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McIlveen uncle tells of fight to save him

By Staff reporter

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THE trial of six youths facing charges arising out of the death of Ballymena schoolboy Michael McIlveen has heard details of attempts by his family and ambulance staff to revive him.

The 15-year-old Catholic died from head injuries on May 8 2006, a day after being bludgeoned with a baseball bat and kicked and punched up to 60 times in an alleyway by a group of Protestant youths.

A statement from the victim's uncle Sean McIlveen, which was read to Antrim Crown Court yesterday by prosecuting QC John Orr, revealed how the family initially thought the injured teenager was drunk when he arrived home.

It was only after he answered his nephew's phone and heard he'd been involved in a fight that he "thought there may be something more wrong with Michael".

Mr McIlveen, who had been sharing Michael's bedroom, said he had been awoken by him coming in and turning on the bedroom light.

He said Michael was initially sick in the bathroom before climbing onto the top bunk above his.

"I tried to help him and I noticed a cut on the back of his hand," read the statement.

Mr McIlveen said the schoolboy's mobile then rang and the teenager answered, saying "he was all right, and hung up".

He said his nephew's "speech was slurred and I thought he was just drunk".

Mr McIlveen called in the boy's mother Gina as he was being sick again, and as they moved him to the bottom bunk bed he was "pushing away any attempt to help him".

Moments later the teenager "began to shake and began to kick out on the bed", so his family moved him to the floor.

It was at this stage that Michael's phone rang again and his uncle, who answered it, was told by a girl of the attack on him.

"It was only then that I thought there may be something more wrong with Michael other than being drunk," he told police.

In a statement from a paramedic who called to the McIlveen home, the court heard that when they arrived shortly after 2.30am, they found the teenager breathing but unconscious on his bedroom floor.

Paramedic James McCafferty said the boy's mother told him her son had been hit on the head with a baseball bat and had then staggered home, and when she found him in the bedroom "it looked as if her son was having a fit".

On trial for murder are a 17-year-old who cannot be named for legal reasons, 19-year-old Jeff Colin Lewis of

Rossdale, Aaron Cavana Wallace (20) from Moat Road, 22-year-old Christopher Francis Kerr from Carnduff Drive and Christopher Andrew McLeister (18) of Knockeen Crescent – all in Ballymena.


The sixth defendant is 18-year-old Paul Edward David Henson of Condiere Avenue, Ballymena who denies charges of affray and criminal damage. The trial continues.

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