

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

EAE

Support person present: YES

Others present: Lesley Allan, Clyde & Co, solicitor for the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul

1. My name is EAE I've been known as EAE I was born on 1938. I am 79 years of age. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

The Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul

2. I joined the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul in 1956.

Work history

3. I started my Community life in 1956. I went to Smyllum in 1958 and I finished there exactly three years later in 1961. I then went to London to do the child care course from 1961 to 1962. I spent the next seventeen years in residential child care, for example two family group homes. In late 1979, I changed direction and trained in pastoral work, where I have continued to serve vulnerable families and single vulnerable adults in Scotland, Germany, Ethiopia, and England until the present time.
4. The child care course that I did in 1961 to 1962 was in Camden Town College, London. It involved two placements in different environments, lectures in English law relating to care, social services legislation and counselling. It was fifty-five to sixty years ago.

Working in Smyllum

5. I was asked by the Community to go to Smyllum. I came from a big family of eight and so had general experience of caring for children. I also had a year of experience working at Rosewell as an assistant in the classroom for mentally handicapped children. I was very at home with children.
6. There was no interview process. There wasn't a visible checking, but when I look back I was probably very well supervised. Sister [REDACTED] BAF [REDACTED] who was in charge, came most evenings and at all different times. I really engaged with her and she with me. I suppose it was really part of my formation.

Smyllum*First impressions*

7. My impression when I went to Smyllum was that it was a little bit like Ireland. Going up the avenue it seemed a distance from the road and when we came up to the front it was like a castle. You saw these little children out, as the nursery was over to the right. The surroundings were fantastic. You would look over the hills and it was so green and beautiful and free and spacious. I suppose I was really very at home. At the time I was just pleased.

Layout of Smyllum

8. I don't know how many groups of children there were in the main house, but it may have been four. The nursery was in quite a big building to the right. There was a church to the far left. The school was up the hill. There was a playground area, and I think there was the boys' kitchen in the middle of it. We had food from the other kitchen, which was the girls' kitchen. All the children lived in the main building in my time. There was a girls' side and a boys' side. Everywhere was like that at the time. I don't think family group homes were up and running until maybe the end of 1961 or 1962. I often questioned why the authorities would allow children to come to

Smyllum if they did not think it was fit for purpose, and yet they did, and placed children miles away from where the kiddies came from. I did wonder where their parents were and how they never came. It doesn't bear thinking about sometimes.

9. My group was upstairs. I had a group of twelve girls aged from about three to eight or nine. I was in a quite separate area called the Loft. They were called "Lofties" and I objected strongly to that. I insisted in time that it should change. The name changed to St Theresa's. I refused to answer to anything else and eventually it took on. The other groups had names but I don't remember them.

The children at Smyllum

10. Smyllum had boys and girls from very young children to children who were leaving school. I did get a few new children. That was really hard because I am assuming they came from the city. They all came from long journeys. From memory, no child left while I was there.

Management structure and staff

11. Sister [BAF] was in charge. If there was a problem or I needed support, I would have gone to Sister [BAF]
12. Sister [ADG] was in charge of all the girls. She had the support of the one or two Sisters running it with her, but she definitely was responsible for the girls' side. I suppose my area was separate. My part of the building itself was separate. I had little or nothing to do with them, except when they got the television. I used to ask if we could go down to see it. The television was in the hall. We did watch it from time to time.
13. Sister [EAD] was in charge of the boys. There was also Sister [AGI] [AGI] who was on the boys' side. There was another Sister with the little boys, but I can't remember her name.

14. We didn't do any cooking or laundry. The girls' kitchen was downstairs and the laundry was a distance. Sister [REDACTED] HBP [REDACTED] was in the kitchen and Sister Michael Daly was in the laundry. She was from where I came from and we related fairly well. There was also lovely Sister [REDACTED] FAM [REDACTED] who was the nurse.
15. I have no recollection of any staff other than the Sisters.

