Name: Dion Mwiza Rudakubana

Statement No: 1

Exhibits: DR/01 – DR/02

Dated: 8 October 2025

SOUTHPORT INQUIRY

WITNESS STATEMENT OF DION MWIZA RUDAKUBANA

I, Dion Mwiza Rudakubana, will say as follows: -

Background

1. My name is Dion Mwiza Rudakubana. I am 21 years old and was born in Cardiff in 2004.

2. I grew up in Cardiff before our family moved to Southport in early 2013. I completed my secondary education and sixth form studies at Christ the King School and Range High School. At the age of 12, in 2016, I stopped being able to walk due to a neuromuscular condition, the cause of which remains undiagnosed. I am a wheelchair user and experience significant joint pain. I had two extended stays in hospital. Once in 2016 for five months during which time a care plan was designed, and then I was in and out of hospital again in 2017 following planned surgery. While in hospital at that time, various assessments were done. At home, I have a stair climber machine and a standing frame. I was receiving physiotherapy to help maximise movement, but I have not had any treatment since completing Year 13 in summer 2022. In September 2022, I left home and began studying a four-year degree course in mathematics at university some distance from home. I live away from home during term time and only return during the holidays. I study consistently and spend my free time doing maths, opera singing, playing the trombone, violin, and guitar.

3. I was diagnosed with autism in 2017. As a result, I tend to interpret things very literally and can sometimes misread the body language of others. This may occasionally make me appear impersonal. When asked how I feel, I respond based on how I perceive or experience a situation, rather than using conventional emotional labels. I often find that words used to describe emotions do not fully capture what I am feeling. Whilst I believe I can express my emotions, they are deeply tied to my perception of events, which may differ from how others typically describe their feelings, leading at times to misunderstanding.

4. I have no criminal convictions, have never been arrested and my only involvement with the Police has been because of my brother's actions. I provided a witness statement to Merseyside Police dated 31 July 2024, which I exhibit to this statement (**DR/01 [MERP001217]**) and refer to it as necessary below.

5. Whilst my Police statement is not inaccurate, it is paraphrased, not always in the right chronological order and lacks nuance and context that I believe is important. At the time of giving that statement, I was in a state of shock and was providing answers to specific questions asked by the Police. I think I mentioned, though I cannot be sure, that I was autistic to the Police officer who was interviewing me, but I am not sure they appreciated this or the impact it might have had on how I interpreted and approached answering the questions asked of me. Whilst I am not critical of the Police and I understand the time pressures they were subject to, I feel my evidence would have been clearer if I had had more time with them to consider the questions, and if I had had time to review my Police statement after it was typed up. With the benefit of time and distance, I have had the opportunity to reflect further and I hope this statement will assist the Inquiry.

Upbringing

6. The Inquiry has asked me briefly to outline my and AR's upbringing which I do here.

7. AR and I were both born in Cardiff and that is where we spent our early childhoods up until I was in Year 4 when we moved to Southport in 2013. While we lived in Cardiff, Mum and Dad completed and graduated from their degrees; DPA DPA

8. After my parents graduated, my Mum had a series of short-term jobs in DPA in Cardiff. My Dad was employed as DPA in Cardiff but his contract ended.

Eventually, my Mum secured a DPA job in the North West which meant we moved to Southport. To accommodate her schedule and shift pattern, my Dad decided to re-train as a taxi driver. This allowed for Dad to be working while Mum was at home and vice versa meaning there was often one parent at home when necessary so my parents could balance their working lives with childcare.

9. Growing up, we spent a lot of time together as a family. We did different activities together and talked often. From a young age, I was always drawn to academic subjects, science, and maths especially. I also enjoyed reading a lot, particularly poetry. I remember my Dad would spend time with me doing maths too, which I really enjoyed.

10. Faith was, and still is, an important feature of my family's lives. As children, AR and I went to church regularly. First in Cardiff, and later in Southport. I still attend Church now when at home and while at university. I am still a practicing Catholic.

11. AR had lots of friends at primary school and was at the centre of lots of friendship groups. When we were primary school age, AR and I would spend time together, watch tv together and would talk to each other about our interests. I think, because we were both autistic, we would often talk intensely with each other. We debated issues quite a lot and sometimes AR would get angry and might hit me but in hindsight this did not seem an unusual way for brothers of primary school age to behave.

12. I lost the ability to walk when I was 12 in 2016, and our parents had to help me a lot more which created tension between me and AR at times. AR became noticeably angrier with me, though it never became physical and I did not think his behaviour was unusual for a boy of his age. AR and I still spoke at this point, but things were more tense between us than they had been previously. Before my disability, we shared a bedroom but we moved into separate bedrooms after my first hospital stay in 2016. AR moved into the smaller bedroom because I had to have a hospital bed installed in my room.

AR's Education

13. The Inquiry has asked me to consider a number of questions relating to AR's education and experiences at the schools he attended from Year 7 (start of secondary school, in September 2017) up and until the attack in 2024.

Range High School

14. I started at Christ the King School in 2015 in Southport. However, I left and was enrolled in Range High School in Formby in 2016 due to my disability, as Christ the King did not have a lift for me to get upstairs to my classroom. While I was in hospital for five months in 2016, I received schooling there for a while and then I eventually transitioned to attending Range High School in person in February 2017. Whilst Range High School was a more accessible school, it was located up to an hour's drive away from home depending on the traffic. I was also told that Range High School was better equipped to support students with autism. While I was at school, I studied intensively, and as AR became increasingly withdrawn, our communication gradually diminished until we had almost completely stopped speaking by 2023, at which point I was in my first year at university.

15. As a result of my transfer to Range High School, AR also went to Range High School when he started secondary school in Year 7 in September 2017. However, many of AR's friends went to Christ the King in Southport for secondary school, and he was upset to leave them behind. I also think he was annoyed about having to move schools and leave his friends behind because of my disability. He did not know anyone at Range High School before starting and went through a period of being upset when he started. However, this subsided after a while once he settled into Year 7. My Dad drove both of us to and from school each day when we were both attending.

16. I have been asked by the Inquiry whether I observed any changes in AR's activities, wellbeing, attitude, or behaviours at home from June 2019 onwards. I respond to this in the following paragraphs where I have also tried to give a chronological account of what was happening at the time.

17. When AR first started at Range High School, I would see AR with a group of three or four friends throughout Years 7 and 8. I do not know the nature of his friendships, and sometimes these friends would change, but he had a small number of friends who he would speak to and who I think he trusted. I believe he had good attendance in Years 7 and 8.

18. At some point when AR was in Year 8, likely between February 2019 and the end of the academic year, I became aware that AR was being bullied. I learnt about it from my Dad

who would tell me about it. I cannot specifically recall when, but I noticed AR's mood started to change during this period. He started being more on edge and would start shouting if we asked about things he did not want to talk about. He was crying more often. After school, we would usually share details of our day with Dad during the drive home but, in Year 8, AR gradually began to say less about his school day.

