

Witness Name : [REDACTED]
Statement NO : First
Exhibits: [REDACTED] 1- [REDACTED] 6
Dated : [REDACTED]

THE INDEPENDENT JERSEY CARE INQUIRY

Witness Statement of [REDACTED]

I [REDACTED] will say as follows:-

1. I was born in Jersey on [REDACTED] 1934 and was raised in Jersey. I was living in Jersey during the occupation. After leaving school in 1952, I decided to become a teacher and went to work at St Helier School, which was the biggest school on the island at the time. I had a [REDACTED] qualification, but was not a qualified teacher as the National Union of Teachers would not accept me onto their qualification course. Miss Harris, who was the head teacher at St Helier School at the time, agreed that I could teach and train on the job. She offered me a job teaching [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. After the break up of my marriage in 1968/1968 I took a post as [REDACTED] at St Helier Day Nursery from where I was poached by St Helier Girls in 1975.
2. I spent four years working at St Helier School before deciding in 1979 to try something different. I had seen an advertisement in the Jersey Evening Post advertising a job for [REDACTED] at Les Chênes.
3. Les Chênes was a residential school that opened in 1977. It was also a remand facility for young offenders. From what I understand, the States of Jersey was fed up of sending children on remand off island, and it took the decision to open the remand centre in Jersey - Les Chênes. Les Chênes accommodated those children on remand for all sorts of offences, from the very trivial to perhaps the more serious.

4. Most of the residents at Les Chênes were children on remand. However, we also had a couple of children who were in care staying with us at Les Chênes. I am unsure why those children in care came to Les Chênes, rather than to one of the other homes on the island. Perhaps arrangements at those homes had not worked out.
5. Les Chênes was initially a school [REDACTED]. They were looking for a [REDACTED] in 1979 so that the school could accommodate [REDACTED] as well. I exhibit as my **Exhibit [REDACTED] 1** a record of the meeting of the advisory subcommittee for Les Chênes held on 13 May 1979 which sets out at paragraph 5 that, until my arrival at Les Chênes in 1979, Les Chênes could not accept [REDACTED]
6. 60 candidates applied for the job. However, I was the only teacher and qualified [REDACTED] to apply. [REDACTED] who was [REDACTED] at Les Chênes at the time, later told me that he knew straight away that I was the one for the job. He has since told me that I was the best appointment he ever made. I moved from my flat on the outskirts of St Helier to a bedsit on site at Les Chênes.

My role

7. I was hired as a residential member of staff, and as a teacher. Some of the teachers did not live on site, but all members of staff were responsible for the care of the children. I taught [REDACTED] (I am [REDACTED] my mother) at Les Chênes, and I doubled as [REDACTED]
8. I was responsible for the general care of the children. I felt as if I played the role of a mother to many of the children, and I think that a lot of the young lads did see me in this light. My working hours varied. On one day, I would start at 7.30am and finish at 5.00pm. The next day, I would start work at 5.00pm and finish at 10.30pm. I would wake the children every morning, and would make sure that they were washed, dressed and fed before school started. An assembly was held each morning during which the headmaster used to go over the events of the previous day.

9. [REDACTED] and Mario Lundy, who was the deputy when I first started at Les Chênes, used to take the children to any Court hearings they had, and I used to take them to any appointments with [REDACTED]. I was also responsible for [REDACTED]. I must say that the children at Les Chênes were all [REDACTED]. I cannot remember ever having to call [REDACTED] Les Chênes.
10. All of the schooling took place at Les Chênes. The lessons took place between 9.00am and 4.30pm. After school, the children would have their tea, do their homework and we would also have evening activities. We had supervisors who used to come in every evening to help with the evening care. The ratio of staff to children was high at Les Chênes. We always felt well covered.
11. I used to carry out many of the evening activities with the children. The children could choose whether they wanted to do some boxing, fishing, play football or computer games. Some of the lads really enjoyed their boxing, and I took them to competitions all over the UK. I also used to take the children to the local youth club. I used to take the children out on night time walks to the woods and along the cliffs. This occasionally proved to be a real challenge, especially when I was looking after the most challenging children, but I enjoyed doing it.
12. We also used to go camping in North Wales from time to time yearly. I recently found some old photos of our camping trips. I recognised some of the boys as being [REDACTED].
13. The children were not given much free time. We tried to keep them busy and out of mischief. The only time the children did sit down and do nothing was when Neighbours, their most popular tv programme, was on.
14. As a residential member of staff, I was always around on weekends and I would often find myself doing all the cooking and cleaning. I used to work one weekend in two. I always took the children to church on Sunday mornings when I worked. The children used to have to come with me whether they liked it or not, and I used to pile them all into the minibus.