My role in Smyllum

16. I was a bit like the children's mother as regards aspects of their care. I was responsible for them. I got them up, gave them their breakfast and saw them off to school. I had a few little ones as well. I have no recollection of them coming back for dinner, but I am assuming that they must have, but it wasn't a big part of my day. I had two of the older girls, aged about fourteen and fifteen, to help me in the morning. They were about to leave school and they helped and then went off to school. They came back to help in the afternoon after school. They always seemed pleased to be there.
17. I was quite creative when I came to seeing to the children's clothes and getting things ready for the afternoon. I can't remember too much of the middle of the day at all, except that I took some time for prayer. When the children were back, we had something to eat for dinner. We would clear up and we would go off walking. I think it was so lovely to have so much space. The children had their own area downstairs where they could be out. They played house and sometimes we played hop scotch. We could spend hours playing and skipping. They were so easy to entertain really.
18. I wasn't given training or an induction before I was introduced to the children. I had learned from my mum. I had learned from my young brothers and sister. I had great experience from the year that I was with the mentally handicapped children. I was at home in the environment. I also had a smaller group than any of the others. I was often told that I was very lucky that I only had twelve children. I probably was, but I didn't think so at the time.

19. The arrangements for caring for the children did not change during the time I was at Smyllum.

Children's routine and life at Smyllum

Admission

20. I can't recall about any admission procedure for children at Smyllum. I only recall the children being upset. Sister [BAF] usually brought the child. One or two them I think may have come from the nursery itself.
21. I remember helping to comfort some children through food and just the freedom of being able to go out and play with the others, and the knowledge that their places would not being damaged - that they would go back out and their house would still be there.
22. I've already described the children's daily routine in relation to my duties at Smyllum.

Mealtimes

23. We didn't do our own cooking. The food always came from the girls' kitchen. We ate in our own part. There was a dining room for the twelve. It was just a small room that had just two tables which we put together. There was the next room which was their playroom and then on the side of that was their dormitory.
24. My memory of the food is that it was as near as possible to home, which would have been very simple and wholesome and hot. We would get a dessert, which I never remember having at home except for Sunday. They had pieces of cake cut up into small pieces. It was good food. The children had the same food as we had.
25. I have been asked what happened if a child did not like the food or refused to eat. My memory of it is that I would have encouraged them, begged them or pleaded with them, to eat. I told them that they needed to eat to grow up and all the kind of things my mother said to me. I wasn't very good at eating and if a child couldn't really eat

something I would be saying that they were sick and bring them along to Sister FAM She would have a look at them and tell them that if they really didn't eat their food, they wouldn't grow up. My children didn't like carrots. They had possibly never seen them before. There was a lot of the food that probably initially they had not really seen before. I have no memory of the children having real problems about eating. I think they were hungry and were ready for food. They might not have eaten it all, but I don't know if I noticed it that much. It probably wasn't an issue with me either, as I was always fussy with food.

26. I have been asked whether I was ever aware of children being brought back the same food at breakfast if they hadn't eaten it at dinner. No, I genuinely never saw that. I never heard of that happening. I think Sister HBP the kitchen Sister, was clever as well, and she gave us the kind of things that maybe we liked. That is all I can remember.

Bedtime

27. There was a dormitory with twelve beds which was partitioned into two. I slept in my own little room in the corner. The children had an orange box to keep their own little bits and pieces in.
28. I have no recollection of the children bed-wetting. I find that a bit strange myself. I would smell a bit of urine from the girls every now and again.
29. Of course children who bed-wet suffered the humiliation of bed wetting and also the smart talk around them. Maybe I really didn't notice it with the little ones that I had, but before I was at Smyllum there would always have been somebody who would tell them or call them names or something smart. I know that in Rosewell the children did have cold water baths. I washed them myself often and freshened them up and they didn't smell. Urine is very toxic and would burn the children's anatomy as well, which was probably more serious than the bed wetting. Also, every one of those children had a thick brown rubber sheet underneath them and there is no reference to them ever having to wash that. If all that was happening, they would have had to wash their rubber sheet as well if they were having to walk around with their sheets

around them as some of them said they did. They would have been asked to take the sheets to the basket which was probably the full length of the long dormitory, but they were at home and you would be asked to do that at home as well. Each bed-wetter had a fresh laundered sheet every night.

