

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

AFN

Support person present: No

1. My name is AFN usually known as AFN. My date of birth is AFN 1948. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before working at Smyllum

2. I am the eldest of 5 children from a happy, loving Catholic home. As the eldest I was used to helping out with the care of my siblings.
3. I attended a convent grammar school in Newcastle. It was one of the two such schools in Newcastle. Although it was full, the Bishop 'leant on' the nuns there to accept all Catholic girls who had passed the 11 plus.

Starting Work at Smyllum

4. I left school at 16. I was working in a day nursery and I knew that I wanted to work with children, but not in the day nursery. I saw the advert for care assistant at Smyllum Park in the Catholic newspaper *The Universe*. It said that there would be an opportunity to go on and do training in residential child care. At that time there wasn't training available in England. Scotland had training available in Glasgow or Aberdeen. I thought that was what I'd like to do, so I wrote and they wrote back and offered a job. They had never seen or met me before I was offered the position. I

could have been anybody. I can't remember if they had checked with my convent grammar school. I had no qualifications in child care.

5. The person in charge at Smyllum was a Sister [REDACTED] EAL [REDACTED]. I think she was the reverend mother. She always seemed to be in an office space. I don't remember seeing her 'out and about'. I assume it was her that I had corresponded with. I don't remember going through any form of interview when I arrived. I think I was 'in at the deep end'. I arrived on [REDACTED] 1965. I worked there for less than a year.

Roncalli House

6. I was allocated to Roncalli House, a separate unit within the grounds at Smyllum. I only ever worked in that unit. I had my own room within Roncalli. Sister [REDACTED] AFK [REDACTED] was in charge of Roncalli House
7. I only remember two other care workers at Roncalli apart from myself. I think their names were [REDACTED] AHL [REDACTED] and Mary. At weekends, I can't remember if it was every weekend, a woman named [REDACTED] ACU [REDACTED] would come back. She was doing the course in residential child care that I wanted to do. Sister [REDACTED] AFK [REDACTED] had apparently also done that course before I arrived. [REDACTED] ACU [REDACTED] came and went a bit. It was my understanding that she intended to return full-time to Smyllum on completion of the course.

The rest of Smyllum

8. I did become aware of other staff at Smyllum as there was a room in the main building that we could gather in the evening if we were off duty. As far as I can remember there were 4 other units; each with its own nun in charge, and each with a couple of care assistants. There were staff that had been there for quite a long time who seemed to have a kind of authority on the basis of the length of time they had

been there. I have a feeling that one of the units had the older boys in it, but I can't be sure.

9. There was also a school on site with a nun in charge of it. I think she was called Sister [EAA]. I think she had a reputation for being stern. I don't remember ever having gone up to the school. There was also a nursery unit. A lady called Margaret worked there. She went on the same residential child care course which I went to after my time at Smyllum. The nuns did not provide any training themselves, but were very keen on people doing some kind of training. I think Margaret had been persuaded to do some training and return to Smyllum by Sister [EAA]. I have a difficulty in understanding this desire for training and reconciling that with the things I witnessed.

Grounds-staff

10. I don't remember any grounds-staff. I did hear the bit in the *File on Four* programme about this guy, [BAC]. If he was somebody who was [REDACTED] he must have come into Roncalli House if we had things [REDACTED]. I have no memory of him at all.

Children at Roncalli House

11. Roncalli House was a mixed unit. I think there were 22 children in Roncalli and a similar number in each of the other units. I think there were just over a hundred children overall at Smyllum including other little ones and infants. Most of the children at Roncalli were primary school age. I only remember one girl who went out to high school. During the time I was there, there was a baby. She was only there for weeks. She was going for adoption.
12. There was a toddler in a cot. She was only there for a short time. She had been placed there by her mother. Her mother visited every week. She got a job as a housekeeper. Her new employer allowed her to have her little girl with her. The

mother was delighted and came to collect her very quickly. I remember that Sister AFK was not pleased. With hindsight, I can see her concern, in that the employer was a single male and the mother was placing herself and her child in quite a vulnerable position. Her employer would have lots of power over her and her child. At the time I just thought "just have that little one out of here!".

