

# Child charity executive says sorry to homes abuse victims

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„ **Lady Smith is heading the child abuse inquiry.**

THE boss of a childcare provider has said crimes against youngsters could have taken place even if individuals were not convicted of offences.

Alice Harper, chief executive officer of Quarriers, told the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry yesterday she was “deeply saddened” by evidence of harm at its former residential homes in Inverclyde.

She described “unacceptable” levels of punishment and children being treated as “domestic labour” by house parents at the Quarriers Village cottages.

It was heard seven former members of staff have been convicted of forms of abuse – John Porteous, Joseph Nicholson, Mary Drummond, Samuel Mcbrearty, Alexander Wilson, Ruth Wallace and Euphemia Ramsay.

However, she added that more crimes could have been committed .

Ms Harper said: “I unreservedly apologise to those who suffered abuse while in the care of the organisation.”

She added: “I accept that simply because individuals were not convicted of certain offences, does not mean they did not abuse children in the way that was alleged.”

The inquiry has previously heard evidence of sexual, physical and emotional abuse at the village.

The inquiry, before judge Lady Smith, continues today.