30. I have been asked if I ever saw children parade around in wet sheets. I never saw this, but I did see them carrying sheets from their bed to the basket or the container that was there for the laundry. I never saw it. I never heard of that being done ever. I never heard of children being chastised for bed-wetting either.
31. If a child needed to get up in the night, they were able to do that. Children would go into a deep sleep and they didn't want to get up at all, and that is what made it so hard I suppose. They wanted it and yet they didn't want. They would have been anxious about getting up. I would say that was more cruel.

Washing and bathing

32. Initially when I went to Smyllum, it was just taken for granted that everybody had a bath every night. I had not been used to doing that. I remember that we had two baths. I suggested that the little ones would have one bathroom and the older ones would have the other. They liked doing what they could do as they were aged seven and eight, and so they had a little something that the others didn't have. Children did share bath water, about three or four per bath. I don't see anything wrong with that myself. Certainly today some children would have a bathroom to themselves, that's the difference.
33. I was aware that washing hair in the bath was a struggle for some kiddies, and some children couldn't even look at the bath for the fear of the water.

Clothes

34. I do not remember if the children had a school uniform. I know there were lots of clothes. The clothes were there long before I came. I was very creative in changing clothes to make them look different.

35. Although I don't remember whether they had a school uniform during the week. At the weekend they definitely had their own change of clothes and their ribbons and cardigans.
36. Everything went to the laundry on a Monday. We had big baskets and they were usually at the end of the room in the children's dormitory. We polished shoes ourselves.

Personal possessions

37. I have been asked whether the children had personal possessions. They would have had little things, and probably things that they collected from in their houses or the garden when we went out to pick flowers. Other than that, I wasn't aware.

Work

38. I have been asked whether the children did manual work. I would hope that the children would know how to help, and be helped to show how to help both each other and the whole of household. I think the only way we learn is from each other and if you have no experience then you are impoverished as a result.
39. I have been asked whether the children would do work such as polishing floors, laundry work or scrubbing floors. I do not know if that happened. My memory of it is that all the floors were wooden, not stone. I would assume that there would be some girls who would have helped out in the laundry and around the house. These were the kind of things someone would do when helping at home. I would have thought that if we did have bed-wetters in our group that the two girls who helped me would probably have brought the sheets down to the laundry. They may have had to put them into the machine. I am not too sure.

Leisure time

40. The children had their dolls, and we made dolls' clothes. We did jigsaws and played Ludo and simple games. We had a big room and even in the winter we could skip. I

used to do their hair and it made them look a million dollars. They were very easily entertained. I would read a story to them most evenings before they went to bed. I used to collect magazines and they would look at pictures.

41. As I said, a television arrived while I was there. I hadn't seen a television myself. Of course it was the pride of the older ones, and I was probably quite jealous because we didn't have one. We watched it probably for an hour or more sometimes. I had a radio and I think it was just music we listened to. Sometimes we would sing the things that they learned in school. I never had a problem with entertaining because it was easy. I put a sheet up around two chairs and they made their own little houses. We had so much room. We would cut out stuff from the magazines and put a bit of glue on and put them into their houses.
42. The children didn't have access to a library. The only books that they had were the books that we had ourselves. We had a few books and they were just the ones that I took from the things that came in sometimes and for Christmas. We did get some really lovely things for Christmas and I would get hold them and save them.
43. The children didn't go to Brownies or anything like that. Brownies probably didn't come for another ten years after. Brownies wouldn't have been something that was very Catholic at the time either. The Church of Scotland and the Methodist Church would have used Brownies more.
44. Christmas time was the only time I was conscious of going out of Smyllum. We went to mass on a Sunday morning down to Lanark. I took the older ones. That was the only other outing for me also.

Trips and holidays

45. We had a summer holiday in Aberfoyle, which was absolutely out of this world for me, and maybe for the children too. I have photographs of our holiday in 1959. The children had just come back from their holiday when I arrived in 1958. There was still a lot of talk about having been on holiday and how great it was so I was looking forward to it. It was great.

