

Former Quarriers 'house mother' force-fed kids and hit them with shoes in appalling child cruelty

Anne Whitty carried out her sickening abuse on vulnerable children for almost three decades at Quarriers Home in Bridge of Weir.

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BY; [Emylie Howie](#) 04:30, 2 MAR 2024

A former [Renfrewshire](#) children's home boss has been found guilty of force feeding kids, hitting them with shoes and making them stand for "prolonged periods" in darkness.

Cruel Anne Whitty carried out abuse on 12 children at Quarriers Home in [Bridge of Weir](#) during her spell as 'house mother' between 1974 and 2003.

After a trial spanning almost three weeks at [Paisley Sheriff Court](#), the jury found Whitty guilty of 11 charges of "cruel" and "unnatural treatment" of children whose "care and protection" she was responsible for.



During the trial, a 54-year-old woman told how she was "force fed" by Whitty. Beth Wylie, who was at the home until she was seven, told the court: "She would force the spoon into your mouth. You would be crying and just felt sick. She would hold it until you swallowed it."

Whitty, of Turnhill Drive in [Erskine](#), would repeatedly place food in Beth's mouth, repeatedly slap her on the head and, on one occasion, threw her across the room causing her to strike her head against a radiator.

The 73-year-old was also found guilty of abusing a boy between 1974 and 1981 when he was aged between nine and 16.



As well as force feeding the youngster, Whitty would repeatedly strike him on the body with a shoe, make abusive comments to him and compel him to stand in a darkened room for prolonged periods of time, causing him “unnecessary suffering and injury”.

An eight-year-old girl was also made to stand barefoot in the winter of 1977 in the home’s porch for a prolonged period of time at night. The court also heard how a seven-year-old boy was branded as a “useless piece of trash whose parents didn’t want him” minutes after arriving at the home in 1979.

Colin Ballantyne, now 54, told the court that on his arrival he was “devastated”. Mr Ballantyne said he was left with post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) after two spells from 1979-80 at Quarriers. Whitty would also cause a young female so much “fear or alarm” that she would “wet herself” during her time at the home when she was aged between five and eight years old. Another boy was also hit with a wooden spoon by Whitty between 1972 and 1982.

The jury also found twisted Whitty guilty of assaulting a four-year-old girl, force feeding an 11-year-old girl where she pulled the youngster’s head back and forced food into her mouth.

And while on an outing to a church in Kirkcaldy, Fife, in July 1993, Whitty caused two young boys to remove their clothes “as punishment” and made them stand for a “prolonged period”.

The two boys were then deprived of sleep on the journey home and Whitty forced a cigarette into one of their mouths.

Between December 2000 and October 2003, Whitty slapped a boy, aged between 10 and 13 years old, on the head and made “alarming and derogatory words and phrases to him”.

Whitty sat weeping in the dock as the jury delivered their guilty verdicts while her loved ones bawled and shouted from the gallery. One cried, “This is unjust”, while another shouted: “This is so wrong”.

Whitty’s defence agent asked for reports to be prepared and reserved further mitigation. Sheriff Tom McCartney said: “I shall adjourn sentencing for reports and continue bail.

“While I am continuing bail, you have to understand that due to the gravity of these offences, there may be no alternative to a period of imprisonment.”

Whitty left the dock in floods of tears and will return to court for sentencing next month.