19. I do not remember AR talking to me directly about the bullying. I also do not remember asking him about it as I felt unable to do so because I was worried he would snap at me. Later on, after AR was expelled, I remember some my friends who had siblings in AR's year mentioned it was widely known in his year group that AR was being bullied. AR was physically smaller than many in his year and the fact he was black made him a target. There were several bullies at the school and this sort of behaviour was not unusual and, as I said in my Police statement (**DR/01 [MERP001217]**), there were a lot of troublemakers. The bully that seemed to be the worst to AR was someone called DPA I did not know DPA

20. When AR started Year 9 in September 2019, I was told by my Dad that the bullying continued to worsen. I remember his mood had also deteriorated further. He was a lot quicker and easier to anger. I was worried sometimes that AR would try and hit me like he did when we were younger. He was getting physically stronger so I was more nervous to interact with him and I felt increasingly wary of him. He was also getting less and less willing to resolve an argument or debate if we had one and he would often have outbursts of anger.

21. My Dad was the main point of contact between our family and the school. I was not in direct contact with any of AR's schools as these communications were always dealt with by my parents.

22. I remember my Dad would speak to Range High School, not only about my needs and care, but I also remember my Dad was frequently seeking support regarding the bullying of AR but I am not aware that anything was ever done. I remember that my Dad would talk to the pastoral lead, Mr Cregeen, quite frequently after school, and he would ask that the school intervene and assist AR.

23. I remember AR was expelled on 9 October 2019 after he had admitted bringing a knife to school. I remember he was distraught about the expulsion and he cried a lot. AR did not speak to me about how he felt, but from everything I observed of him and his

behaviour at the time, I think he was deeply affected by it. I think, based on my experience of him at the time, he was frustrated at DPA treatment of him, the fact that nothing had been done to address the bullying and that no action been taken by the school to protect him despite having reported it.

24. Whilst I agree that Range High School had to take action to address AR's behaviour, I have wondered whether they tried to make an example of AR when they expelled him, rather than supporting him or trying to understand his situation. I say this because Range High School had received poor OFSTED ratings in December 2018 and there was a new headteacher, Mr McGarry, who started in September 2019, who, it was understood, was trying to crack down on bad behaviour including the carrying of knives, which I understood from friends was pretty common at our school. However, I understood that typically, if someone was caught carrying knife, they got a detention or suspension. I did not know of anyone who had been expelled for that before my brother.

Post-expulsion from Range High School (October 2019 and after)

25. Following AR's expulsion from Range High School on 9 October 2019, his behaviour deteriorated quickly. The sense of family routine and togetherness which we once had, started to fade when I lost the ability to walk but, after AR's expulsion, it broke down completely.

26. I remember that AR was initially in contact with his friends from Range High School. He would play video games and chat to them while doing so. It was around this time AR understood from conversations with friends that DPA had not been punished for his bullying and this really angered him.

27. I remember AR was violent at home at this time and this was building noticeably before he returned to Range High School in December 2019 (the hockey stick incident). He was quick to get angry and he would not talk much to us as a family. He would be breaking or smashing things like plates or glasses which got worse over time. It was happening around every other day. This is what I would describe as an outburst.

28. After an outburst, my Mum would typically subdue AR. He trusted her more and he accepted her affection. She would talk to him softly and try to calm him down. Although AR was never directly violent towards me during an outburst, he was very unpredictable and intense. There was also a perceived risk of harm to me which my parents would seek to protect me from. I was often upstairs in my room anyway due to my disability,

but sometimes Mum or Dad would come and shut my bedroom door to shield me from what was happening. My disability means that I cannot (and could not) move easily around the house or between rooms. I need someone else (e.g. one of my parents) to operate the stair climber for me so it takes a few minutes to get up and down the stairs, and I have a wheelchair I can use in the house to get around when downstairs.

29. AR's behaviour at this time, and during the years that followed, was not, however, consistently violent or erratic. He would have better times when he was calmer, and some worse days when he was angrier. He was always unpredictable but I felt that any threat of violence would only ever be aimed at me or my parents.

30. The Inquiry has asked whether I ever reported any concerns about aggression or violence within the family home, whether involving AR or anyone else, to any school that either I or AR attended. I did not personally report any such concerns to any school, the Police, or other agencies. I was aware that my father was in contact with various institutions regarding my brother, and I relied on him to communicate with them. I also knew that the Police were aware of what was happening, and it felt as though the right people already knew. In that context, I did not feel there was anything further for me to report. I did speak to my teaching assistant at Range High School about my brother sometimes and he said that whatever happened to AR would be what was best for him.

31. In the months and years preceding the attack, my focus was directed inward, towards the persistent and escalating risk to life within the family home. That internal concern shaped my perspective, leaving me without suspicion, let alone awareness, of any threat beyond that environment. In the lead-up to the attack, I had no indication that AR was planning any form of harm outside the home.

Acorns School (October 2019 onwards)

32. Following his expulsion from Range High School, AR started at Acorns School in October 2019. He was referred to Acorns through the expulsion process. I remember it happening, but I cannot recall the details of how the referral worked or how the decision was made about where he would go next.

33. Initially, he attended Acorns School as normal, but he had to stop attending for a period following the hockey stick incident in December 2019 while this was investigated. I do not recall how long that was for.

34. I remember Acorns School would report to my Dad each week about his behaviour. I was not shown the content of the reports but we did talk about them at home. From what I was told, I understood AR was being picked on and he was seen as an easy target as he was at Range High School. He found Acorns School quite a hostile place and found the weekly reporting on his behaviour difficult. This impacted his trust in the teachers at Acorns School.

35. I recall my parents telling me, though I am unsure precisely when, that Acorns School had called my Dad in to discuss concerns about AR's online activity and search history on a school computer. I know now from documents produced by the Inquiry that this was in connection with a report made to Prevent in December 2019. I did not know, however, that a report was made to Prevent at the time. I knew that issues had been raised with my parents and thought that the school had prepared a report and kept it on some sort of personal record for my brother. I heard for the first time what Prevent was in the news after the attack (see further the 'Prevent' section below).

Covid-19 Lockdown (March 2020 onwards)

36. I am not confident in my recollection of events of 2020 – 2021.

37. During the COVID-19 lockdown, I spent a lot of time on my own at home. I was trying to get a head a start on studying for my A levels. My GCSE exams were cancelled so I had minimal schoolwork to keep me occupied. I would therefore spend time playing violin and studying maths, physics, and chemistry. I tended to stay up in my room, so AR and I only spoke occasionally, usually if we happened to be in the same room, which was not often.

38. AR's behaviour remained unpredictable and inconsistent. He continued to have outbursts and was violent, though I did not witness everything directly. I remember he became increasingly withdrawn and I knew I had to be cautious if I did speak to him as any disagreement could escalate into an argument.

