

HIA REF: [            ]

NAME: [ DL 516 ]

DATE: [ August 2014 ]

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**THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995**

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**Witness Statement of      DL 516**

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I, DL 516 will say as follows: -

1. I was a Social Worker, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]
2. I was involved with children in Rubane in the late [REDACTED] / early [REDACTED] and had case responsibility for DL 144 and his [REDACTED] brother DL 45 (I am unsure if DL 45 was called DL 45 and DL 55 and DL 31 [REDACTED] DL 45 and DL 55 were already resident at Rubane, Kircubbin. Whereas DL 144 and DL 31 had just transferred from St Joseph's Children's Home, Belfast to Rubane. Kircubbin. At the time of DL 144 transfer he was not aware he had an [REDACTED] brother.
3. Rubane was located outside of Kircubbin village. Rubane was self-sufficient: the unit had its own school, church and clothing store. When I started to visit Rubane it was staffed by a few Nuns and Brothers. The few Nuns who still resided in Rubane stated the Brothers had taken the decision that it should be staffed by Brothers. During my involvement with Rubane the few Nuns who remained eventually left. I do not know where they were deployed.
4. When I visited Rubane I was always shown into the larger building to the left. This building was above ground level and had a number of steps to the entrance. The front door was always closed and one of the Brothers would

always be available to walk you through the reception area into the room on the left. This room was large, clean and quite sparsely furnished.

5. When I became involved with the named children, BR 2 was head of Rubane. I am unsure when BR 2 left and when BR 1 BR 1 took over responsibility of Rubane. BR 2 presented as being professional and was always cordial and hospitable. My involvement with BR 1 was always professional but a working relationship was forged and he was open to possible changes in caring for the Boys.
6. The Brothers' whom I knew to see were: BR 1 BR 18 and another Brother who was a teacher but whose name I cannot remember. My memory of this Brother was he was always 'on the go' I also knew the caretaker to see but had never had a conversation with him. From memory I always saw him in the grounds of Rubane, when I visited.
7. In relation to BR 1 he presented as a pleasant man who was softly spoken with an Irish accent. BR 1 acknowledged my reservations of the possibility of the boys being institutionalized because Rubane was self-sufficient and it did not allow the children to experience life skills and or develop their own personalities.
8. My reservations were that:
  - The children to my knowledge had no contact with the local community.
  - Social Workers had no opportunity to speak with the Brothers who taught the boys. I was not given the opportunity to enquire about the school syllabus and academic achievements of the children I was responsible for.
  - In relation to the clothing store, my observations about the clothes worn by the boys showed it may have been bought in bulk. The boys presented like 'orphans' and clothing did not take consideration of personality and or size.
  - The boys were 'farmed,' out in the summer months (those who had no or little family contact.) I was aware of this information from the boys, that some went to stay with a Brother and Sister in who owned a farm. These adults provided food and accommodation in lieu of having the boys work on the farm. BR 1 confirmed this arrangement but always showed ability in not identifying their names and the address of the farm. This decision in itself meant that some boys had not been seen over the summer months.
  - The boys sleeping arrangements to my knowledge was never inspected by social workers. I never had the opportunity to check the boys sleeping arrangements, because the boys were always brought to the social worker in the large building. From memory and on reflection

I had limited knowledge about the boys and they had little knowledge about their lives.

9. In relation to BR 18, he was [REDACTED] BR 18 would come into the large room when I was waiting to speak with brother BR 1 and or waiting to see one of the boys. Brother BR 18 never spoke but I was always conscious he was looking at me. I instinctively walked backwards placing my back to the wall and edged to the exit door of the large room. I do not know why I did this other than I felt uncomfortable when I was alone with BR 18
10. In relation to the Brother who was a teacher, I never spoke to him. He was a young brother slender and energetic. The boys generally referred to being physically punished by him in the class room setting. It was rumoured this Brother was successfully prosecuted for physical abuse.
11. When I arrived what I noticed if the caretaker was not in the grounds on my arrival he was always in the grounds when I left.
12. My statutory visits to the boys whom I had responsibility for, and this is from memory, the visit always took place in Rubane in the large room. I am unsure if BR 1 and or other staff remained. If this was not the case, again from memory, the visits were short.
13. BR 1 confirmed my request to take the boys whom I had responsibility for to attend a disco. I cannot remember where I took them but it was either a Friday and or Saturday night. This happened at least more than once. The proviso was that the boys had to return before 10.00pm or the large gates would be closed. From memory the gates were closed on one occasion and the boys had to climb over them.
14. In relation to the boys attending the disco, it was agreed that I would wait outside in my car and they would come out at an appropriate time to allow for travelling back to the unit. I never experienced any problem with this arrangement.
15. I asked BR 1 to consider group sessions for the boys, which would take place in Rubane. BR 1 stated he would consider this request. I am unsure of the time delay from the request, to agreeing the sessions.
16. BR 1 confirmed and agreed the group sessions for the boys to enable them with life skills. It was agreed that I would be accompanied by two other social workers: [REDACTED] and DL 517

