

Newsletter

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry



Foreword

by Lady Smith

Here at SCAI, we have covered much ground in the last six months. In May 2023, we concluded further expert evidence relating to Phase 1 of our investigations.

August saw a return to our Boarding Schools case study. Following the completion of the Inquiry's early evidential hearings in relation to a group of seven schools, a significant number of applicants and other witnesses came forward to provide evidence of their experiences at the Edinburgh Academy, a school not included in that group of seven. I decided it was important to hold an additional set of hearings to explore the Edinburgh Academy evidence. They continued throughout August.

On 19 September 2023, we began public hearings in relation to Phase 8 of our investigations. The focus of this case study is residential accommodation provided or used by the state between 1930 and 2014 to accommodate young offenders under the age of 18, children and young persons under 18 awaiting trial, and children and young persons under 18 in need of care and protection.

A range of organisations were involved in the provision of such residential accommodation, including local authorities, religious and voluntary organisations and the Scottish Prison Service.

Hearings are currently underway relating to establishments run by the Scottish Prison Service and these will run from now until the end of the year.

This is a case study which has been in preparation for a long time and it will be both a substantial and demanding one. The hearings are expected to continue through 2024.

You can read more detail about it in this newsletter. A video is also available on our [website](#) where I explain our approach to this case study.

My findings in relation to the migration of children from Scotland have now all been published, with the first volume published in March 2023 and the second volume published more recently, on 28 September. In April of this year, I also published the first in the set of my findings in relation to the Boarding Schools case study – my findings relating to Loretto School, Musselburgh. Findings in relation to Morrison's are complete and are being prepared for publication.

I am pleased to report that we launched our new website over the summer. It includes a range of features to improve accessibility. I hope that you are able to easily find the information you need. Meanwhile, anyone who requires additional support to give evidence to the Inquiry should get in touch with our Witness Support Team who will be able to assist.

I would like to extend my thanks again to all who have and continue to provide valuable evidence to the Inquiry.

CASE STUDY FINDINGS

Boarding Schools, Loretto findings

In April 2023, Lady Smith published her findings relating to the provision of residential care in boarding schools for children at Loretto School, Musselburgh.

She concludes that pupils were exposed to sexual, physical, and emotional abuse both in the senior and junior school.

Hearings took place between 24 March 2021 and 12 May 2021, during which Lady Smith heard evidence from 32 witnesses.


Factors such as inappropriate recruitment policies; staff who lacked the appropriate skills and training; and insufficient oversight of pupils and teachers, were amongst those found to have resulted in children being abused.

A video from Lady Smith summarising her findings can be viewed [here](#) and the full report can be read on the [Inquiry's website](#).

Loretto is one of a number of boarding schools investigated by the Inquiry and explored in evidence at case study hearings. Lady Smith's findings in relation to other boarding schools hearings will follow later.

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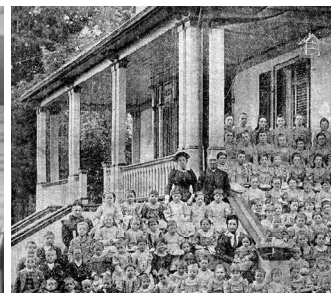
Child Migration case study findings

In March 2023, Lady Smith published the first volume of her findings relating to the migration of children from Scotland.

From the latter part of the nineteenth century until well into the second half of the twentieth century many thousands of children were sent away from Scotland as child migrants by means of a system that was inherently abusive.

Volume one of the Chair's findings covers, in detail, the histories of former child migrants who provided evidence to the Inquiry, or whose family members provided evidence. Forty-five individuals came forward to tell the Inquiry about their experiences as child migrants who were sent from Scotland, or as relatives of former child migrants. They also provided evidence about the experiences, at their destinations, of other child migrants.

Statements were taken at private sessions held in Scotland, Australia, the USA, and Canada.



In September 2023, Lady Smith published the second volume of her findings concerning the practice of children being migrated from Scotland.

Volume two considers the history, policy, and practices of child migration, with a focus on the Scottish context.