39. AR did not attend school in person during the first lockdown. I think he might have had occasional phone calls with teachers at Acorns School who would check in and send work by post, but there was no structured teaching. I remember he began neglecting the materials sent to him, preferring to learn voluntarily rather than follow the school's programme. I recall my parents were constantly encouraging him to engage but he did

not enjoy the curriculum and gradually disengaged. After the first lockdown in 2020, AR returned to Acorns School a few times but, I think by Christmas 2020, he had stopped attending altogether, but I am not entirely sure.

40. I remember he had started a genealogy business although I am not sure when this started but I think it was before the first COVID-19 lockdown. We very occasionally discussed this and this is something I would initiate conversations with him on as it felt like safer territory for us to engage on. I remember he made some money from it, though I do not know how much. I think he was inspired by the daytime television programmes he was watching.

41. As I mentioned in my Police statement (**DR/01 [MERP001217]**), AR stopped leaving the house altogether around the time the COVID-19 pandemic began. During the first lockdown, AR lost touch with his friends completely and I am not aware of AR having any contact with people his age for about four and a half years, from the start of the COVID-19 pandemic through to the attack.

42. I remember he stopped using the computer to communicate with friends or to play video games and he requested a basic phone. I cannot be sure exactly when this was but think it coincided with the first lockdown.

43. Social services and probation officers (though I cannot now recall the details) continued to visit home before, during, and after the COVID-19 lockdowns. AR was afraid of leaving the house and was paranoid, but the people who visited would often take AR outside for walks. I met some of the people who visited, but only because I happened to be present sometimes when they arrived. I do not recall them speaking to me directly.

Presfield High School

44. Presfield High School is a specialist school for students with a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder or Aspergers. AR was formally diagnosed with autism on 12 February 2021,[1] which enabled his placement at Presfield High School. He did not want to be diagnosed with autism. I remember he believed he had ADHD.

[1] Beyond recalling the fact that AR was diagnosed with autism I do not remember the date of his diagnosis and so have provided the date based on the material disclosed by the Inquiry.

45. I understand from disclosure that AR started at Presfield High School in March 2022. I think he only attended a few times during the summer term before the summer holidays disrupted everything.

46. I recall him telling our parents that he did not feel challenged and did not believe he belonged there. His difficulties were different from those of the other pupils, and I do not think he felt there was any benefit to attending. This perception seemed to affect his willingness to go, as he did not see himself as severely autistic as the other students. Mum and Dad tried to encourage him, and although their efforts worked for a while, they eventually stopped having an effect.

47. The Inquiry has asked how AR's placement at Presfield ended, and the impact of that on AR. I had understood that AR was taken off the roll from Presfield due to poor attendance, but the school continued sending a taxi to collect him which was confusing. I recall from discussions at home that the headteacher initially said he was expelled but later clarified that he had not and encouraged him to return. He did start attending again for a while, with my parent's encouragement, but then gradually stopped. From this point until the attack, he was not attending school.

48. The Inquiry has asked me to identify what I consider to be the main barriers to AR's attendance and engagement with his education at Acorns and Presfield. First, AR had a profound fear of the outside world; even opening the front door would trigger panic, and this was a significant reason for his refusal to attend school. This fear caused him considerable distress and went beyond generalised anxiety. Second, his intellectual needs and desire for stimulation were not adequately met, particularly at Presfield. As a result, he had minimal interest in attending. My perception was that he did not feel that there was a compelling reason for him to go, as attendance offered only limited social value, and he did not find anyone at Presfield with whom he could meaningfully engage.

49. I have been asked by the Inquiry whether, on reflection, I consider there was anything further that my family or the schools could have done to encourage AR to engage or re-engage with his education at Acorns and Presfield. I do not believe there was anything more that could realistically have been done. Acorns appeared primarily focused on keeping AR occupied, and I do not think they were equipped to offer him more than they did. Referral schools are not necessarily designed to provide tailored educational methods, and in this case, their approach was not effective. My perception was that Acorn's priority was simply to keep him enrolled until he turned 16, as there were no other

schooling options available to him. Presfield tried to do more for him and was better equipped but it was just not educationally suitable for him. His lack of engagement / attendance, I imagine, also made it difficult for Presfield to help.

50. The Inquiry has asked whether I thought my parents could have done more to support AR going to school. I do not think my parents could have done anymore. They spent hours every day trying to convince him to go, sometimes this was successful and sometimes it was not. Eventually, it stopped working as often. He was not aggressive towards my Mum when she encouraged him but he would become aggressive and more violent towards Dad, who was more direct and would say things like "look what you're missing out on" which was something that genuinely concerned AR.

51. The Inquiry has asked how frequently AR would leave the house from 2022 to 2024, whether this changed over time and why he stopped leaving the house. As I said above, AR did not leave the house during the COVID-19 lockdowns. The only times I recall him going out were for psychiatrist appointments related to his medication, but he eventually stopped attending those too. The last time I recall him travelling any distance was to take me to university in Autumn 2022 with Mum and Dad, but he got very agitated so my Dad took him home that night and my Mum stayed with me overnight while I got settled.

52. From the point he stopped going to school in 2023, he spent most of his time reading and watching the *news*. He remained intellectually active at home. He taught himself languages like Rwandan and German, and read extensively, particularly about politics, history, and economics.

53. It was around this time he stopped talking to my Dad and me. I remember he would grunt and throw things and tell me to get out of the living room. He still needed things, so he would sometimes type messages on his phone for our Dad to read, but he would not speak directly to him. As a result, our Mum had to spend more time supporting him when she was at home.

54. AR also developed eating problems and became increasingly fussy. My parents had to seek help from the NHS for nutritional supplements to help him gain weight and manage his eating habits. Though I am unsure when, I know he was prescribed medication for anxiety but he did not like how it affected him. He felt the medication dulled his senses and made him less aware of perceived threats and stopped taking it, though, again, I am

not sure precisely when. I think he hoped the medication would be a solution to how he was feeling and, when it did not help, I think he felt despondent.

55. I moved away for university in September 2022. I think that during the first term of my first year, things were bad and I believe worsened at home. My parents did not tell me everything, but I overheard things during phone calls and saw the aftermath when I came home such as holes in the walls and food thrown around.

56. When I returned home for the summer in 2023, at the end of my first year, AR and I did not talk. If I greeted him, he would not respond. If I needed a drink, I would ask Mum, who would sometimes ask AR to bring it to me. He would sometimes do so without speaking. The last interaction I can recall was approximately a year before the attack, when Mum and Dad asked me to say goodbye to him before I went out to meet friends. In response, he threw a metal bottle at me. We did not speak again after that.

57. During my second year at university (September 2023 – July 2024), I understood from phone calls with my parents that AR's behaviour appeared less outwardly violent but increasingly withdrawn and depressed. His mood was consistently low. I noticed that Mum sounded increasingly worried during our conversations, particularly around my exam period in spring and summer 2024. On occasion, I could hear objects being smashed in the background. I sensed she was trying not to alarm me. I returned home on 26 July 2024 and describe the events leading up to the attack in more detail below.