17. I cannot recall the date of the first session and where it was located in Rubane. I remember there were a reasonable number of boys, some of whom I knew and others I did not. They had chairs to sit on and the seating was in a semi-circle. There were no staff at this session. I cannot remember what was said but the boys were asked to talk about Rubane. The boys like an echo stated they did not like being touched before shower time. Also some boys mentioned being given alarm clocks. I cannot remember how we finished the session. The information was not shared with BR 1. I know that the comments from the boys were taken back to management in [REDACTED] (Assistant Principal Social Worker who managed the office) [REDACTED] (who may have been a Senior Social Worker) and [REDACTED]. I also know that [REDACTED] (Programme Manager ) based in [REDACTED] became involved.
18. Following this and BR 2 was brought back to Rubane to oversee its closure. I am aware there was some type of holiday arranged for the boys. I am also aware that the Caretaker had been arrested and his property was searched by police and inappropriate photographs of some boys were found. These photographs had been taken with the boys holding toys when they were getting bathed.
19. I am aware that the caretaker was given a custodial sentence. I came across the caretaker many years later when I attended Confirmation in the Catholic Church in Newtownards. Bishop Farquhar was officiating over the Confirmation Service. The official photographer was the caretaker. I refused to allow [REDACTED] to be photographed. I requested and approached Bishop Farquhar about the caretaker's history. He assured me that he would deal with the matter.
20. [REDACTED] was a project that was provided for Boys from Rubane who had reached the age of sixteen. This Aftercare Hostel did accommodate a group of boys for a period as I had made a few visits to the project. My visits were as a result of my employer [REDACTED] Community Unit of Management, having agreed that I would be the 'key social worker for the project.' [REDACTED] (I am lead to believe his parish currently is [REDACTED] was appointed as the priest for the project.
21. I was told by [REDACTED] that the manager had a social work background and may have worked in what is currently the Southern Health and Social Care Trust. There was an incident, which happened and was reported back to the Church and Social Services by [REDACTED] that the manager (I cannot remember his name) had been involved in what would now

be described as a domestic incident. states there was blood on the newly painted walls and curtains. What I was told, information was requested about this man and the information given was that he may have had an alcohol problem and also having an interest in women.

22. The Bishop (whose name I cannot remember but he was small in stature) arranged that this man would attend a meeting, which he, the Bishop would chair. Those professionals at the meeting had to remain standing when this man was invited into the room. The man was given two choices: (1) sign a declaration of resignation (2) if not Police will be informed. The man signed.

23. I know was involved in managing [REDACTED] for a very short period, whether this was because some boys had already been prepared to move from Rubane to [REDACTED] I am unsure how long this continued as I went on maternity leave.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed **DL 516**

Dated 29.08.14

HIA REF: [            ]

NAME: [ DL 516 ]

DATE: [            ]

**THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995**

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**Witness Statement of Ms. DL 516**