Lady Smith concludes that child migration is now rightly regarded as a shameful chapter in our history, and that the system itself was abusive and resulted in many children being abused at their destinations.

Videos from Lady Smith summarising her [volume one](#) and [volume two](#) findings can be viewed on the Inquiry website, alongside the full [reports](#).

Professor Levitt report

The Knowledge and Definition of Child Abuse within Scottish Office Departments, 1945-74: Report for the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry.

Professor Ian Levitt (Emeritus Professor of Social Policy, University of Central Lancashire), has written a report for the Inquiry examining the definition of child abuse and the extent of knowledge about it within Scottish administrative departments from 1945 to 1974.

Professor Levitt carried out extensive research and analysis of the government papers for this period retained by the National Records for Scotland (NRS). Existing childcare files indicate that officials with oversight for statutory child care provision were regularly informed about the living conditions for children in approved schools and children's homes.

From the mid-1960s, there was greater recognition of how different care settings affected children, and awareness of the limits of the statutory provision for children in need of care. This knowledge seems to have influenced changes in legislation, rules and regulations. However, the records also indicate that proposed reforms were often met with resistance by voluntary organisations, who were responsible for the institutional care of many children during the period under consideration.

Professor Levitt's work provides a unique insight into officials' internal and external negotiations regarding the evolution of residential childcare provision in Scotland.

The full research report is available to read on the [Inquiry website](#).

Boarding Schools case study

In August 2023, the Inquiry resumed public hearings investigating the abuse of children in boarding schools with a focus on Edinburgh Academy.

The Inquiry has been investigating residential care provisions at boarding schools for a number of years. The case study has examined the background, administration and regulation of boarding schools in Scotland, and the experiences of boarders at some specific schools.

Evidence about the experiences of boarders at Fettes College was heard during November and December 2021. Some of the Fettes' witnesses also spoke of what happened at the Edinburgh Academy but evidence about the Edinburgh Academy was not considered in detail at that time.

After the completion of the Inquiry's evidential hearings in relation to the initial group of seven schools in the Boarding Schools case study, a significant number of applicants and other witnesses came forward to provide evidence of their experiences at the Edinburgh Academy. In considering this new evidence, Lady Smith decided to hold an additional set of hearings, focusing on Edinburgh Academy.

It is normal for applicants to come forward during and after evidential hearings. Those hearings and the publicity surrounding them encourage them to get in touch. All evidence is considered by the Inquiry.

Hearings in relation to Edinburgh Academy took place across three weeks in August. During which, the Inquiry heard evidence from over 30 witnesses in person, and over 20 witness statements were read in.

Phase 1 expert evidence

In May, the Inquiry resumed hearing expert evidence relating to Phase 1 of its investigations.

The Inquiry heard from experts:

- Professor Ian Levitt (Emeritus Professor of Social Policy, University of Central Lancashire);
- Professor Andy Kendrick (Emeritus Professor, CELCIS, University of Strathclyde); and
- Professor Lynn Abrams (Professor of Modern History, University of Glasgow)

Their evidence covered the development of regulatory and social policy in relation to the provision of residential care for children in Scotland (including foster care), the evolution of inspection systems, and the state of knowledge within government of the presence, nature and extent of abuse in care settings.

Residential accommodation for young offenders and children and young persons in need of care and protection

On 19 September 2023, the Inquiry began its public hearings in relation to Phase 8 of its investigations:

The focus of this case study is residential accommodation provided or used by the state between 1930 and 2014 to accommodate (a) young offenders under the age of 18 (and children and young persons under 18 awaiting trial), and (b) children and young persons under 18 in need of care and protection.

This accommodation was managed by a range of providers including local authorities, religious bodies, voluntary bodies, and the Scottish Prison Service.

The case study will look at:

- Residential establishments in Scotland used as approved schools, List D schools, secure accommodation, remand homes, and assessment centres.
- Borstal institutions, remand institutions, detention centres and young offenders' institutions run by the Scottish Prison Service.

The period covered by the Inquiry's investigations into abuse at those establishments extends from 1930 to 2014.