Prevent

58. The Inquiry has asked about my knowledge of the Prevent referrals made about AR on 5 December 2019, 1 January 2021, and 26 April 2021.

59. As stated above, my understanding of the Prevent referrals is very limited. I heard for the first time what Prevent was in the news after the attack. I therefore only know now, since hearing about it in the news and since being involved in the Inquiry, that a number of referrals were made to Prevent. At the time, I was aware that some sort of report had been made while AR was at Acorns School due to his online search activity, and I knew my Dad had been contacted about it. However, I thought at the time that the school had prepared a report and kept it on some sort of personal record for my brother.

60. The Inquiry has asked whether I recall a visit from Prevent officers to our home on 3 January 2020. Whilst I do not doubt that it happened, I have no clear memory of it

happening or who attended. I did not engage with the officers directly and was not informed of any details.

61. The Inquiry has asked about my, AR's and my parents' attitude towards the Prevent referrals. Given my limited knowledge of the referrals, I did not hold any attitude or was aware of anyone else's attitude towards them.

62. The Inquiry has asked whether I ever considered that AR had been radicalised to believe in terrorist ideology. At no point did I believe AR had been radicalised or held extremist beliefs.

63. The Inquiry has also asked whether I ever considered that AR might have an interest or obsession in extreme violence or school massacres. I had no idea he was looking at or watching videos of extreme violence or school massacres. I remember there being conversations with my parents at the time Acorns School had raised the issue of his internet searches in which I think my parents had mentioned they had been told what he had been looking up, but I cannot recall now specifically what it was. I do not recall being concerned about the material I was told he had been looking up. The explanation I was given at the time gave me no reason to be concerned.

Lancashire County Council (Social Services)

64. The Inquiry has asked me about my knowledge of AR's interactions with Lancashire County Council (Social Services) between 2019 and 2023. I was aware that people from social services and probation officers visited our home regularly between 2019 and 2023 and with increased frequency during AR's probation following the hockey stick incident. However, I was not involved in the conversations or any interactions with the people who visited and, with a few exceptions noted below, I do not remember who they were or which specific agencies or services they were from. When people would visit, I would typically be upstairs in my room. I think the professionals who visited the home were social workers as mental health workers were seen at a practice but did not visit the house. I do know that social workers often arranged to meet AR outside the home, either for walks or drives followed by walks, which he did seem to enjoy.

65. The Inquiry has provided me with a list of names and asked whether I recall meeting or hearing about any of the people named. I recognise the names John Fitzpatrick and Anna Jameson. I think John was from the youth offender's agency and, based on material that has been disclosed, I see now that he was part of Child and Youth Justice

Services ("CYJS"). He used to meet AR regularly. I believe I met Anna Jameson during family counselling sessions, which I attended occasionally. Whilst their contact with my brother may have been regular, my engagement was largely limited to introductory sessions. I remember having brief conversations during these sessions, possibly even individual ones, but do not recall the detail of them.

66. The Inquiry has noted that following the 'hockey stick incident', AR was subject to a Referral Order between February 2020 and January 2021, in which he met regularly with social workers from CYJS and they have asked me whether I observed any effects, positive or negative, of that engagement. As above, I recall more people visiting in the months after the hockey stick incident, but I was not involved in the conversations or any interactions with the people who visited. I do not remember who they were or which specific agencies or services they were from. I recall that his behaviour remained consistent before and after these visits but I think the overall impact was positive, as when these sessions ceased, things did change negatively.

67. The Inquiry has asked me whether I was aware that, in January 2021, AR reported to CYJS that our father had struck AR following AR assaulting him, what my direct or indirect knowledge of this incident was, and whether this behaviour was typical of AR and my Dad. I was not present in the room, but I recall an incident that reflects this description but cannot comment on specifics. More generally, by January 2021, it was not uncommon for my brother to lash out and throw things. My Dad's typical response when dealing with AR's outbursts was not to respond physically.

68. The Inquiry has asked me whether I was aware that, between October 2021 and February 2022, AR received support from a Targeted Youth Support Worker called Carl Coughlan, who they said met him on approximately eight occasions. I do not recall meeting or interacting with Carl Coughlan, though I remember hearing his name mentioned by my parents. I believe AR saw him in connection with work John Fitzpatrick was doing but I cannot recall observing any particular effects, positive or negative, of that engagement.

69. The Inquiry has asked questions about when AR left the house with a knife on 17 March 2022 and his behaviour afterwards. I address this incident below but I am not aware of any specific assessment or support provided by social services following this incident.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services ("CAMHS") and Other Mental Health Support

70. The Inquiry has asked me to detail any concerns I held during the time which AR was under the care of CAMHS about the treatment and support provided to AR by CAMHS. At the time AR was under CAMHS care, I was 15 years old and not directly involved in his treatment. My parents were the ones who interacted with CAMHS. However, I was concerned that AR's psychologist failed to recognise his autism. I recall discussions within the family before AR was expelled from Range High School that indicated a suspicion of autism. His traits were not subtle and would have been evident through conversation. I understand from conversations with my parents that AR underwent a psychological assessment while in Police custody following the hockey stick incident, which suggested he had autism. Despite this, CAMHS did not acknowledge or diagnose his autism until February 2021.

71. The Inquiry has asked me to detail any concerns I held during the time which AR was receiving therapy sessions from Parenting 2000 and about the support provided to AR by Parenting 2000. During the time AR was receiving therapy sessions from Parenting 2000, my observation was that these sessions were more effective than those provided by CAMHS. I think the therapists had time to get to know AR and communicated with my parents. My father encouraged AR to try counselling before pursuing an ADHD diagnosis, which AR was keen to obtain. AR initially found the sessions helpful but stopped attending before being assigned a psychologist at CAMHS. I remember Dad also attended group support sessions with Parenting 2000, which offered him some reassurance. I do not know how long my Dad attended these sessions for. My perception at the time was that, hearing other parents describe similar frustrations with autistic children helped my Dad feel less alone and that my brother was less alone in having these issues.

72. The Inquiry has asked whether I had any concerns about AR's aggression or violence within the family home that I reported to CAMHS. I did not personally report concerns to CAMHS. My parents spoke to AR's psychologist about his behaviour, and these issues were sometimes discussed within the family.

73. The Inquiry has asked me to review [**AHCH000145**], a CAMHS session note written by Dr Molyneux dated 25 September 2023, and to comment on whether I believe it accurately reflects how AR was presenting at the time. I do not recall this visit, and it is

possible that I had already returned to university when it took place. I understand that my parents were in frequent contact with Dr Molyneux. Nonetheless, I have reviewed the note and would not describe it as inaccurate. However, in my view, the note fails to capture the nuances of AR's behaviour. For example, the reasons he had stopped taking his medication (as discussed above) and the extent to which his anxiety and paranoia were affecting his overall wellbeing. It also entirely overlooks the level of violence occurring in the home and understates the concern my parents were expressing at that time.