Education at Les Chênes

15. I understand that one criticism that has been made of Les Chênes is that there was too much emphasis on keeping order, rather than on promoting the educational and care needs of the children. There may be some truth to this. However, I do recall [REDACTED] placing an important emphasis on the need for the children to do well at Les Chênes. I recall one staff meeting in particular when [REDACTED] exploded after the examination results had been released and the students had done much better in the subjects I taught, in comparison to the other teachers' subjects. I believe that [REDACTED] was particularly frustrated given the fact that I was not even a qualified teacher but was getting good results. I believe that my success with the academic results was largely down to the fact that the children enjoyed my subjects of [REDACTED] more than they enjoyed [REDACTED]. Most of the children were not very academically bright and they were never going to do well with the academic subjects. I found [REDACTED] much harder to teach the children.
16. If I was being hypercritical, I did wonder what the motivation would be for teaching staff at Les Chênes to leave normal education to come to work with us. There would have been much more opportunity for advancement had they stayed within normal mainstream education. I could not see what the qualified teachers were achieving by coming to Les Chênes. Perhaps this lack of motivation by some of the staff did contribute to the view that Les Chênes was more focused on control and discipline, rather than on promoting the educational interests of the children.
17. Some of the teachers I remember from Les Chênes are [REDACTED] [REDACTED], who was another female member of staff, and [REDACTED] the [REDACTED]. The kids used to love doing some [REDACTED] with [REDACTED].

The residents of Les Chênes

18. The maximum number of residents was 20. However the norm was to have anything from 11 to 17 residents at Les Chênes at any one time.

19. Most of the children at Les Chênes came from very inadequate backgrounds. The children's parents did not spend any time with them, and this impacted negatively on the children's lives. [REDACTED] often used to say that it should have been the parents living at Les Chênes, and not the children.
20. Many of the children, for the very reason that they were in Les Chênes, were very difficult and challenging children. Some of the children could be quite violent. The odd explosion was inevitable. The children could 'lose it'. They used to go for each other, and sometimes went for the other teachers. Thankfully, they never went for me. They knew better than to go for [REDACTED] [REDACTED] They realised quite quickly that it was better to keep on my good side. I think that [REDACTED] had perhaps warned them all not to go for me.
21. I exhibit as my **Exhibit 2** a [REDACTED] reports prepared by [REDACTED] in 1979. At page 7, paragraph 9 of this report [REDACTED] refers to the children as 'retarded'. This description does sound quite severe and not all of the children were as bad as this analysis may suggest. I think he meant that they were lagging behind the age group norm. All, however, had their difficulties.
22. Many of the children used to abscond from Les Chênes. At one point, this used to happen on a fairly regular basis. There was a period of time when it was the 'thing to do'. It was, on occasions, a real challenge keeping the children under control and safe. If the children decided to make a 'run for it', for example during our night time walks, there was not much I could do to stop them. I recall one incident when I had taken the kids out on a day trip with [REDACTED] another member of staff. We were driving back in the [REDACTED] and when we stopped at traffic lights, the kids decided to open the doors of the minibus and make a run for it. We had left with 12 children but had to return with only three of them. The kids knew that they would be caught eventually, but it was just a game that they liked to play.
23. Looking after the children could be quite fun; you always had to be one step ahead of them. I remember on one occasion, we had residents from Guernsey staying at Les Chênes. To our great surprise, the kids were all of

a sudden mad for oranges. They could not have enough of them. They had never been interested in oranges before. I thought that something was not quite right and we later found out that the kids had somehow been injecting vodka into the oranges!

24. I must say that despite their difficulties, and the odd challenge, the children at Les Chênes were generally lovely. I believe that the children developed well at Les Chênes. They all grew and put on weight and, in my opinion, they flourished. I think Les Chênes was good for them.

