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(For Criminal Justice related purposes only)**

MG11(W)

CPS Use Only

WITNESS STATEMENT			
(Criminal Procedure Rules R16.2, Criminal Justice Act 1967 S9)			
		URN	
Statement of	Lucy MCLOUGHLIN		
Age if under 18	Over 18 (if over 18 insert 'over 18')	Occupation	Headteacher, Presfield School
<p>This statement (consisting of 9 page(s)) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it, anything which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.</p>			
Signature	Signature	Date	23/08/24
Signature of parent / guardian / appropriate adult		Relationship of parent / guardian / appropriate adult	
<p>Tick if witness evidence is visually recorded <input type="checkbox"/> (supply witness details on MG11 Back)</p> <p>I am the above-named person and I reside at an address known to Merseyside Police. This statement is my account of events leading up to the attendance of Police Officers at Presfield School to speak with me regarding Axel RUDAKUBANA, who was on roll as a pupil at the School from 28th March 2022 to 12th June 2024.</p> <p>I am the current Headteacher at Presfields High School and have held this position since May 2023. My previous role within the School was the Deputy Headteacher from the period of March 2020 through to March 2023 when I assumed the Role as Headteacher.</p> <p>Presfield School educates 124 pupils in total and provides specialist education for pupils who possess an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP), with Autism identified as a primary need. The school offers tailored education to address specific needs laid out within an EHCP.</p> <p>I was first made aware of Axel RUDAKUBANA when Presfield school received a placement request from Lancashire to place Axel on roll in September 2022. The placement request had been made following receipt of an Educational Health Care Plan which recommended that he attend a school which met his learning needs following a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. This diagnosis had been made late in Axel's schooling years and it was important that the right measures be put in</p>			

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place to support his educational needs. Presfield School had been highlighted as a suitable School for Axel's needs and was able to offer him a place. Axel was visited by the Head of Sixth Form who deemed that Axel's educational requirements could be met in a specialist setting which Presfield could provide.

When pupils are offered a place at the School, they are invited to participate in transition visits so that they are able to be eased into a new environment. It was determined that Axel would benefit from an enhanced transition to support a gradual increase in his hours of education. This provision was set in an attempt to give Axel the best opportunity to experience academic and social success at Presfield in September 2022 when official enrolment would take place. Due to this, Axel attended the school as part of an enhanced transition on 14th March 2022.

As part of the transition, Axel was invited into the school on a number of occasions between 17th March 2022 to 25th March 2022 in order to assist in the process of moving to a new school, which would be inevitably challenging for him. Axel attended school 14th March and 21st March. On each of these occasions, Axel was slowly built into his new routine, where he was introduced to form teachers, classrooms and general surroundings. This is something that is done with each pupil who is new to the school as it is important for them to feel settled in their new learning environment.

During the sessions in which Axel attended, it was clear from the beginning that he was struggling. Axel chose to sit at the back of the classroom and did not engage with other pupils and barely spoke with members of staff. It was suggested by Axel's Father (Alphonse), that he should be taught on a 1-1 basis and away from other pupils as this had been something that had worked for Axel in the past. Due to this, school offered the Axel this provision going forward.

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<p>There were occasions during the transition where Axel was invited to come in to school, but he did not attend. We asked for feedback from Axel's Father Alphonse as to why Axel wasn't attending these visits and it was suggested that Axel didn't feel as though he was part of the School. Due to this, the headteacher at the time made the decision to enrol Axel early, which took place on 28th March 2022 rather than September 2022 as originally planned.</p> <p>Following enrolment 28th March 2022, Axel did not attend School again until the 9th May 2022. During this period, home visits were arranged in an attempt to build relationships with Axel and provide as much information as possible to him about his new setting in school.</p> <p>I will now detail a timeline of events that followed:</p> <p>On 3rd May 2022, Presfield school conducted a home visit as there was concern that Axel had not been seen for a significant period of time even when home visits had taken place. This was raised by Axel's form tutor as a safeguarding concern. On arrival at Axel's home, Axel ran up the stairs as soon as member of staff from school arrived at the front door. During the visit, Axel's form tutor has insisted that he see Axel as he had concerns for his welfare. Alphonse disclosed that he did not want to force Axel into seeing someone from school as he was worried that Axel would become violent and attack the form tutor (who was in attendance at the home visit). Alphonse said that Axel is refusing any education as he does not see the point and only wants to learn things that are of an interest to him. Alphonse suggested to the form tutor that he has a zoom meeting with axel in the evening, which couldn't be accommodated by the school as he wanted this to be done late in the evening.</p>	