74. The Inquiry has also asked whether I had any concerns about AR being discharged from CAMHS psychiatry in April 2024 by Dr Molyneux. At the time, I was concerned about the withdrawal of mental health support, but I was not surprised by the discharge. I would attribute this to my limited involvement in the situation. I had not fully appreciated that the psychiatrist's role extended beyond simply prescribing medication. In fact, the session note shows that AR had not seen Dr Molyneux for six months prior to the discharge, which may have contributed to my perception that the support was minimal. I believe my parents would have informed me when this occurred as I was likely at university at the time.

75. The Inquiry has noted that, in my Police statement (**DR/01 [MERP001217]**), I said: "*[m]y brother had previously been seeing someone to do with anger management, after the hockey stick incident where he injured someone at the school. It was to do with Social Services and CAMHS but that was only over 10 months. I don't think people realised how bad Axel had become*." The Inquiry has asked whether I expected Social Services and CAMHS treatment to continue beyond that ten-month period. I did expect support to continue, particularly given AR's lack of willingness to engage. In my view, this should have prompted an extension of the intervention period. I also anticipated that support would continue following the conclusion of his sentence and probation related to the hockey stick incident. I had hoped he would be referred elsewhere for ongoing care, support, and education, and that he would continue to receive the same level of sustained intervention as before.

76. The Inquiry has noted that, in my Police statement (**DR/01 [MERP001217]**), I said my brother showed no empathy and has asked how this was apparent. This topic was included in my statement because the Police specifically asked me about it, and I find it difficult to answer definitively as a lack of empathy can be a trait associated with autism. I believe AR's ability to empathise was affected by his condition, but this did not mean

he could not empathise at all. In my view, I believe that, when he was younger, AR was capable of empathy, but this diminished over time, particularly after his expulsion from school. As AR became more socially isolated and increasingly fearful of others, the value of empathy may have diminished for him, especially as his anxiety and paranoia increased. If the world felt hostile and untrustworthy, he would not see a reason to engage empathetically.

77. The Inquiry has noted that, in my Police statement (**DR/01 [MERP001217]**), I said: "*I think there were times when things happened with Axel that could have been taken more seriously. I think four years ago he could have been taken out of the house and had intensive mental health support. He refused help and things got worse. I think more could have been done*." The Inquiry has asked me what more I believe could have been done, and by whom. Reflecting on this, I believe that more could have been done by both Social Services and mental health professionals. Specifically, I think a more involved and sustained intervention, tailored to AR's evolving needs, might have helped prevent his deterioration. His repeated separation from school and society was deeply traumatic for him, and I believe this isolation contributed significantly to his decline. A bespoke mental health programme, focused on reintegration and long-term support, could have addressed both his emotional wellbeing and educational needs.

78. I also cannot address this question without considering the initial response to the bullying AR experienced at Range High School. Whilst I agree that action was necessary and do not condone the carrying of weapons, I believe the school's response, which focused solely on disciplinary measures rather than adopting a restorative approach, contributed to exacerbating AR's trauma and deepening his sense of exclusion. This early decision set the tone for how his needs were subsequently misunderstood and unmet and attempts to support AR later on did not address, in my view, the root causes of his distress. His refusal to engage with help undoubtedly did not make it easy for the agencies and professionals involved with AR, but it should have been seen not as a barrier, but as a signal that more creative and persistent approaches were needed. His needs were complex and changed over time, and I do not believe the support systems in place were capable of adapting accordingly.

Interactions with Lancashire and Merseyside Police

79. The Inquiry has asked whether I was aware that on 7 October 2019, an officer from Lancashire Constabulary spoke with AR after AR had told Childline he was taking a knife to school. I think I was probably present on 7 October 2019 and I think it may have been

this incident that contributed to the decision by Range High School to expel AR. I think I was in earshot but not in the same room when the Police asked AR whether he had intended to use the knife and I think he was quite direct with them that he had intended to use it. I do not think AR was very responsive to the Police.

80. The Inquiry has asked me a number of questions about the assault at Range High School on 11 December 2019 (the hockey stick incident) including whether I had any concerns that AR was at risk of physically harming anyone else or whether AR indicated he was intending on carrying out the assault. I have also been asked where I believed AR was going on 11 December 2019, when I first learnt of the incident and if I knew AR was carrying a knife.

81. Prior to the assault, I had no concerns that AR posed a risk of physically harming others. Whilst things were tense at home and this was building before the assault (as explained above), I do not recall AR saying or doing anything that indicated to me that he intended to carry out an assault. I do remember when AR returned to Range High School on 11 December 2019, I was with my Teaching Assistant and I alerted my Teaching Assistant to it and told him I did not think AR was supposed to be there after he was expelled. I was surprised to see AR at the school that day because I knew he had been expelled. I did not witness the assault.

82. I was unaware that AR intended to return to the school that day. To the best of my recollection, I left for school that morning as usual, while AR remained at home. I left before him and had no knowledge that he was carrying a knife. As I was not present at home, I had no reason to question his whereabouts or intentions when he left. I only became aware of the knife later when my Dad collected me from school and explained the circumstances surrounding AR's arrest.

83. After AR was released from Police custody, I remember him returning home very late at night with the Police. We had been waiting up for him to return. I never spoke directly to AR about his time in Police custody but it was not clear that this had any impact on him or his behaviour.

84. The Inquiry has asked if I was aware of four separate visits by Lancashire Constabulary to my home on 5 November 2021, 30 November 2021, 17 March 2022 and 14 May 2022. They have asked whether I was present and, if so, what I recollect about what occurred to cause the Police to be called, and about the Police response. I have a recollection of

all these visits, though cannot recall the specific dates on which they took place. I was at home for all of them as they took place before I left home for university, but I do not recall being in the room if or when the Police were speaking to AR.

(a) 5 November 2021 – I believe this was the first time the Police were called. I think it was Mum who rang. I was in the house at the time but I cannot remember where. I was likely to have been in my bedroom. AR had been throwing things around and his behaviour was unusually intense. My Mum could usually calm him down, but she could not this time. I think the Police arrived after AR had stopped being as violent, and I think they spoke to him, but I cannot be sure. I do not remember being spoken to by Police.

(b) 30 November 2021 – This was a scary time. My Dad and AR had had an argument but I cannot remember what about. I remember Dad holding AR off him at one point and then managing to escape. I do not recall AR jumping on the car, but I do remember him pulling at the windscreen wipers. I think I was in the living room whilst they were fighting. The Police were called because we were scared he might kill my Dad. Again, I think the Police arrived after everything had calmed down. I think they spoke to AR, but I cannot be sure. I think they may have also spoken to my parents in the living room. I think I was up in my bedroom at that point. I do not remember being spoken to.