It will explore the nature and extent of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse including the abusive use of corporal punishment, restraint and segregation.

Reporting and impact have been and continue to be aspects of the Inquiry's investigations, as do staff recruitment, training, and culture; they will also be explored during this case study.

The first part of the case study will feature evidence from relevant experts, regulatory bodies and inspectorates, as well as evidence from providers.

The Inquiry will then hear evidence in relation to a number of particular establishments. This will include evidence from individuals who experienced abuse and a range of other witnesses.

The Inquiry has gathered a significant number of statements from applicants and witnesses to prepare for this case study. All evidence is valuable to the Inquiry and we are grateful to all those that have come forward. Not everyone who has given a witness statement to the Inquiry will be asked to give evidence at a public hearing but all statements will be considered as evidence. The Witness Support Team are available to answer any questions.

Thirty-nine establishments have been confirmed as being included in the case study. A full list can be seen [here](#).

Chair's decision

A public hearing was held on 23 February 2023 in relation to applications concerning evidence provided in relation to the Inquiry's Boarding Schools investigations. That evidence was protected by the Chair's General Restriction Order.

Oral submissions were heard in support of applications received by the Inquiry, and in response to them. Following the hearing, Lady Smith published her decision in writing, advising that permission is now given, with immediate effect, to disclose and/or publish

Inquiry evidence that identifies Iain Wares.

Relevant Inquiry statements and transcripts are being updated to remove the cipher CDZ, revealing the name. It should be noted that as Iain Wares was referred to by the pseudonym 'Edgar' during hearings, the removal of the cipher in the hearing transcript will show 'Edgar' but this person is in fact Iain Wares.

You can read the Chair's decision and addendum [here](#).

Q Who does the Inquiry want to hear from?

A The Inquiry needs to take evidence from a wide range of people. They can be people who want to tell us about abuse they or a family member experienced while in care. It does not matter if the abuse was reported to the police or not. It also does not matter if they have already made an earlier statement to the police, a solicitor, or anyone else.

Other witnesses may want to tell us about positive experiences they had in care. Or they may have seen others being abused. Witnesses may also be people who worked for care providers, such as staff members, supervisors, managers or social workers.

Q I provided a statement after the case study concluded. Will my evidence still be considered?

A Your evidence is still important to the Inquiry. In case study findings, Lady Smith explains that applicants and other witnesses have come forward to SCAI with relevant evidence, both during and since the conclusion of the evidential hearings in the case study. This evidence may not be included as part of findings but will be considered by the Inquiry as part of the overall investigation of the nature and extent of abuse of children in residential care.

Q Can I still give evidence once findings have been published?

A Your evidence is still important to the Inquiry.

It is normal for applicants to come forward during and after evidential hearings. Those hearings and the publicity surrounding them encourage them to get in touch.

This evidence may not be included as part of these findings but will be considered by the Inquiry as part of the overall investigation of the nature and extent of abuse of children in residential care.

Applicants and any other witnesses with relevant evidence to offer should contact the Inquiry; their evidence will still be considered as part of the continuing process.

Q Does the Inquiry work with the Scottish Government on Scotland's Redress Scheme?

A The Inquiry is independent of both Scottish Government and Redress Scotland.

Q I provided a statement to the Inquiry some time ago, will I need to give evidence at public hearings?

A Some people will be asked by the Inquiry to give evidence at a public hearing - but not everyone who has given a witness statement will be asked to give evidence at a public hearing. For some applicants and witnesses, their signed witness statement will be the whole of their evidence to the Inquiry.

The Witness Support Team will be in touch with anyone who may be invited to give evidence at hearings. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact them.

Q Will all announced investigations be part of a case study?

A There are currently more than 100 announced investigations which are listed on the [Inquiry's website](#).

The Inquiry is looking at different types of care providers within its terms of reference and will consider some in detail as part of a case study. Case study evidence will be held in public.

Not all institutions which are listed will become a case study. However, all evidence is important to the Inquiry and will be considered as part of the Inquiry's work.