13. There was also a family of three who I think had been picked up from the streets in Glasgow. They were scruffy and smelly and I remember their hair was stuck together with nits on arrival. I think this was, very matter-of-factly, cleaned up and I remember this little one, [REDACTED], who was aged about three. She in particular may have had her hair cut shortish. I must admit I don't know you could have, back then, cleaned those heads without cutting some hair at least. I do remember that very quickly she had nice clean shiny hair. I don't remember them being treated in any way with any kind of disgust. I think [REDACTED] went to nursery at the school with the others.
14. I remember 2 boys for very specific reasons, which I will come to. I'm fairly sure one was called [REDACTED]. Miss ACU used to call him [REDACTED]. The other boy was called [REDACTED]. I think his last name might have been [REDACTED].
15. I didn't know anything about the history of any of the children. I don't remember anyone saying to me that a child might behave like "that" because "this" happened to them. With the family of 3 who arrived, all I knew was that they had virtually been lifted off the streets. Apparently, they had been kind of running wild. This was presumably because of a complete family breakdown, but I don't remember being told anything else about them.

Impressions of Smyllum

16. My overall memory of Smyllum is of this dark period in my life. It was a short period. I don't think I was there for the full year. I was so homesick I thought I would die. I desperately wanted to go home, particularly in the first 6 months. I didn't do so because I did want to do the residential child care course, and also because my Dad

had absolutely and desperately not wanted me to go. He said I was too young, and he was right. I felt that I couldn't admit that he was right. My mum on the other hand had taken my side. I don't know why she did as she had had an horrendous experience when she came to the UK from Ireland aged 17. For both of them, they thought I couldn't be in any danger because I was with the nuns, so I'd be alright.

Routine at Roncalli

17. I don't remember the daily routine at Roncalli very well. Some of this is just my assumption because this is how it must have happened for the day to progress, but I don't remember it properly.

Mornings and bedtime

18. I know that I got the children up. Some of that is because of the particular memory I have regarding [REDACTED]. The children would have had breakfast although I don't particularly remember breakfasts. The big ones would then have taken the little ones up to school. I never took them to school. It was literally only yards up a path.
19. All the children's meals were taken at Roncalli. We never ate at the main building. The thinking behind that, Sister **AFK** having been on this course, was to make it as homely as possible. They ate at Roncalli and all their washing and ironing was done there too.

Food

20. The food was all cooked at Roncalli. That's one of my memories. My mum was a really good cook. I remember Sister **AFK** explaining to me the thinking behind cooking for the children at Roncalli not long after I had first arrived. I have a very clear picture of her opening this catering size tin of cold meat and emptying it out onto a plate and thinking "My God! What's that?!" and "I'm expected to eat it!" I can't

remember anything else about food, except that it was all prepared at Roncalli. Sister AFK directed it, but we all were involved in preparing the food.

21. Other than the incident I refer to later, I don't think I ever observed children being force fed. I am very glad to say I didn't witness children being made to eat their own vomit.

Bathing

22. I am fairly sure that bathing the children didn't happen every night. I think there must have been a bath night once a week and it was just like one child after the next in and out of the bath. I don't remember if the water was changed between each child or not. It was not a pleasurable experience for them where they would be sat in the bath and somebody would sing them a song or play a game. There were 22 children to be bathed, so you kind of got through them all. It must have been some sort of queuing system because my memory is that it was a fairly swift turnaround.
23. I have one clear other memory that just made me think "what?!" It must have been in my earlyish days, and I must have been helping with bathing. I can remember Sister AFK saying to me, "Don't you know how to bath a child properly?". This was because I did not know that, apparently, that the bit at the back of the heel is a place where dirt accumulates. I didn't know that because in our house my mum or my dad did the bathing or the washing, and I had bathed myself for a long time behind a locked door.
24. This sticks in my mind particularly because of nuns and modesty. The older girl with us must have either started her periods, or been really close to starting her periods. Her breasts were arriving and she had the beginnings of pubic hair. I remember her kind of standing and lying in the bath as well trying to cover herself. Sister AFK was just washing her and I was thinking "well this is not right. She should be bathing herself, she should be running her own bath behind a locked door and bathing herself".

25. There is a point where all young people, I don't know whether it is girls particularly, I think it is all young people, just become very conscious of the changes that are happening to them. They don't want people standing around looking at them. I thought that was such an odd thing. It showed such a lack of understanding of what was happening to this girl.

Menstruation

26. There may well have been instruction given to girls approaching puberty about menstruation, but I don't remember any. I don't know what provision was made for them starting their periods. It was never mentioned to me. Presumably somebody had to do something, but I don't know what it was.

Schooling

27. I don't remember if I had anything to do with the primary school on site. I don't think the children got any homework, but again it might just be that I don't remember it.