(c) 17 March 2022 – This was the time when AR went missing and was found on the bus with a knife. I cannot remember how I became aware of this or when AR left but I think my Dad told me when I got home from school. I understand my Dad had dropped me off at school in the morning so I did not know what time AR left. Dad called the Police after returning home from dropping me at school to tell them AR was missing. The Police found AR on the bus and brought him home. I recall the Police speaking to him at home and I think they spoke to my parents, but maybe just my Mum. Either way, it was outside of my presence. After AR had come home, there was a conversation between AR and my Mum which was calm and which I was present for. Though I cannot recall all the details of this conversation, I remember this was when I learnt AR had told the Police that he was going out to stab someone to get rid of his social media account. He did not show immediate anger after this incident, but I did think it contributed to his general mood after that event. He had problems every day and the flare ups were growing, as explained above.

(d) 14 May 2022 – This was a very scary occasion. It was quite late at night, and I have learnt from disclosure that it was at 04:54am, but I think but I was awake. AR had wanted my Dad's laptop so he could break it, but Dad refused to give it to him. This was an issue that had been building up as there had been a few instances where AR had been searching for the laptop but had given up because my Dad was adamant that he could not have it. However, this time, AR started smashing more and more things around the house. He was darting around and throwing food everywhere. I recall that either my Mum or Dad (though I am not sure who) called the CAMHS emergency helpline first, but they advised that the Police be called. I had the door to my room closed and the lights off. I remember it feeling like the Police took a while to arrive. It may not have taken long, but I remember they arrived after AR had calmed down. I recall they spoke to AR. I might have heard this happening through the walls but I cannot be sure and cannot recall the details of any conversations I heard as I was covering my ears at this point. I think they spoke to my parents first maybe. The Inquiry will see there is a text message from my Dad on 14 May 2022 at 02:55am with a Police log number (see DR/02 IWS000057). It reads "*Log number to Police 163*". I think Dad did this for his own records so he had a copy somewhere of the log number. He may have sent it when he was speaking to Police but I cannot be sure.

85. The Inquiry has asked me, as far as I have knowledge of it, to comment on the support provided by the Police, and by any other agencies, as a result of these incidents. As best I can recall I think the Police response on all of these occasions was just a conversation with AR. I seem to remember their conversations with my parents were sympathetic but I was not aware of any other support provided by any other agencies following these call outs. I think my parents were continuing to seek support from CAHMS but I could not see that there was any change in CAMHS's support in response to these incidences. However, as I have explained above, I was not involved with any interactions with agencies or services as this was handled by my parents.

86. The Inquiry has asked me to explain why, in my Police statement (**DR/01 [MERP001217]**), I said I was "*so [surprised] in 2021 when AR was brought home by Police when he had a knife"* on the bus. I now know that this should have said '2022' but, in any event, I was surprised because it was the first time in a long time that AR had left the house. I was also surprised the Police had let him go as, to me, the incident was serious and I would have expected them to have kept him in Police custody.

87. The Inquiry has asked whether I was aware that AR had been purchasing ingredients and equipment to manufacture ricin. I was not aware of this at the time. I only found out about this from the news after the attack.

88. The Inquiry has noted that, in the incident on 14 May 2022, AR was trying to locate a laptop and has asked me whether there were efforts to prevent AR from having access to electronic devices and, if so, why, and what impact they had. There were no efforts at home to prevent AR having access to electronic devices. On 14 May 2022, AR wanted to destroy Dad's laptop. He wanted to destroy it to cause problems for my Dad as it contained a lot of his confidential information.

89. The Inquiry has asked when I believe my family started concealing knives within the home from AR and, from that point, whether all knives were consistently concealed from AR, or whether there were periods when knives were not concealed. I did not personally conceal or hide any knives. This was something my parents did. I am unable to recall a specific date on which knives were hidden.

90. The Inquiry has asked to what extent the concealment of knives from AR was: the result of advice we received, and if so, from whom; a reflection of the family's concerns that he might use a knife to harm others; and discussed or shared with anyone outside the family. I do not recall my parents receiving any specific advice to conceal the knives. However, I understand from disclosure that the Police advised us to hide knives in the house following the bus incident in March 2022. My understanding is that my parents made the decision before this in 2019 motivated by concern for the safety of everyone at home. I did not believe AR posed a risk to people outside the household.

AR's Online Activity

91. The Inquiry has asked me to provide further details about my awareness of AR's online activity, including the social media platforms he used, messaging applications, games he played, and any topics beyond economics and Rwanda that I knew he was researching or interested in.

92. As I mentioned in my Police statement (**DR/01 [MERP001217]**) I did not think his social media accounts were particularly active. I know he had an Instagram account, as we created our accounts together. I think he had a TikTok account, but I am unsure when it was set up or how much he used either application.

93. I would often see him reading books and sometimes ask what he was reading when things were less tense and before he stopped speaking to me. When gaming with friends prior to losing contact with them in 2020, he may have used a messaging app to chat with them, but I cannot be certain.

94. After he lost contact with his friends in 2020, I am not aware of him messaging anyone, nor do I know who he might have been in contact with.

95. In terms of gaming, I recall he played *Fortnite* and *Dead by Daylight,* but he also played other nonviolent games like Terraria before his expulsion from Range High School and the COVID-19 lockdown. He also used to watch gaming YouTubers and Twitch livestreams, which included chat features.

96. I cannot recall exactly when he stopped various activities, such as gaming, watching videos, or running his online business. I think he stopped playing games around the time of the pandemic, though I cannot pinpoint exactly when. I knew he had stopped using his PC because I no longer heard it late at night through our bedroom walls, and my parents also mentioned that he had stopped playing.

97. My parents are from Rwanda and AR was interested in the country's history and politics, particularly the corruption that led to the genocide. His interest in corruption extended beyond Rwanda though. I remember he was learning Rwandan and that he also had a general interest in politics and global injustices. He purchased books and textbooks and had an e-reader, which I believe contained a lot of content, though I cannot be sure. My knowledge of these things came from just being in the family home and through everyday conversations with my parents and AR when we were still speaking.

98. The Inquiry has asked on what basis I stated in my Police statement (**DR/01 [MERP001217]**) that AR's views were mainly shaped by watching mainstream news. I recall that he only watched daytime television and would watch mainstream news, discussing current events and affairs with me and my parents before he stopped speaking to us. His opinions were mainstream, though he held them with unusual intensity and depth of feeling. Before he stopped speaking to me, our conversations (and often with my Dad) were debates about current affairs, history, or politics. AR would sometimes even reference things he had looked up online. These conversations became more intense over time, until they eventually decreased when AR stopped talking to me.