Mario Lundy

25. When I first started at Les Chênes, [REDACTED] was [REDACTED]. He came over from England to work in Jersey and was Les Chênes [REDACTED]. I believe that he had been working in a similar school in England. I think that he was used to working with children with challenging behavioural problems.
26. [REDACTED] had an air of authority around him. The children all knew that he was [REDACTED] and that he had [REDACTED]. I thought that he was a fantastic [REDACTED]. He certainly gained my respect. The school was at its height then, and it may be that the school started to go gradually downhill after [REDACTED] left. The school operated a merit award system, which I will discuss in greater detail later in this statement, and I do not think that the system was implemented as strongly after [REDACTED] left.
27. When I first started working at Les Chênes, Mario Lundy was the deputy. He later became the Principal [REDACTED]. Mario, like [REDACTED] had worked in a similar school in England and had experience in dealing with difficult kids.
28. As I have discussed, there were times at Les Chênes when some of the children became worked up and they used to go for each other or other members of staff. We were occasionally faced with quite explosive situations, and Mario often had to intervene to calm the situation down. Mario was a very powerful fellow and he certainly used his strength to defuse many a situation.

29. Corporal punishment and caning was still on the statute books when I started working in Les Chênes. I think that I must have been told this as I cannot remember ever seeing a document which set out what was or was not acceptable. When I was offered the job as [REDACTED] [REDACTED] warned me that [REDACTED] ever had to be caned, I would have to be the one to deliver the caning. Thankfully, this never happened, and I never had to use corporal punishment as a mean to discipline the children.
30. Having said this, some of the male residents were caned at Les Chênes. This did not happen often. I would estimate that during the 16 years that I worked at Les Chênes, the cane was brought out and administered on four occasions at the very most. The caning would always happen in [REDACTED] or Mario's room, and another member of staff had to be present to witness it. I was never asked to witness any child being caned.
31. Although the caning took place behind closed doors, all other punishments were administered there and then. The staff had to be quick to react and intervene if they noticed any of the residents going for each other. There would not have been time to take the children to another room to punish them.
32. I did see both [REDACTED] and Mario being very rough with the children on the odd occasion. However, the children's behaviour at Les Chênes demanded this at times. Some of the lads were very large and, if they ever became volatile, [REDACTED] and Mario had no alternative but to intervene to protect the children and staff around, and this did need a forceful response.
33. I believe that [REDACTED] was more proportionate when it came to disciplining the children. Mario disciplined the children more vigorously and was perhaps more physical than [REDACTED]. I think that Mario was quicker to react and to dive in if he saw a situation brewing in comparison to [REDACTED]
34. Having said this, I do not think that either of them ever went overboard when disciplining the children. Had I seen either of them assault or treat the children unfairly, I would have reported the matter immediately, but I never did.

35. I understand that some of the ex-residents of Les Chênes have alleged that they were abused by both [REDACTED] and Mario Lundy, and have referred to them as [REDACTED] because of the way they disciplined the children. I was quite content with the manner in which both [REDACTED] and Mario treated the children. I did not witness any abuse take place at Les Chênes and I never heard any of the children use the term [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

36. Another member of staff that I recall from Les Chênes is [REDACTED]. From recollection, [REDACTED] taught [REDACTED] at Les Chênes. [REDACTED]

37. [REDACTED] and I often used to take the children out on day trips. On one occasion, when [REDACTED] was driving [REDACTED], I could smell drink on his breath and I did not feel safe. It was a very hard decision to make, but I reported the matter to [REDACTED] and communicated my concerns about [REDACTED] to him. I presume that [REDACTED] would have given him a written warning. [REDACTED] always used to tell me that as long as the children were with me, he knew that they would be safe.

38. [REDACTED] had a lot of run-ins with the kids. He had to run a very tight ship. He was one member of staff who could be very harsh with his implementation of the merit award scheme, in view of the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] he had to keep strict control.

The merit award scheme

39. During all my time working at Les Chênes, the merit award scheme was in operation. This was a point system that encouraged and rewarded good behaviour amongst the children and penalised bad behaviour.