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<p>On 4th May 2022, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL had a meeting about Axel as Alphonse had disclosed that Axel was not taking his medication, sertraline. The Headteacher at the time informed Alphonse to contact the GP with his concerns about this issue.</p> <p>On 5th May 2022, A home visit was conducted by the Designated Safeguarding Lead where Axel disclosed that the environment was too noisy at School. It was during this meeting that Alphonse shared his view that Axel only responds to Authority; an observation that he had made about Axel.</p> <p>On 9th May 2022, Axel attended school for one hour following a bespoke timetable being put in place to support him. This was then followed by a message from Alphonse the next day (10th May 2022) where Alphonse stated that Axel had no plans to attend school and did not want to talk about it.</p> <p>On 16th May 2022, Alphonse was invited into the school to discuss Axel's non-attendance and non-engagement with School. It was during this meeting that Alphonse described a recent incident at home where Axel had tipped Alphonse's dinner over his head. Alphonse had then gone to bed to find that his bed had been saturated with milk and discovered that his laptop had been placed in the bath filled with water. Due to this disclosure, I advised Alphonse that I would completing an Early Help Referral. Alphonse stated that Early Help had really assisted the family in the past and Axel was very engaging with them when they were involved.</p> <p>On 17th May 2022, an Operation Encompass referral was received by School which was rated 'high' in relation to Axel's lack of attendance at school. There was no further follow up after this and we did not hear anything further about this referral.</p> <p>On 23rd May 2022, The DSL had a telephone consultation with CAHMS who confirmed that Axel was recently reviewed by Samantha STEED and Dr RAM from CAMHS. During the review,</p>	

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concerns were raised about Axel's weight loss and issues with eating. Axel had explained to CAMHS that he was paranoid by the amount of saliva he was producing and that he was worried about the sound of his stomach rumbling. Axel had been advised by CAMHS and his Psychiatrist, Dr RAM to take his medication and he would then be able to attend school. Samantha STEED From CAMHS asked that Axel attend School for an hour on 24th May 2022 which was agreed.

On 24th May 2022, Axel has attended school but this was for one day only.

On 14th June 2022, a professional meeting was held with a number of partner agencies in attendance. It was during this meeting that Dr RAM has raised concerns around Axel's anxiety and Mental Health. Dr RAM was concerned that Axel had been left in charge of his own medication and was worried that he could overdose. Alphonse stated during the meeting that he no longer wanted Axel to be supported by Samantha STEED from CAMHS.

On 6th July 2022, The Designated Safeguarding Lead spoke to Lancashire County Council where they spoke with Matthew Hall regarding attendance concerns about Axel. Lancashire advised for School to contact the police who may perform a welfare visit. It was determined that the Police would not be a suitable option as there are no safeguarding issues for the police to address.

Presfield advised that year 12 is not a viable option for Axel as his needs are now primarily Mental Health.

On 12th July 2022, Presfield's then Headteacher emailed the Senior SENDO at the time to advise that Axel would not be offered a place in September 2022 due to Axel's lack of attendance and Mental Health issues.

On 5th September 2022, Alphonse emailed School to say that Axel was to attend Presfield as directed by Lancashire County Council in his EHCP.

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On 11th October 2022, School were in receipt of an email from Catherine Martin (Axel's Case worker) who stated that she was awaiting permission to take Axel off role.

Between 11th October 2022 and 16th November 2022, there were multiple emails back and forth between the School and Lancashire County Council where it was highlighted that Axel had numerous case workers. This was a concern to school; it was worrying that there was no consistency in place for Axel.

On 1st February 2023, A referral was made to Sefton and Lancashire County Council as Axel had not been seen since May 2022.

On 6th February 2023, School received an email from Sharon Rowlands at Lancashire who confirmed that Lancashire's view was that Axel is on roll at the School and that the school has been named in Axel's EHCP. It was asked that the school provide a response as to why Presfield cannot meet Axel's needs.