Clothing

28. I don't think the children wore any kind of uniform. The thing I hated about what they wore was in relation to Sunday morning and going to mass. There must have been some kind of competition between the nuns as to who had the smartest turned out children, hats and hairdos, I just loathed it. Their Sunday clothes came off the hanger went on them; they then came back from mass and the clothes went back on the hanger and back into the wardrobe again. The children were then back into their ordinary clothes for the rest of the day.
29. Clothing was provided for them, and as they grew there would be clothes available that fitted properly. I think I would remember if their clothing were really poor or ill-fitting, and I don't remember that. I don't remember anybody being taken for new clothes. That doesn't mean that it didn't happen, but I don't remember it. I don't think they were taken to be fitted for shoes, but I don't remember.

Leisure activities

30. I don't remember any leisure activities at Smyllum. I don't remember playing games or reading stories or anything like that, but that might just be because I don't remember. I don't remember us going out. We did a summer break at the seaside, but I don't recall the details of that. We had a toddler who wasn't there for very long, and I know that I would very often just take her out with me. I don't know if anybody else did that but I know if I was going down to Lanark I would just put her in the pushchair and take her with me. I don't remember doing anything else.

Outside activities

31. I don't remember any outside activities such as cubs or brownies. There might have been I don't remember.

Discipline

32. If there were any formal rules about disciplining children at Smyllum, nobody explained them to me. I wasn't aware of any discipline book being kept. Shouting seemed to be something that happened. Withdrawal of pocket money would have been a sanction I think, but I don't remember if they got any. I don't remember any formal corporal punishments such as a belt or a cane or a slipper or anything like that. That doesn't mean that it didn't happen, but I don't remember it.

Personal possessions/toys

33. I don't remember if the children had anywhere to keep personal possessions like toys or books. I don't have recollections of them having possessions. I presume they must have got Christmas presents and stuff. They must have had some things that were theirs. I say that because, I cannot envisage it being possible for them not to have had some possessions that were theirs, but I don't remember. My assumption

is that there must have been a toy room with toys for them to play with, but I don't remember. I don't remember if books were available to them.

Birthdays and Christmas

34. I don't remember children's birthdays being celebrated. I don't have any recollection of seeing any birthday cakes or cards. I was never at Smyllum for Christmas. I arrived on [REDACTED] December 1965 and left before Christmas 1966.

Visits/Inspections.

35. I don't remember if there were any visits from social workers. In personal research for my own benefit I recently carried out, I understand that children should have been visited by an allocated worker at certain points in time. I think it might have been twice a year. I think that they didn't come. They certainly did not come to Roncalli House. It may well have been that the children were taken to say hello with a nun in attendance and asked if they were alright, and then taken back into the classroom. I don't know, but I don't remember either social work staff or parents coming.
36. In Roncalli House, I was not aware of parents visiting other than the example I have mentioned. I think that quite a lot of those children would have spent quite a lot of time, in their primary school years anyway, not being seen by other people, other than the staff in Smyllum Park. I don't remember any of the children ever going home for weekend visits.
37. The only thing I recall is some kind of committee, presumably some kind of scrutiny committee, if that is what they had in those days, coming. I assume that they would have come from a local authority. I think that most of the children that we had would have come from Glasgow and outlying areas, so I assume it was from there, or it might even have been Lanark itself.
38. I think they carried on a general inspection of the home, because they came into Roncalli House and I think they had a wander around. It was warm and clean and

comfortable. Every child had a good bed with clean nice bedding. I don't remember any of the committee members speaking to myself or any of the children directly. They may have done but I don't remember it if they did.

39. There was a bowl of fruit on the table in the big main living room and it had a big bunch of bananas on the top of it. One of the committee members said to one of the others "Oh look they get bananas, oh isn't that lovely!". I just thought "You fucking idiots! What on earth do you think; that they don't deserve bananas somehow?" I don't think bananas would be put out like that for the children to help themselves, but I am sure within the realms of what was, those children would have had a balanced diet and fruit would be a part of that.

Healthcare

40. I don't remember anybody having any medical needs, I don't remember any of the children actually being ill. I don't think there was a nurse on site. It may have been that one of the nuns had medical experience, but I don't know. I don't remember there being any regular visits from a local GP or nurse or anybody.

Dental care

41. I don't remember any dental care or check-ups. It may have happened but I don't remember it. I suppose if that happened, somebody would have needed to drive and have access to a car, so I am guessing it wouldn't be something that I would have done, but I don't remember.