Christmas and birthdays

46. At Christmas we went into Glasgow. We had about three different days to go because I needed the two older girls with me. We went into Glasgow with about five children each time. We went in the train and we got money to go. I don't think we got much to spend, but we were given money by the people. It was incredible. I did not have to account for it, so we just spent it. These were great days for us and the children as well.
47. We got a present for each of the children when they came into Glasgow. They could choose what they wanted. We went into that big shop in the main street. There was a whole top floor of toys. They tried the tricycles and things. Sometimes we got things like that for Christmas brought in I presume by businesses. I was given them because they were small. Sometimes I took them when they came into the front hall of Smyllum. I just waited and picked them up and walked away with them for my children. We did share them.
48. Children's birthdays weren't marked with a birthday card, but then I didn't grow up getting birthday cards much except from my dad sometimes. What we did do is make a cake. I wasn't very good at this, but we used to attack it anyway and make a cake. Sister **HBP** was very good as well. I would ask and she would have a little sponge cake for us. We always sang Happy Birthday and when the cake came up I would put a candle on it. That's what I did in my group. I'm not sure what happened in other groups.

Schooling

49. My children went to school in Smyllum. Sister **EAA** was a brilliant teacher and she was very ambitious for the children as well. I know the older children used to go out to secondary school. I don't have any recollection of homework.
50. I have been asked whether the older children were taught life skills to prepare them for leaving Smyllum. I would say that Sister **ADG** was very astute about those

kinds of things. Certainly her group would have had a lot of what I now call coaching. I suppose the girls coming and helping me was preparation as well.

51. The older girls helped everywhere on the girls' side. They probably had to do a bit of cleaning that had to be done. I don't remember them cleaning my place. They did the washing up and stuff like that. I must have done the cleaning myself.

Healthcare

52. Sister **FAM** was absolutely brilliant. She was watching out for the children all the time. She would check out with me if one of them was crying or they were sniffing. She would be after me asking if there was something wrong with that little one. She would say that she would have a look at her and so we would bring them along. She was like a granny and a great nurse.
53. The doctor came regularly, but I don't know how often. I think it was probably once a month. I have no recollection of Sister **FAM** calling them except for once when one of the children had bad measles. She brought the doctor up to the dormitory and had a look at her to see if she was alright. I had to take her temperature I think about four times a day for Sister **FAM** as well. Sister **FAM** was just there and supportive. I knew that there was always somebody there and it wasn't my full responsibility, as I think I was too young anyway as well.
54. I do not know whether the children saw dentists.
55. I have been asked whether any medical records or reports about the children were kept. I would have said that Sister **FAM** probably kept something, but I didn't keep anything.
56. I have no recollection of any of our children going to hospital. The only experience I have of hearing about hospitals was when one of the boys had an accident on holiday in Aberfoyle.

Deaths

57. It was in 1960 or 1961 in Aberfoyle. My memory of it is that two of the priests from Lanark came and played golf with the lads. They were playing golf. I was not watching, but I was in the hearing. The child came from behind the priest who was swinging the golf club and hit the child on the side of the head from what I was told. He collapsed on the floor and of course there was a huge furore. It was probably at that point that I heard, but I had the children so I couldn't leave them. The lad was taken away. We didn't go home. I remember going away and having a meal together and there was just silence.
58. I can't remember the boy's name. I think he was about twelve. I remember asking about it and hearing he was still very poorly. My memory of it is that he died five or six days or a week later in hospital.
59. I know I didn't go to any funeral. I understood that he was an orphan and the meaning of an orphan at the time was that he had no family. I suppose there was so much grief around as well. I don't know where the funeral was or where he is buried. I wasn't included in it.
60. I think our children probably weren't even aware of it at that point in time. I think I might have even protected the children myself. I was really trying to keep the holiday right rather than talking about the child going into hospital.
61. I didn't know anything whatsoever about the children from Smyllum having unmarked graves. In our home town in [REDACTED] Ireland, I grew up as a young adult with an awareness of what they call a pauper's grave. I found it incredible that anyone would talk about mass graves. Most of us we were Irish or Scottish with a culture of death and burial and respect and appreciation of the dead, and I think for anybody to say that it was a mass grave is totally cruel. They died but our culture is that they would be treated with respect and you don't lose culture overnight. Mass graves are identified with Ethiopia and Nigeria and African countries where I did see mass graves and children dying overnight with numbers being buried altogether.