40. I exhibit as my **Exhibit [REDACTED] 3** a document that sets out how the merit award system worked. I do not remember ever seeing this document during my time at Les Chênes. However, from recollection, the document accurately reflects how the points system was operated. I was told verbally about the

points system and how it worked when I first arrived in Les Chênes. Each child carried a card around with them to monitor their points, and they all knew how the system worked.

41. The aim for the children was to collect enough points to gain the right to go home over the weekends. The kids needed to collect 375 points before they could return home. The children knew that if they wanted to go home, they had to behave and earn their points.
42. The children would be awarded for good behaviour during lessons and mealtimes, for completing their homework, for cleaning their rooms, for making their beds and for helping out generally. There were 10 points to earn each lesson.
43. If the children attacked anyone, swore or misbehaved in any way, their points would quickly be deducted and they would have to stay in Les Chênes over the weekend. They could also lose out on some of the evening activities.
44. I thought that the system was an excellent system. The children knew exactly where they stood. They knew exactly what they had to do in order to gain their privileges.
45. The possibility of going home on the weekends encouraged good behaviour. The children were desperate to go home. I suspect that it was mainly because they wanted to collect the fags they had hidden in the walls outside Les Chênes on their way out.
46. I recall one incident with one of the residents, [REDACTED]. He had been misbehaving and he was pleading to be caned. [REDACTED] had taken his points away, which meant that he could not go away with his family on a holiday. I cannot remember what he had done, but he was begging [REDACTED] to cane him as punishment, rather than to deduct the points. [REDACTED] was firm and refused. At the time, I thought nothing of implementing the system as it stood, but I was sympathetic to [REDACTED] on this occasion. He learnt his lesson and knew better than to misbehave again. However, when I look back

at this, I am unsure that this was the right response. Values have changed dramatically by today.

47. I understand that a Dr Kathie Bull prepared a report on Les Chênes in the early 2000's. I was unaware of this report. The report was prepared after I retired. However, I have been shown excerpts of this report which I exhibit as my **Exhibit** [REDACTED] 4. In her report, Dr Kathie Bull is critical of the points system. In her opinion, maintaining family contact was a good thing for the children of Les Chênes, and the points system should not have been used to prevent family contact. She states at paragraph 26 of the summary of the report that 'denying visits home, however, to those who are not in a secure place is very unacceptable practice irrespective of whether it is because young people have not obtained sufficient points'. She was also critical of how easy it was for the children to be deprived of their weekend leave; 'The system is also open to abuse. For example, young people not wishing to go home could manipulate it. Adults could similarly deduct more points than a misdemeanour warrants and thus prevent a young people from going home'.
48. I did not think of the point system in this way during my time at Les Chênes. I never stopped to analyse the system, I was simply getting on with my work and was following instructions. I saw the system as a straightforward way of disciplining the children; the children knew exactly what was expected of them. It was short, sharp and effective, even if it meant that the children could not go home. Having said this, I can appreciate the alternative view that is being advanced by Dr Kathie Bull. Having had the opportunity to reflect and look back on the merit award system, perhaps it was implemented a little unfairly. It was perhaps rather subjective and some members of staff could be harsher than others, as I have said.
49. Another analysis of the merit award system is offered by a Mr Pilling who prepared a report in 1980 which I exhibit as my **Exhibi** [REDACTED] 5. In this report, Mr Pilling suggests that the merit award system suited the staff more than the children; he questions at paragraph 4.1 whether the merit award system is 'in existence more to meet staff needs than children's needs'. There may be

more than a grain of truth in that analysis. The merit award system certainly did help us control the children. But that was part of the point.

50. The merit award system was the principal way of disciplining the children and controlling behaviour. During lesson time, each member of staff was responsible for disciplining its own class. I was quite strict with the children during the lessons. I had a much softer touch with the children in the evenings. The children all knew a way around me.
51. If the child's behaviour was so serious that I could not discipline them, I would usually call on [REDACTED] or Mario. I remember on one occasion, I took the children out on a day trip and I caught them all smoking in the bunkers. I made them all sit on the wall by the beach and called on [REDACTED] and Mario to come down. The children all knew that they were in trouble.