**Supplemental Statement**

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I, DL 516 will say,

1. Further to my previous statement of 29 August 2014 and as requested, I have read the above document found at RUB 60200 and exhibited to this statement at exhibit 1
2. I am not familiar with this document and from memory this is the first time I have ever seen this document.
3. The date in question [REDACTED] is a time that is familiar to me because I had major surgery at the end of [REDACTED]. As a result I required a period of sick leave, which I believe would have taken in this period and beyond
4. The contents of this document are written in both the third and first person. There is also a handwritten entry at the bottom of the page "Exhibit G. A. W. 1."
5. DL 144 'At present in La Salle. He is going through a 'bad patch.' Told DL 516 that he requested to leave Kircubbin because BR 1 felt his bottom and he did not want to be a 'poof.' DL 144 is very independent. This incident was told to me six months ago. I have no recall of this incident. In relation to the time line of the incident, this would suggest to me that this may have been recorded and obtained from a six monthly review. The Review document was green (colour) and divided into sub titles covering essential issues pertaining to all aspects of DL 144 care and needs, whilst in Rubane. The issues discussed would be hand written on the back page of the document. This information formed the basis for the following six monthly reviews; considering what had been achieved and or addressed and what remained outstanding. If

issues were not resolved then this would be recorded at the time to be discussed again within the six monthly period and or earlier if required.

6. The reviews were always chaired by social work management and attended by professionals involved in DL 144 care. The preferred core group was, Assistant Principal Social Worker, Senior Social Worker, and social worker who had responsibility for DL 144. From memory it was unusual for young people to attend their review. From memory I would have shared with DL 144 what was discussed in the review and the future plan for the next six months.
7. In relation to DL 144 requesting to leave Kircubbin because BR 1 felt his bottom and he did not want to be a 'poof.' I have no memory of DL 144 sharing this information directly with me. I do remember the 'group session,' with the boys from Rubane and them (boys) sharing this information about BR 1. BR 1 I have no memory of DL 144 attending this group session and if so whether he was one of the boys who had shared this information. What I remember was that the information was not shared with BR 1. Instead Social Services management were informed about the boys disclosures.
8. I am unsure of the time line, but I was involved in a review group, which was chaired by Assistant Principal Social Worker who was based at the time in Beech hall office. was the nominated coordinator for Social Services to work with Down and Connor regarding any issues arising from the fall out of the Rubane allegations as well as being involved with the hostel on the [REDACTED] which was to facilitate those boys who had reached 16 years and no family to undertake their care.
9. As already stated there was a period of time when I was on sick leave because I had major surgery. I have no recall of being informed about the process and or progress of the RUC investigations into the 1980's alleged abuse in Rubane. I am unsure if DL 144 was provided with an opportunity to talk about his experience in Rubane. However, based on factual information contained in RUB-60200 (exhibit G.A.W 1), I believe he would and should have been given the opportunity to talk about his experience in Rubane.
10. In the late [REDACTED] and into [REDACTED] from my experience it was important to inform Social Services Management as soon as possible of any issues arising with regards children. This has always been my practice. Practice then was a reliance on verbal communication between social worker and their line manager. This may not necessarily have been recorded but what would be recorded was what DL 144 had to say.

11. DL 148 In [REDACTED] complained to me that BR 18 had beat him around the head when he was helping to serve meals in the dining hall. DL 148 parents also complained to me regarding this incident. I discussed this incident with BR 1 he accepted that the incident had taken place. He apologised to me on behalf of BR 18 No apology was given to DL 148 DL 148
12. I have no memory of this incident, but the content as recorded has a ring of truth about it for the following reasons. (i) DL 148 reports the incident to me. (ii) DL 148 parents also complain about the same incident. (iii) I approach BR 1 about the incident, which he confirms happened. (iv) BR 1 apologies on behalf of BR 18 (v) I ask DL 148 has he received an apology. This process tells me that DL 148 was the first to inform me about the incident. This information would have been shared with my line manager for direction in managing the allegation. It would be my belief based on the political unrest at that time that DL 148 parents would have been consulted and their views taken into account to resolving the incident. DL 148 parents' decisions would have been shared with management. My discussing the incident with BR 1 BR 1 would have been approved both by Social Services based on what DL 148 parents requested. As was my practice, I spoke with DL 148 because he was the victim, to enquire if anyone apologized to him.
13. To provide clarity about my comment, 'political unrest,' DL 148 lived in the area of Belfast. In the late [REDACTED] and beyond, the RUC were mistrusted by the residents of [REDACTED] I cannot for certain state that DL 148 and or his Parents were advised of another resolution, which was to report the assault to the RUC.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed\_ **DL 516**

Dated 30th October, 2014



**DL 516** - [REDACTED] - 11.00 a.m.

**DL 144**

**DL 55**

**DL 31**

- provided social work support.