On 2nd March 2023, a multiagency meeting was held where representatives from Social Care, Lancashire County Council, CAMHS and Presfield School were present. Also in attendance was Axel's Parents. The meeting highlighted that Axel did not want to attend School. During the meeting, Axel's Mother, Laetitia stated that she did not want Axel's health to be discussed in the presence of school professionals. It was agreed that a further meeting would take place after Presfield school made it clear that they are not in the best position to support Axel as the lead practitioner in Axel's care plan should have expertise in Mental Health.

On 10th March 2023, The Designated Safeguarding Lead conducted a home visit where Alphonse stated that Axel was 'not good' and that he wasn't speaking to him. Axel refused to be seen by staff during this visit.

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On 20th March 2023, Sefton Attendance Team attended Axel's home where his Mother Laetitia refused them entry. A complaint was then made by Laetitia that she did not feel as though the visit was warranted.

On 24th, 27th and 29th March 2023, Axel attended two one hour sessions with his tutor. It then followed that Axel had expressed to his Father that he wanted to increase his time in School, but shortly after this, Axel stated that he found school boring and then refused to attend after this point onwards.

On 15th November 2023, an annual review was cancelled by Lancashire, but a discussion took place where it was acknowledged that Presfield could not meet Axel's needs and that a plan was needed to support his future. It was highlighted that Youth Futures would be contacted by Sharon Rowlands, (Axel's case worker) and Presfield would attempt to gain Axel's views for the future. It was agreed that Axel would remain on role until Youth Futures could begin to work with him.

On 30th November 2023, Sharon Rowlands emailed Axel's parents alongside the school about Youth Futures informing them that Alison Malcolm would be in touch to support them and Axel with plans for his future. The email asked how to find and move Axel to a suitable provision as he no longer wishes to attend or engages with Presfield School.

On 8th December 2023, The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Safer Schools Officer conducted a home visit where they spoke with Axel who stated that he no longer wanted to receive education. Alphonse stated that Axel wanted to set up his own business, but this seemed to anger Axel who then refused to answer anymore questions.

On 29th March 2024, Presfield School received an email from Angela Wilson with a letter attached ceasing Axel's EHCP on the grounds he hadn't attended education for two years. This was

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<p>appealed by Alphonse who stated that he wanted Axel to remain on Presfield's role but not to physically attend to support their financial circumstances.</p> <p>On 6th June 2024, A medical letter arrived at school from Alder Hey informing AR's parents that Axel did not meet the criteria for an ADHD assessment.</p> <p>On 12th June 2024, A telephone call took place with Presfield School and Lancashire County Council where Presfield asked whether Axel had been placed elsewhere so that School could record his destination. It was during this conversation that Lancashire advised that they no longer have any involvement with Axel and that he could be removed from the School's roll.</p> <p>Presfield School had no further involvement with Axel or his parents from this point onwards and have had no contact since.</p> <p>During Axel's time at Presfield School, there were no concerns around Axel being bullied or being involved in any incidents with teachers or other children. Axel did not spend any considerable length of time in School and due to this, he did not form any friendships or have any real social interactions. There were a couple of occasions where Axel came into School and played Basketball, but this never resulted in him having any friendships with any other pupils. Axel's attendance at school totalled 0.7% during the period he was on roll. However, school saw more of Axel due to the home visits which took place.</p> <p>I did not feel as though Axel was forthcoming and engaging with School, but I also believe this was due to his non-attendance. I did not feel as though Axel ever settled in the school and was worried there was a stigma attached to being enrolled at a special school.</p>	

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There were multiple agencies involved in providing support and assistance to Axel and his family during the time he was enrolled at Presfield School. I am aware that a number of referrals were made not only by me, but also by other agencies.

I have provided Police with supporting documentation which relates to Axel and his time at Presfield School. I have referred to these documents when making this statement and have summarised pertinent points to note, particularly from the Chronology timeline. This material has been sent in a digital format. These exhibits are my exhibits and will be referred to as follows:

LM/01 – Chronology Template

LM/02 – Missing From Education Doc

LM/03 – Attendance Certificate 2021-2022

LM/04 – Master Reduced Education

LM/05 – Lancashire Children Services Request for Support

LM/06 – Lancashire Children Services Request for Support

LM/07 – Presfield School Learner Support Plan & Risk Assessment

LM/08 – Education Health and Care Plan 2021 – 2022

LM/09 - CPOMS document

Statement taken by (print name) Constable 1133 FRY

Station Operational Command Centre

Date, time statement taken 21/08/2024 10:00