The secure cells

52. There were secure cells at Les Chênes. The children on remand were sent to the secure cells to sleep until they were sentenced. It was our responsibility to present the children on remand to the court on the day of their hearing. We could not risk having these children escape from Les Chênes and we therefore placed them in the secure cells. The detention rooms were never used to punish the children that I remember.
53. Many of the children resented being in the secure cells. They also resented being searched, which is something we had to do at the end of every weekend when they returned to us from home leave. God knows what they used to bring back with them from weekends at home. We once found that one of the residents had a machete with him that his uncle had given him.
54. I exhibit as my **Exhibit 6** excerpts from the Les Chênes school handbook dated 1990 shown to me by the Solicitors to the Inquiry. I do not recall seeing this handbook during my time at Les Chênes. Reference is made on page 11 of this handbook to how the children should not be 'forgotten or overlooked' whilst in the cells. I have been asked whether it was sometimes the case that children who were in the cells were forgotten about. I cannot

remember this ever happening. We had to pass the cells to go to the kitchen and we therefore would have seen anyone in there on a regular basis.

55. The children who were placed in the secure cells would be let out of the cells during the day. They used to play outside on the ball court. There was a high fence around the ball court to stop them from climbing over and escaping.

Child Care Officers

56. I have been asked to comment on the relationship between the residential and educational staff at Les Chênes, and the Child Care Officers. All of the children had their own Child Care Officers when they arrived at Les Chênes. However, I rarely saw any of the Child Care Officers and was never once asked for any input when it came to planning the care of the child. They seemed to do a vanishing act as soon as the children were formally admitted to us.

57. I cannot remember any of the children having a formal care plan. We used to have a record for each child which we filled in daily. For example, if I took the children to a medical appointment, I would record this in the record book. I also used to keep a diaries setting out what I did each day.

58. Although some of the children were taken to the hospital to see the psychiatrist, this was not part of any overall care plan. Some of the children at Les Chênes had serious issues of mental health. The children who were taken to see the psychiatrist were the ones who had mental illnesses. We never took them to see the psychiatrist because they were suffering from depression or anything like that. They all used to think that the appointments were rubbish and a waste of time.

59. I believe that the Child Care Officers used to hold case reviews about the children. However, the educational staff were never asked to contribute towards these reviews, they focused more on the care side of things.

60. I do recall inspectors coming to visit Les Chênes during my time there. I believe that those who came to inspect the school were more interested in

the care side of the school rather than the educational side. I can't recall who they were, or when they came.

Allegations

61. I am aware that allegations of abuse have been made by some of the ex-residents of Les Chênes. I was also aware of the police investigation that launched in 2008. In fact, Mario Lundy rang me to let me know that the police may get in touch with me, which they did. I certainly never abused or assaulted any child at Les Chênes, and I never saw any ill treatment of the children at Les Chênes in the sense of violence beyond that warranted by the circumstances.
62. The children were occasionally forcibly held for a short period of time, or forcibly removed from volatile situations. However, this was necessary to protect them and others around them. I never saw any member of staff hurt a child maliciously.
63. I did not receive any training in how to safely restrain a child during my time at Les Chênes. In fact, during my time at Les Chênes, I did not receive any training at all. However, I cannot remember ever having to use any restraint. I would never have put myself in that sort of situation. If I was ever struggling to calm any of the children down, or to defuse a potentially explosive situation, I would always call on another member of staff.
64. I understand that one witness has given evidence about a time when he had a major run-in with [REDACTED]. According to the witness, I grabbed a carving knife that he had from him. I can vaguely remember an incident when I had to take a knife away from a child. A situation had escalated between the child and [REDACTED] and I had to intervene. I asked the child to hand the knife over, which he did. The children did usually obey me. I cannot remember ever being fearful of the children at Les Chênes. They were nice kids really, despite their troubled backgrounds.
65. I understand that another resident has alleged that [REDACTED] grabbed him and forcibly pushed him against the wall. This is another incident that I recall. The children could be quite boisterous. However, on this occasion, I

believe that [REDACTED] went a bit too far. I think that the child concerned was [REDACTED]. He was a very weak little boy. [REDACTED] should not have grabbed the young child as he did. [REDACTED] was on a fairly short fuse, but he was going through a very tough time at home at the time [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