**DL 148** at St Patricks - No social work contact.

**DL 45** - [REDACTED] yrs - lives in [REDACTED] Receives social work support from **DL 516**

**DL 144**

At present in La Salle. He is going through a 'bad patch'. Told **DL 516** that he requested to leave Kircubbin because **BR 1** felt his bottom and he did not want to be a 'poof'. **DL 144** is very independent. This incident was told to me six months ago.

**DL 55**

I have what I would describe as a shallow relationship with **DL 55** He has never relayed anything to me but on occasions I have had my doubts e.g. **BR 1** running his fingers through **DL 55** hair.

I am aware of no incidents relating to **DL 31**

**DL 148**

In [REDACTED] complained to me that **BR 18** had beat him around the head when he was helping to serve meals in the dining hall. **DL 148** parents also complained to me regarding this incident.

I discussed this incident with **BR 1**, he accepted that the incident had taken place. He apologised to me on behalf of **BR 18**. No apology was given to **DL 148**.

**DL 45**

**DL 45** was always unhappy in the chalet with **DL 11** because he was, in his eyes, always receiving punishment. He related an incident to me where he was kicked at a football match as a result of which his wrist was in plaster for two weeks. It was alleged that **BR 77** is 'heavy-handed' and gives punishment freely - observation based on comments from boys generally.

EXHIBIT C. A. W. 1.

On [redacted] I was on duty in [redacted] I was under-taking duty at [redacted] in a private capacity.

I asked [DL 36] if he was going to a disco, whereupon [HIA 149] said I knew why he will not go out, he is a fruit and stay in! this was a clear suggestion that there were boys in hostel that [DL 36] 'fancied! The discussion then turned to Kircubbin and [DL 36] stated that Chalet [redacted] was rotten and they were 'always at it'. [HIA 149] said you could get a 'great touch there'. I was concerned and said that this was not so but both [HIA 149] and [DL 36] both assured me that it was. I asked what [BR 1] did about the incident. [DL 36] said "You would not go near him". I asked what he meant and he said that [BR 1] was always touching the boys and putting his hands at the back and front of the boys trousers. [HIA 149] agreed with this statement. [DL 36] said that he did this when they were in the playing fields. [DL 36] said that on one occasion [BR 1] asked if he minded the fondling and also if any of the other boys talked about it. [BR 1] said that it was only his way of showing friendship. [HIA 149] suggested that [DL 36] used to be 'a fruit' but that he wasn't now. [HIA 149] then went on to say that [BR 1] medically examined the boys on admission. [HIA 149] said that [BR 1] should not be allowed to do this as he was not a doctor. Neither of them said whether or not this had happened to them and I did not ask them.

[HIA 149] went on to describe a homosexual incident between two boys [DL 65] and [DL 44] and how one of the houseparents caught them in the act and hit them on the backsides and I asked if the houseparent [redacted] was not shocked. [HIA 149] and [DL 36] said "No, since everybody knows what goes on in Kircubbin! [DL 36] went on to describe how [BR 1] asked him if he took showers, then did he take showers with the other boys and he agreed he did. He [BR 1] [BR 1] asked if he would take his trousers down in front of him and he said no he would not and [BR 1] said, but you take them down in front of other boys in the showers, to which [DL 36] said but that is different. [HIA 149] then said how he had been in bed one morning and [BR 1] came in and [HIA 149] pretended he was asleep and [BR 1] pulled down the clothes and looked at his privates.

Both boys suggested that [BR 1] had a special relationship with one of the boys whom they had described as definitely 'two fruits' (referring to [DL 65] and [DL 44]). [HIA 149] said [BR 1] hates you to go with girls and he thinks that [BR 1] did not like him for that reason. [BR 1] was always saying that these girls are no good they will only get you into trouble. When [HIA 149] was leaving [BR 1] said he should give up these girls and try something else, [HIA 149] asked 'like what' and apparently [BR 1] replied 'something that you could make more money at, it would be more profitable'. The definite implications from [HIA 149] was that he took it to mean some other form of sexual activity. I asked about any of

the other Brothers (staff) and asked by name about [REDACTED] BR 18, they said that he would thump you and that one day one of the boys was sitting at the dining table and [REDACTED] BR 18 hit him from behind and pushed his head into a plate of stew.

When this discussion took place in the hostel [REDACTED] (Houseparent) was present.