closed shop" with little turnover of staff. There could have been a sinister reason behind this but I don't know for certain. It was mainly male staff although there were some females.
11. The principal teacher was Richard Cotter. He was part of the senior management team and it was clear he didn't want the boat rocked. I can't remember the name of

the officer in charge. He had a beagle dog that was always with him. There were two deputies who were brothers. I think that their surname was ^{GQW} [REDACTED] but I don't remember their first names. The officer in charge stayed in his office most of the time. The deputies were a bit more hands-on. They would walk around the building, managing staff and the units.

12. There were senior workers for each of the separate houses within the home. These senior workers were also part of the senior management team. The houses were called Arran, Bute and maybe Islay. There was no difference between each of the houses other than the names.
13. I don't know how many care staff were on duty at any one time. It seemed to me that some of the staff had been at Larchgrove a long time. I got the impression that they were not as qualified as the staff at Gilshochill.

Residents

14. The boys at Larchgrove were all from different backgrounds and had been lumped together. I remember I had a boy in my class who was accused of murder and another boy who was there because his mother was in hospital. The boys wouldn't be placed separately dependant on their background, it would just be where there was bed space available.
15. There was a uniform that all the boys wore, which had a coloured band on the sleeve.
16. My recollection is that each child had a case co-ordinator who worked with them. I remember one child telling me they had a "case complicator". Maybe this is a reflection on what the relationship was.

Routine at Larchgrove

17. I don't know what happened first thing in the morning as I didn't start work each day until after this. The dormitories slept 6, 8 or 10 boys. The beds were metal-framed, similar to what the army would use. There was no personal space in the dormitories apart from small lockers. I always thought that they were very cold. The walls were bare.
18. I have no recollection of evening activities such as swimming, sport or going out and about. Some of the boys would go to the gym or play football in the games hall. There was a TV room with big plastic chairs. For some this was the main evening activity.

Chores

19. I remember seeing the kids scrubbing the floors on their hands and knees. I don't know what this was all about. Maybe it was a way of filling the time in.

Food

20. There was a large area where the children ate. The staff had their meals in a separate area. I would say that the staff food was better, although I don't think that there was anything wrong with what the kids were given to eat. It was just different menus. I thought it was a bit like a prison setting, with the kids sitting at the tables and staff wandering around them.

School

21. As Larchgrove was an assessment centre the boys were only there for 6 to 8 weeks. As a result there was only limited education provided. I don't think that the education was very well planned. It was difficult to educate children in that time, especially when some of them had not regularly attended school.
22. I had 5 or 6 children for PE and general teaching. They would be assessed for reading and maths. This would be in the form of how far they could read down a

page or do basic adding up. It was a fairly pointless exercise but I did it. The results would then be presented at assessment meetings.

Showers

23. I can recall the kids talking about staff monitoring them whilst they were showering. I don't know if this happened or why. I didn't even know where the shower areas were.

Visits/Inspections

24. I remember that visits were always at 7pm. That's when the parents arrived. The visiting areas were monitored. Again I felt that this was like a prison environment. After the visits the kids were stripped searched. I'm guessing that this was to look for things that had been smuggled in.
25. I was not aware of any independent inspections. If there had been then I would have said to them what I thought. I can only assume that social workers came to see the young person they were involved with. I remember psychologists coming as part of the process and making assessments of the boys. This would last about half an hour.
26. Social work managers, councillors and local authority officials would, I'm sure, know about the regime at Larchgrove. At least they would have known the basics about the home. They would have heard stories from the kids.

Residents leaving Larchgrove

27. When any of the boys left Larchgrove, and moved on to wherever they were going next, they had all their belongings in a black bin bag.

Abuse at Larchgrove

Punishments

28. At that time I don't think there was corporal punishment. A normal punishment would be withdrawal of things such as cigarettes. I don't remember if there was any set tariff for punishments dependant on what someone had done.
29. There was a room known as the "pokey". This was a small room near the front door. It didn't have a window, this had been boarded up. There was a mattress on the floor. The radiator in the room was always on and it was stifling hot. There was a book that had to be completed with the reasons why the person had been put in. I don't think that the boys were ever in the "pokey" that long. The "pokey" reminded me of the sweat boxes where the prisoners were put in the film "Bridge over the River Kwai".
30. On one occasion, whilst I was on an evening shift, I had to restrain a young lad, I don't know his name. I don't think he had been at the home that long. We had not had any training in holds or restraints. I think with this boy I was just trying to restrain him and help him calm down.
31. Two of the staff came in. I think one was [REDACTED] but I don't know the other person's name. They took over from me and said something like, "We've not got time for this, its lights out". [REDACTED] led the boy to the "pokey" and put him in. I think this showed that the regime was governed by the clock and this was more important than the child being upset. I don't know how long the boy was in the "pokey".
32. I didn't see any evidence of bullying amongst the boys. I wasn't aware of any times when I saw any of the boys with marks or bruises, such as black eyes.
33. I can't remember any times when care staff were directing any of the boys to exact retribution on other boys. I can imagine this happening but cannot recall any specific instances. There was an underlying fear factor that I think set the tone for compliance.

Reporting of abuse


34. The culture at Larchgrove for staff was "Don't rock the boat" and "Just get on with it". The equivalent to what is known now as "whistleblowing" just didn't happen then. The culture and regime were well- established. I can't remember any structure for reporting. It was not something that was discussed. That's probably why I went down the route I did.
35. I contacted a journalist friend, David Cameron, who worked with the Scotsman. I met with him three times and told him about Larchgrove. I think the trigger for this was an accumulation of things. It might even have been the wee boy going into the "pokey". I think that I had it in my mind that I would be moving and that's why I probably contacted the journalist.
36. A few of us used to play badminton on a Monday night. This was around tea- time when there was none of the staff or kids about. We smuggled in a photographer from the Scotsman and he took photographs from a number of different areas. It was only people from the teaching side that knew what was going on.
37. The day before this exposé was due to go press, David went to see the social work director, Fred Edwards, and told him about it. I have been in touch with David Cameron recently and we have worked out that the story went out on 9 October 1981.
38. David wanted to put a name to the story to add a bit of substance to it. As a result of this one of the teachers, Gerry McKeown, agreed to put his name to it. Gerry said that him and his wife were planning to emigrate so he had no problem doing this.
39. After the story went out the officer in charge was moved to the social work headquarters. Nobody knew he had moved, it just happened. Two or three days later there was a meeting with the social work management. Liz Jack, who had been the head of Gilshochill, was also there. We were told there would be changes and, I

think, there were. One thing that happened straight away was the front door was unlocked. I think that this was the beginning of the end of residential assessment centres. I can't remember if any of the other staff were moved.

- 40. I don't think that after the exposé there was any independent social work investigation. I think if there had been one then I, along with other staff, would have been interviewed.
- 41. I left Larchgrove in May 1982 By this time there was a new officer in charge, Ken Rants. By chance Ken was also a PE teacher.

Other information

- 42. Things were different when I was at Larchgrove than what they are now. There were different care establishments. Some were good, like Gilshochill, others like Larchgrove were not. There were some practices that were acceptable then but not now. There were some practices then that would never be acceptable.
- 43. I think that kids should know that they can talk to anyone that they feel comfortable with. This should be made clear to them when they are in care.
- 44. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed..........

Dated..... 12TH OCTOBER 2017