Deaths

42. I don't recall any deaths at Smyllum during the time I was there. I have been told of the death of Sammy Carr in 1964, before I got there. I don't remember that being discussed. I didn't realise that there had been a death so close to the time that I was there. I heard on the *File on Four* programme that they think that 400 children were in this unmarked grave. I don't remember there being any discussion of anything like

that. It might have been that there was and I didn't understand what it was about, so it kind of went over my head. But I don't remember anything being said.

Priests

43. I don't recall ever speaking to a priest at Smyllum. I would only ever see them at mass.

Abuse at Roncalli House

Mealtime abuse

44. The children came back to Roncalli for lunch. That's where I saw one of the things. I can't remember whether it was a 'one-off' or whether it happened more often. I have an impression that it happened more often, but I couldn't swear to it. I don't remember Sister **AFK** being there when things like this happened in the house. There was this little boy called **██████████** I think his last name was **██████████**. He never wanted to eat. He was about 7 years of age I think. He was one of those little, little, scrawny children. He was just always sad. This other member of staff, **AHL** decided that he had to eat. She was older than me and left Smyllum to get married soon after.
45. She made **██████████** bring his plate over to where she was sitting. He wouldn't eat. You know yourself when there are things in front of you that you can't eat and you think to yourself "That's disgusting!, I can't eat it!". He knew he couldn't eat it. She made him put his hand on the table and she hit him repeatedly over the knuckles with a fork. I can't remember him making any noise. I just remember him standing there with tears kind of running down his face. The more he did that, the more she shouted at him. He didn't eat it anyway, that I remember. He then had to go back to school.

46. There was some bit of me that was just shocked into frozenness. There was this silence in the room apart from her voice. Shouting at him. On reflection, I think "Every child must have been just sitting there absolutely terrified, because I was". That was one of the things that absolutely stayed with me as a memory. There is a bit of me that hopes he has been able to grow and throw it off, but I don't think it's the kind of thing that you throw off very easily.
47. There was such a contrast with my own upbringing. I came from a family of 5 and we were very noisy. My dad would occasionally 'lose it' and wave a slipper about. You always knew if my mum was going to clout you because she put her tongue between her teeth, so you could duck. It was not a place of children being frightened. I found that enormously difficult, but presumably not as difficult as [REDACTED] did.

Physical abuse by Sister [REDACTED] AFK

48. [REDACTED] was also on the receiving end of another beating, this time from Sister [REDACTED] AFK. We had a big room and there must have been a smaller room off it. [REDACTED] and a little girl were in this smaller room. They would have been aged 6 or 7. They had been playing with each other. I didn't get the impression that it was anything more than children playing 'doctors and nurses'. They were both fully clothed. This seemed to be treated as some sort of heinous crime. There was this eruption. Sister [REDACTED] AFK had taken her shoe off and was wailing indiscriminately on both of them with her shoe. She was telling them that they were "dirty" and "disgusting".
49. In my memory there was just this sudden yelling and beating and her being really angry and red faced. Afterwards she was saying "I was sure they were doing that", "I was sure he was doing that, because I could smell it on his hands sometimes". It wasn't until sometime later that I thought "Were you just hanging around waiting to trap them in that?".
50. It was like, on the one hand there was this acknowledgement that institutions were not good for small children and efforts needed to be made to make them more comfortable and more homely. On the other, in there somewhere, there still existed

this belief that some children were innately bad and the way of dealing with that was to beat them. My take on it is that, if you are doing training it is to help you give a better deal to the children that you are caring for and for the families you are caring for and that there isn't any room for this other stuff. What I witnessed was not within the norms of corporal punishment, even then.