99. The Inquiry has asked whether I knew AR was accessing extremist or violent/graphic material online. I did not. I do not believe my parents monitored his online activity. I did not monitor it either. I had no concerns based on what I knew and never had a strong reason or suspicion to look at his devices. Even if I had had concerns, I could not have accessed his devices in any event as his behaviour had worsened to the point that he would have lashed out at me violently if I had touched them.

AR's Online Purchases

100. The Inquiry has asked a series of questions from this passage in my Police statement (**DR/01 [MERP001217]**) in the context of AR's online purchases: *"This time he had bought knives. He had parcels delivered. Big boxes we couldn't touch. He didn't open them. There were boxes that were open but I didn't look in them, I think they were amazon boxes which I presume had the knives in them. … I worried the parcels had something bad in them. …. Boxes were in the living room unopened. Some boxes that have been there for a long time are still in the house unopened as far as I'm aware. I was sometimes there when boxes were delivered. He would go to the door accept parcels and put them in the living room. This was unusual as he wouldn't normally answer the door to anyone. I believe the accounts he used were ones he created himself. I suspect he may have used a name other than his own. He may have used my dad's name. There were times when a lot of things were delivered, but I didn't know what they were and we werent [sic] allowed to touch them. He wouldn't tell anyone what they were. More recently there were boxes that had been delivered. The boxes behind the door were closed and covered with a blanket or towel. I think he would have told my parents to cover them or done it himself and told them not to touch. There were other boxes when you entered the living room that had been opened. Those boxes were not there when I arrived home on the Friday.*

101. The Inquiry has asked how often AR would go to the door to accept parcels and whether he would answer the door for any other reason. AR rarely answered the door, and I recall most parcels or deliveries were accepted by my parents. I do not recall seeing him sign for any parcels. I do not recall specifically how frequently or consistently parcels were delivered as it varied. Later on, between 2022 and 2024, noting I can only comment on what I saw when I was at home during university holidays, I think he would occasionally go to the door by himself to collect parcels, but never for any other reason. He disliked the door being opened, so I think my parents saw him going to the door as a sign of progression when, if ever, he did.

102. The Inquiry has asked whether I was aware of AR accepting deliveries that required age verification and whether my parents or I accepted such deliveries on his behalf (or under alternative identities provided by AR) and what was done with those deliveries. I was not aware of AR ordering items that required ID verification, nor did I accept any deliveries (age verified or not) on his behalf. It is difficult for me to open the door due to my disability. As explained above, if were upstairs (which I often would be after AR's behaviour had worsened), I would need someone to operate the stair climber to enable me to get downstairs which would take a number of minutes which just makes it easier for Mum and Dad to answer the door. I am also not aware of whether my parents accepted any deliveries that required ID.

103. The Inquiry has asked why I suspected AR to be using a name other than his own or that he may have used my Dad's name. I was not aware of AR using false details or others' IDs, and I did not suspect he was using a different name, but as I said in my Police statement (**DR/01 [MERP001217]**) he may have used my Dad's name to order parcels. Sometimes he or I did that if we bought something online using an account our Dad had already set up with an online shopping website (e.g. using Dad's Amazon account).

104. I have been asked if I was aware that AR was buying materials that allowed him to make a crude preparation of ricin. As I explain above, I was not aware of this at the time. I only found out about this from the news after the attack.

105. The Inquiry has asked when I first found out that AR had bought knives. I also set this out in more detail below but, in short, it was only on the day of the attack that I learnt he had bought knives.

106. The Inquiry has asked, with reference to my Police statement (**DR/01 [MERP001217]**) what led me to worry that parcels might contain something harmful and what, if anything, I did about it. I was not consistently concerned about the contents of the parcels AR received. At some point, though I cannot recall exactly when, I saw that some boxes had been opened and contained ordinary items such as a keyboard or books. I think my anxiety was driven by my feeling of unease about AR more generally, but I did not believe that the delivery of parcels themselves to my brother warranted raising a concern, nor did I think he was purchasing items with any intention of committing violence. As noted above, I had no direct contact with any agencies regarding AR and therefore did not report the fact that he was receiving parcels.

107. The Inquiry has asked whether, given that my parents had concealed knives from AR, I considered what the parcels might contain, whether I looked at the labels or inside the boxes, and whether I ever reported this to any agencies. I did not speculate about what was inside the parcels, as I had not seen anything that gave me cause for concern. As I mentioned earlier, I had seen him order books before, so the parcels could have contained anything. I did not look at the labels or inside the boxes because I did not go near them. AR made it absolutely clear that no one was to touch any parcels or any of his things as there was an ever-present risk he might attack us if we did.

The Events of 29 July 2024

108. The Inquiry has noted that I said in my Police statement (**DR/01 [MERP001217]**) that: *"[m]y dad told me that recently Axel had booked a taxi and tried to get in. My dad had stopped him leaving. My brother then threatened my dad and said if you stop me again there will be consequenses [sic]."* and have asked when I was told about this and whether I had any awareness of whether AR had a knife when he tried to take the taxi to the Range on 22 July 2024. I returned home late on Friday, 26 July 2024, having been away since the Easter holidays. I cannot recall exactly when I was told that AR had recently tried to get into a taxi and that Dad had stopped him, which resulted in AR threatening him. It may have been during the car journey home from university with Dad on 26 July 2024, but it could have also been over the weekend, or after the attack. I am unsure. I had no awareness at the time that AR had a knife when he tried to take the taxi to the Range on 22 July 2024.

109. The Inquiry has asked whether my parents or I considered contacting the police or other appropriate agencies after AR had attempted to go back to the Range on 22 July 2024. I was not at home on 22 July 2024 to consider contacting the Police nor was I aware this was happening and did not find out about it until later on. I do not know whether my parents considered contacting the Police.

110. The Inquiry has asked whether I took any steps to ascertain whether AR had a knife between 22 July 2024 and 29 July 2024. I did not take any steps to ascertain whether AR had a knife between 22 and 29 July 2024. As I have said, I had only returned home from university on 26 July 2024 and I did not think there were any knives in the house that he had access to. I also had no reason to believe AR had one, so in my mind, there was no reason to ascertain if he had one.

111. The Inquiry has asked me to address the interactions I had with AR from my return to the family home on 26 July 2024 to 29 July 2024, whether AR's behaviour caused me any concerns and whether there were any indicators that AR might go on to carry out the attack. During the drive back from university, I remember my Dad told me to be very careful around AR, mentioning that something bad had happened the week before. I cannot remember if he told me then, or at some other point about what had happened on 22 July 2024. All I remember is that Dad said not to engage with AR and to be cautious, which made me nervous. My Dad does not usually show fear in relation to his dealings with my brother, but this time he seemed afraid which was unusual. However, I perceived any threat of violence to be towards me or my parents. I see now that I have access to my old mobile phone that I sent a message to a friend on Discord on 27 July 2024 at 02:39am saying "*Your brother is dangerous. He can kill you*" (see DR/02 **IWS000057**). I recall I was on the phone to my friend and, rather than saying out loud what my Dad had said to me, I tried to convey the message more generally via text what my Dad had said to me. As the message demonstrates, I thought any risk of danger from AR was towards me or my parents.