66. I have been asked whether Mario Lundy used to prod the children in their chest as some of the children have alleged. I do remember Mario prodding the children, but he did not do this maliciously. I do not think there was anything wrong with what he did, I think this was just a mannerism and was not malicious.
67. I have been told about another child who alleged that I stopped her from going home after she swore at me. Whilst I cannot remember this particular incident, I would not have put up with anyone swearing at me. If a child did swear, the merit award system entitled me to deduct points and to prevent them from going home, and it is quite possible I did so.
68. I am not the type of person to put up with poor behaviour. I recall that when I was working in the St Helier day nursery before becoming a teacher there, there was one child who used to go around biting all of the other children. I was the [REDACTED] at the time and after months of watching the girl biting the other children, I suddenly lost my cool. I grabbed her arm and sunk my teeth into her arm. Something inside me snapped. I could not help myself. I was not ready to put up with her behaviour. Of course, I was told off by the matron and told that I could not do this. I did not do anything like this ever again.
69. I understand that another resident has alleged that I smashed a stack of plates over his head. I believe that this witness is [REDACTED]. I recall the incident well. I did not smash the plates on [REDACTED] head. The incident occurred around the dinner table. I was clearing the plates away and [REDACTED] was being a general nuisance. I walked past him with the stack of plates in my hand. I asked him to be quiet and I tapped the stack of plates on to his

head gently. To my surprise, the bottom plate shattered on his head. It was a complete accident and was not done in a malicious way at all.

70. I understand that other residents have given evidence and have been critical of the manner in which I treated those who wet the bed or soiled themselves. We did have some bed-wetters at Les Chênes. If we knew that a child had a tendency to wet the bed, we used to give them a plastic mattress. I never made a fuss of any child who wet the bed and always dealt with it sensitively. It was usually the staff on night duty who changed the sheets.

71. I have been asked about the regime during meal times at Les Chênes. The children at Les Chênes were well fed. They did not have a varied menu, they had whatever was on the menu and that was it. If they did not like it, they were not offered an alternative. I understand that one child has described being effectively force-fed macaroni and cheese. I cannot remember the children having macaroni and cheese. I could empathise with any child who did not like macaroni and cheese as I loathe it myself. However, none of the children were ever made to eat food like that. We did award points for good behaviour around the dinner table. However, we never deducted points from children who refused to eat their meals. Neither would they be offered an alternative. The children always had bread on the table, so they could eat as much of the bread as they wanted if they did not like what was put in front of them. The children were always well fed at Les Chênes. They had three good meals a day and they all put on a healthy amount of weight during their time at Les Chênes.

72. I did not see any behaviour that caused me serious cause for concern during my time at Les Chênes. As the matron, I used to deal with all of the children when they were ill. I never once saw a serious injury that could have been caused to a child by a teacher who had been overly rough. The staff and students did used to hold football matches each week. The football matches were always rough and someone did usually end up being injured, but it was usually just a bruise or a broken toe nail. The most serious injury we had after the football match was, I think, a broken arm.

73. I would hope that the fact that I reported [REDACTED] for his drink issue would demonstrate that had I seen any inappropriate behaviour by any member of staff during my time at Les Chênes that I would have had the confidence to do something about this and report the matter.

Reflections

74. I was more than ready to retire 1984. I was tired of working long hours and I did not feel up to scratch. There were endless kids who kept coming through the system, and it was hard work keeping on top of everything.

75. I thoroughly enjoyed my first 14 years working at Les Chênes, but perhaps did not enjoy the final two years as much. As an institution, I do not think that Les Chênes was run as effectively by the time I retired in ~~1984~~ 1994 K.T.W.

76. I was very happy at Les Chênes. I enjoyed my job. I thought it was a very interesting job. I loved the kids and I enjoyed working with most of the staff.

77. I thoroughly enjoyed working for both [REDACTED] and Mario Lundy. They appreciated everything we did for them. [REDACTED] in particular was very appreciative of any extra work that I did and was always careful to thank me whenever I went above and beyond my normal duties. He was a good boss in that respect.


78. I strongly believe that all of the children at Les Chênes received more care and attention than they ever did at home. I think we were good to them.

79. I confirm that I am willing to give oral evidence to this Inquiry if required to do so.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed .  .


Date 24.5.15