Abuse re bedwetting

51. The boy [REDACTED] wet the bed. He is the only child at Roncalli I remember who wet the bed. I remember him particularly for this incident. I don't remember if he was hit regularly. The thing I remember is that he would be shouted at by Sister [REDACTED] AFK. I can't remember if [REDACTED] AHL did this or not. He would be told that he was "dirty" and he would have to strip his sheets off the bed and take them through and put them in the bath and turn the cold tap on them.
52. My image is of this small boy who would have been about 8 may be 9 with his sheets, trailing them through, and putting them in the bathroom in the bath to soak. His pyjamas were wet as well. He would kind of haul his sheets around him to carry them through, almost like a cape. He didn't gather them in a bundle. Nobody helped him. I like to think he couldn't have got in the bath with the wet sheets. I hope to God that he didn't. I can't remember if he was properly washed or not. I don't remember bathing or washing him after he had wet himself.
53. Just before I left Smyllum, this other carer, [REDACTED] ACU came back from doing the residential childcare course. It was her first proper week back. I think she did the Glasgow course. My memory of it now is that I had in my head this idea that she was going to come back because she had just done this course and I think she must have worked there before, because she clearly knew her way around and had some authority in the place and was definitely older. I went through to the bedroom and I could not believe what I was seeing. I came through and ,God, there she was with her shoe off wailing on him and shouting at him and telling him that "he was a disgusting, dirty boy." I can just remember my heart kind of sinking into my shoes and thinking "well what's all this about?".

54. I don't know if Sister **AFK** was aware of what had happened. I don't think she was there but I'm not sure. Essentially this **ACU** was doing what I had seen Sister **AFK** doing on a different occasion. Sister **AFK** was not gentle and sympathetic to him. He must have woken up every morning wondering whether or not he was wet.
55. I used to lift him to the toilet at night. It was common practice, although I don't think that it worked, during that period of time that if there were children that were bed-wetters on your way to bed you would lift them to the toilet. It might well have been that we all did that because it was our turn, but I might just be mixing that up with one of the places that I went to afterwards. A fair percentage of children in care wet the bed in the places that I went to afterwards. Those children did not get humiliated and beaten. It was all dealt with very quietly, nothing remarked about it at all.
56. I don't remember any other action beyond shouting and dragging their wet sheets being taken against bed-wetters. I think I ought to have those memories but I don't remember anything else.
57. These are the kind of vivid impressions that have been left on me but, I can't tell you if they were 'one offs' or more than 'one offs,'. I suspect that they would be more than 'one offs'.

Leaving Smyllum

58. I left Smyllum to start the residential care course in Aberdeen when a place became available for me. I knew I wasn't going back, absolutely not going back there, when I left. I attended that course for an academic year.

Reporting of abuse at Smyllum

59. When I was at Smyllum there wasn't anybody to mention to, or discuss with, my concerns about what I was witnessing. The thing that puzzles me is that it didn't occur to me that I could have talked to the leader of my course in Aberdeen when I got there. His name was Robert Kidd. He was fairly well known in residential work circles and as an academic. It wasn't even that I had the thought and dismissed it, it was 'how it was', and no one would do anything about it.

Life after Smyllum

60. After I completed the residential care course in Aberdeen. I went on to work in two children's homes in Scotland. I did not have any concerns about either of the 2 homes I worked at in Scotland after Smyllum.

61. The first was run by Barnardo's. In those days it was known as a school for maladjusted boys. It had a mix of residential staff and teaching staff. The person in charge was a lovely head teacher called Mr Norris. It had very small classrooms, 4, 5, 6 boys in a class in 2 units. I worked in the residential unit for the smaller boys, It ran on completely different lines; a completely different set of beliefs from that at Smyllum.

62. The boys went home in the school holidays, they had regular contact with their parents. Every other Sunday parents came for the afternoon into the evening to visit. Somebody drove the school minibus down to pick the parents up from the bus and take them back again. It was easy for them to get there.

63. One memory that came back to me was that on one of these Sunday afternoon visits, there was this boy, he must have been about 8. He went down on every bus and his parents didn't come, although they had promised him that they were coming. He had gone to meet the last possible bus. He came into the kitchen and there was a crate by the door of empty milk bottles. He walked into the door and he picked the bottles up, one after the other, and smashed them. He was so angry. I kind of went and got him and got my arms around him, held him and said "Don't do that, that is not a good idea". and "I know you are angry but, actually, that is not okay". We had a

male member of staff and he must have come in at that point and kind of picked him up and carried him off to distract him. In Smyllum Park that just wouldn't happen. A child would not be able to display their rage in that way and not bring some real punishment on themselves..