112. When I arrived home on 26 July 2024, I did not speak directly to AR. I had a brief conversation with my Mum, for around 10 to 15 minutes, about university, as she was in the same room as AR. I recall that AR appeared withdrawn and subdued, which aligned with what my Dad had told me earlier. He was whispering to my Mum and showed no signs of aggression. His movements were noticeably slow, although his outbursts could be unpredictable. There was no aggression from him that evening, but I felt uneasy due to my Dad's comments and because AR was behaving differently from how I had seen him in the past. This was a marked change from his usual level of activity as, during previous university holidays, he would often pace around, talk to himself, and appear deep in thought.

113. The Inquiry has provided me with doorbell footage from outside our house which contains timings of events on the morning of 29 July 2024 and has asked me to describe the morning of 29 July 2024 in detail. Whilst I can recall what I was doing that morning, I was not able to recall precise timings. Where I have referred to times, I have based this on the disclosure provided to me.

114. On the morning of 29 July 2024, I woke up around 10-10.30am to confirm plans with my friends that day. I needed to finalise who I was meeting, where and at what time. After that, my Dad had to help me shower and get ready. My disability means I cannot

do this for myself. I saw AR briefly in the corridor before my shower. He came upstairs, stopped, closed his bedroom door, and then went back downstairs and left the house without saying anything. I do not recall him carrying a bag or visibly holding anything. I recall he may have been pulling down his sleeves which was typical behaviour for him, and wearing a mask, but I do not recall thinking he was holding anything inside his clothing. I did not see a knife or anything that suggested he was concealing an item. I asked my Dad if his leaving the house was usual. The response was no, though both my parents seemed pleased that he had gone out, viewing it as a positive step. They seemed to be reassured by his calm mood.

115. The Inquiry has noted that my Mum's finger/palm mark was found on the packaging of the knife that AR used in the attack and has asked precisely when my Mum told me she had found the wrappings of a knife and what, if anything, was done about this. Before I got in the shower, Mum showed me the packaging, saying she found it in the washing machine, but neither she nor my Dad appeared alarmed and I took comfort from this.

116. I then got dressed to go and meet my friends. I came downstairs using my stair climber and then I had to wait for my Dad to carry me from the bottom of the stairs to my power wheelchair outside. While waiting, I held onto the walls to go to the living room doorway. I recall I saw an open box in the living room. I vaguely remember seeing knife packaging which looked similar to that found by Mum in the washing machine. I thought the open box may have been where the knife came from but it did not change my view of the risk. I think I would have told the Police officer who interviewed me after the attack about this.

117. The Inquiry has asked whether, given the concern about AR's prior use of knives, and the finding of any empty knife packet that morning, I (or my parents) considered calling the police that morning. There was no discussion about contacting the police. I thought AR had gone out for a walk, and although I found it unusual (in the sense that he did not usually leave the house), I did not believe he intended to harm anyone and thought, if he was carrying a knife, it was to protect himself, not to harm others. Things felt normal after he left the house. My parents did not express concern at the time and felt it was positive that he had left the house. My Mum went to sleep in anticipation of her night shift later that day.

118. The Inquiry has noted that in my Police statement (**DR/01 [MERP001217]**) I said: '*[o]n the Monday 29th July, at about 11:15am Axel left the house*'. I now know from the doorbell footage that AR left 11:10am. The Inquiry has asked: (i) whether I or anyone

else in the household saw AR leave the house at 11.10 and what discussions were held about this and what conclusions were drawn; (ii) whether I or anyone else in the household saw AR return to the house at 11.17 and what discussions were held about this and what conclusions were drawn; and (iii) whether I or anyone else in the household saw AR get into at taxi at 11.31 and what discussions were held about this and what conclusions were drawn.

119. On 29 July 2024, I saw AR leave the house at around 11.10am (as explained above) before I got into the shower. The footage provided to me shows AR walking back towards our house at 11.17am. As far as I am aware, he did not enter the house and I did not see or hear AR return at 11.17am. I did not see him get into a taxi at 11.31am nor did I know that he had called for a taxi. I was unaware of this until later in the day after the attack had happened. I left the house at midday to get a bus to meet friends in Southport. I was not looking for AR.

120. The Inquiry has noted that I said in my Police statement (**DR/01 [MERP001217]**) '*By the time I got to Specsavers I ran into a friend and someone mentioned there had been stabbings in town. I then started to worry it might be about my brother.'* I also said in my Police statement that I was "*worried [AR] might do something bad*." The Inquiry has asked why I had this worry. I had gone to Specsavers to have my glasses fixed and I ran into an acquaintance and their Mum outside the station. During that conversation, his Mum told me there had been stabbings but I did not know the details. I did worry that what she was saying might be about my brother because it was unusual that AR had left the house earlier that day and, whilst I did not know for certain whether he was carrying a knife, there was always a lingering "what if" because of how unpredictable he could be. There was a police helicopter overhead and I could hear sirens which added to my unease. The combination of events made me feel anxious.

121. I said in my Police statement (**DR/01 [MERP001217]**) that '*I hadn't heard from my parents which worried me. I was concerned he may have harmed them.*' The Inquiry has asked why I had this concern. I was concerned AR may have harmed them, especially as I saw the police helicopter fly in the direction of our house, and I had not heard from my parents as time went on. I had not contacted my parents because I did not want to confirm my worst fears that they had been hurt or killed.

122. The Inquiry has asked why I said in my Police statement (**DR/01 [MERP001217]**): '*I had been told that someone had gone to a place with young people and stabbed lots of*

people. I was told about five people had been killed. I belived [sic] by now that it was my brother who was responsible. I wasn't told directly but I knew it was him.' I left Southport to get a train to Ainsdale with my friend. I think it was when I was on the train that my friend told me about messages he was receiving that someone had stabbed multiple people and that five had been killed. I was not told directly it was AR, but I was left with an uneasy feeling that it could have been him, and there was nothing that contradicted that notion. Around two hours later, I recall my Dad messaged me saying AR had done something very bad, which confirmed my suspicion. I was told by the Police through my Dad to stay with my friends. I think this message from my Dad is on WhatsApp which I can no longer access, but I understand the Police (or the Inquiry) may have access to this message.

Reflections

123. I was, and continue to be, devastated and deeply saddened by the immense pain, anguish, and grief my brother inflicted on 29 July 2024 and I want to express my deepest condolences to all those affected.

124. I am grateful to contribute to this Inquiry. It offers a vital opportunity to understand what happened and, I hope, to help prevent similar tragedies in the future. I hope that by sharing my experiences, my contribution will support the important work of the Inquiry.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true. I understand that proceedings may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief in its truth.

Signed: Signature

Dated: 8 October 2025