

PE1933/Z: Allow the Fornethy Survivors to access Scotland's redress scheme

Petitioner written submission, 16 June 2024

Fornethy House was a residential school and not a respite or holiday placement.

We have now ascertained without any doubt that Fornethy was a school. We are now in receipt of hard evidence from the archives which prove this –

- a) If Fornethy wasn't a school then why was the Glasgow Education Department advertising for teachers?
- b) The archives, kept by Glasgow City Council (GCC) until recently, were locked and we were denied access. The archives show that Strathclyde Education Department took over from the Glasgow Corporation and were in charge of Fornethy until it closed. Yet there were no formal inspections or regulatory practices in place, allowing our plight to slip through the net.
- c) Fornethy was listed as a Pilot Project as a Work Experience where people were invited to take part.
- d) GCC stated that all schools must be registered with the Scottish Education Department (SEED), and as such were issued with a unique identifier SEED code for each school – SEED numbers were not issued until that scheme evolved in 1999 before devolution in 1999. So, SEED was not in place at the time of Fornethy Residential School existing. Moreover, Fornethy appeared in the Education Committee Handbook from 1960-1961.
- e) Archives about Residential Schools' set ups are seen in a document provided by GCC via Freedom of Information request, which state:

“Fornethy Residential School ... caters for girls of primary school age from all areas of Strathclyde. Pupils are referred via the School Welfare Department and tend to come from one parent families or from areas of deprivation. They stay at Fornethy ... and receive outdoor education”.

“The school can accommodate 52 pupils and they can come from 20 schools at any one time. They are not accompanied by any of their own teachers and the teaching staff (4 posts) at Fornethy have sole charge of the pupils. There are no resident domestic staff, and the teachers are on duty/on call during the evening and nights as well. The teachers are currently undertaking duties which would normally be done by an auxiliary – similarly clerical work is undertaken by the Head Teacher. It is recommended that a post of clerical assistant/auxiliary (GS1) be appointed”.

Therefore, we know:

- We were all girls who went to Fornethy of primary age.
- They were “referred” by their School’s Welfare system (not a social services department)
- The school accommodated “pupils” (i.e. learners)
- Pupils came from schools in the Glasgow/Strathclyde area
- Teaching staff appointed
- There was a Head Teacher
- Teaching staff were on duty at night
- There is no mention of medical staff

f) Minutes of meetings and communications about Fornethy reveal:

- References made to additional grants and bursaries
- Fuel requests
- Requests that schools be placed on the official code list
- No reference needed to be made to “schemes of work” and “it must be assumed that these will be submitted to HMI [HM Inspectorate]”
- Residential Schools existed to give children the benefits of a residential education which cannot be given in day schools.
- Prior to the war there were three schools (Fornethy not named) where children went for convalescence but after 1948 the need for schools must have been recognised by Glasgow’s Education Department at some time between 1944 and 1948 and were presumably approved by them.
- (Correspondence from 24/05/56) – “One of the main reasons why Glasgow prefer to have the management of these Residential Schools in their own hands, is the advantage to adapt to their own requirements ...”.
- In 1954, Fornethy was gifted to Glasgow for adaptation as a Residential School, prior to this it was used as a convalescent school for mentally handicapped children.
- Archives (GCC) show that five files were destroyed and listed in a table showing:
 - Glasgow Contracts Department for Fire filed in 01/12/1979 and destroyed in May 1993

- Bursaries from the Glasgow Education Department for Fornethy 05/1961 to 04/1991 and destroyed on 14/04/2009
 - Bursaries from the Glasgow Education Department for Fornethy – general correspondence files dated 03/1975 to 05/1990 destroyed on 14/09/2009
 - Bursaries from Glasgow Education Department – Maps and Plans – filed in 1975 and destroyed on 14/04/2009
 - Glasgow City Council Legal Contracts for Fornethy School filed in 04/1997 - 03/1998 and destroyed on 17/03/1999.
- What is to be noted here is that these files all existed during the time the Fornethy Survivors were there. All files were listed under the Glasgow Education Department – NOT welfare or social services?
 - Since these all relate to formal government institutions – i.e. Glasgow Education Department and later Strathclyde Education Department – the state must include Fornethy in the Redress Scheme.

In conclusion, we reiterate once more that the Redress Scheme does not go far enough. What do we want? We want acceptance of responsibility; an offer of repair or corrective action; a full public apology of the wrongdoing and assurances that this won't happen to any other child. Please put this right. No more delays, we seek action. We were made vulnerable – there was no safety or even a safety net for us at Fornethy and bad people hurt us – if we don't have justice, they have got away with it again. We were failed and we hold this legacy of abuse. It was not our fault. It is not about believing us; it is about taking action now.

Trust is sacred. It is about the essence of our identity. Having the deepest respect for what we went through and still go through. Liberation in our freedom, wholeness, and justness. (Paraphrased from Waldegrave, 2003).