64. The next place was in Edinburgh somewhere in the middle of 1969. At the time Edinburgh was closing all the big children's homes and building purpose built places for 10 children. This was one of those, and I went there as the deputy. It was run by a couple and there was me and another member of staff. Everything in the home was just so different from Smyllum. At bath times each child had their own bath in their own space and in their own time. Quite a number of the children from there had come from these bigger places, and they really could not deal with being in this intimate environment with adults and other children.
65. It must have been in the early days that one of the small boys wouldn't get in the bath. I could not get him in the bath. I can't remember how we resolved it, but eventually we worked that out. For him, and probably for other children as well, one of their punishments had been, being put in a cold bath. He had been naughty up until bath time and I was thinking a that nice warm soothing bath, and calmness before bedtime would help. He thought that I was going to put him in a cold bath, and that this bath that I had run was cold. This home was just so different, and yet, Smyllum was still open, still running in the same kind of way until 1981.
66. After that I moved to work in England. I worked for Leeds Social Services and they paid for my social work training.in 1982.

Other information

67. I saw an article in the Guardian which referred to an upcoming *File on Four* program about Smyllum on BBC Radio 4. I did some Google research on Smyllum Park and came across several articles. At the end of one of them there were details of how to

contact the Inquiry. I noted these and decided to listen to the program first and then make a decision on whether to contact the Inquiry or not.

68. After listening to the *File on Four* program I decided to contact the Inquiry. I found it very difficult because although my head knows that I was 17 and not in a position to do anything at the time, there is still the Catholic guilt that says “you should have done something about that”. I can accept that intellectually, but still find it incredibly difficult to “relive” these events. I fear that talking about it may cause other memories to resurface. In retrospect, after contacting the Inquiry, I realise that I had been scared of these people as well. I was scared that they would come and find me. I had that, quite irrational, fear.
69. I put the news on one lunchtime and saw an interview with that woman who was making allegations of sexual abuse against the priests at Smyllum Park. I had to switch it off again, because I felt physically sick. I just thought “this is just unbearable”. What I keep taking myself back to is, “well okay if this is unbearable for me, then what was like for those children?” I can’t even begin to imagine that, really, because it is so far from my experience of growing up. What is it like to wake up in the morning and find that you have wet your bed again and think “so now what is going to happen?”, or you know what is going to happen to you.

Impact

70. Even prior to the recent publicity about Smyllum I suffered intrusive thoughts related to my time at Smyllum. I didn’t ever seek assistance in trying to work through things for myself. A few years ago there was an article in the Guardian magazine written by Bea Campbell which included a reference to Smyllum. It mentioned that a helpline had been set up by some of the previous residents. I thought “this is a good opportunity for me to kind of say I witnessed some stuff and I could talk about it if anybody thought it was useful”. I rang the Guardian and asked how I could get in touch with her. I e-mailed her, but I did not hear back from her. I tried to think of other ways, but I couldn’t so I had to let it drop.

71. I have not ever, until recently, talked about those experiences at Smyllum myself. I am not absolutely sure why that was, but my memories certainly got quite deep and buried but not completely. The recent publicity and interviews have “taken the lid off” something.

Records

72. I had no involvement with record keeping at Smyllum. I have not attempted to recover any records of my time at Smyllum.

Lessons to be learned

73. What I am left with now is a feeling that my really strong beliefs about how we behave towards children and the things that we do and the things that we never, ever, ever do come principally from my time at Smyllum. I think that there is a major chunk in my belief system that says “that couldn’t happen again”, but actually there is a bit that says “yes it could”.
74. All it needs for it to happen again is for an institution to be not easily accessible, social services departments, children’s departments, whatever you want to call them, not being properly resourced, and children not being seen. I think that must be the absolute underlying reason “why?” It obviously wasn’t just Smyllum because I know that there are so many other places with children not being seen, not being listened to and not being believed. If you create a set of circumstances again were that is possible, then all of the other stuff can follow on.
75. I have spoken to someone who was a social worker in the 60s, at the time we are talking about. She was in Liverpool and worked with quite a lot of Catholic children’s homes run by nuns. Her experience was quite different, but then they were all there in the city and children were being placed there and there were social workers in and

out all of the time. Nuns were doing social work training. It was obviously a whole different ball game.

76. I would like to think that none of the nuns or the staff went to Smyllum with a belief that somehow that they could use this as an opportunity to be abusive to children. However, this set of beliefs about the Devil, beating the Devil all that kind of stuff, things like that could be allowed to just percolate through the whole place without being challenged.

77. It is essential that we don't ever take insufficient resources, lack of money, whatever, as being a good enough reason for allowing situations that allow for abuse of children to develop again. That is up to and including how we recruit staff and the supervision of staff. Having had years of it later, and provided it for other people, there was nothing you could even vaguely describe as staff supervision at Smyllum. Those sets of circumstances must not ever be allowed to be recreated.

78. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed..... 
Dated..... 05/10/2017