62. A child can't die without a doctor certifying the death and documentation, so the child has a name. It may be unmarked, it wasn't unnamed, I suppose is what I would be saying. They wouldn't have been piled on top of each other as in mass graves.

Religious instruction

63. Religious instruction was going to mass on Sunday. We said our night prayers. I used to say them with the children but it would be blessing themselves. I wasn't really aware that I was teaching them, but I think I might have been. I would tell them about the Angel of God prayer and that they had an angel and would they want a name for their angel and things like that. There was nothing really formal, but it probably was in school though, but I do not know.
64. The children were expected to go to mass and they would not have been allowed to refuse to go. It was 1958 to 1961.

Visitors

65. I had one occasion when a mother and a grandmother came and I thought that they were going to take the little one home but they didn't. I thought it was horrendous. [REDACTED] was the little girl's name but we called her [REDACTED]. For me, that was a revelation. I was really questioning why did people do that to their own children and what was it all about. I was really upset as well. They just came to visit and didn't come back. I wondered how many brothers and sisters she had. I heard later that she was from Glasgow. I wondered how is it that they were allowed to take her so many miles away to a place like Smyllum, lovely as it was. The children all belonged to families, every one of them. I covered it with Sister [REDACTED] BAF a few times, and asked how is it that this was possible but there were no other answers then. I was told that if they weren't here in Smyllum, they would have had to go to the poor house or one of those places. The alternative would have been the workhouse.
66. I certainly didn't have a visitor's book.

Inspections

67. I don't remember any inspections by officials. No social worker or any other person appeared after putting all those children into care while I was there. They brought the children in a van and dropped them at the front hall. The checking was done by members of the Community.
68. I did have the one child whom a couple were going to adopt. They came for about six months. That was all the visitors that we had. I used to look forward to them as well. At the end of it the child wasn't adoptable, which I thought that was horrendous. I never found out why they couldn't adopt the child. I was told that she just wasn't available for adoption. She was about six or seven years old so she knew what was going on. I don't know how that happened for all those months and then nothing.

Review of care

69. I was never aware of any arrangements to review a child's placement at Smyllum.. Nobody asked any questions and everybody seemed to have been really happy with that. Nobody ever asked us if we ever needed any extra either monetary or other help. Nobody ever asked if we had enough staff. It was a member of our own Community who saw the need and implemented the changes after I left.

Families – 1958 - 1961

70. Siblings were separated immediately. They just went to the groups. Boys and girls were separated and I am assuming that children were also separated due to their age. They may not have been aware that they could have sisters or brothers in the home environment. They never asked for them, but they probably didn't know what to do at that age unless they were very forward. It wasn't the era for forwardness as such either, so it didn't happen. I don't know whether they saw each other at other times. They may have but they never said. They never talked about them and we

never encouraged siblings. I didn't know whether the children in my groups had brothers and sisters elsewhere.

71. I never saw a letter coming in for a child. There would have been probably one telephone in the main office, but I never had any telephone calls for a child.

Access to the children at Smyllum

72. I have been asked about whether any adults other than the sisters had unsupervised contact with the children. I don't know of anyone. Visits by trainee priests didn't happen until much later.
73. People from the local community in Lanark were nice when they saw the little ones. They felt sorry for them, but that would be it. Institutions were expected to fulfil care provision and mental health provision.

Discharge from Smyllum

74. None of the children in my unit were discharged from Smyllum while I was there. I don't know what happened.

Discipline and punishment

75. I can only speak for our own group. Little girls just really like you to be their friend. If I did have to say anything, it would be something like "Oh stop it" or "Behave yourself". I don't even think I had that language to be quite honest even then. I would say "Stop" or "Be helpful" or "Look after each other" or something like that. I never remember having to punish a child, not even sent to a corner or anything like that. I see my nieces now doing it and children cause havoc right in front of their very eyes. We didn't do it and the children that I had at that point in time did not seem to do it. I

often felt that it was because there was a lot of fresh air, a lot of freedom, a lot of movement.

76. I am not saying that was the same for the boys and big lads or maybe the bigger girls for all I know. I don't remember anything at all about it. They had television but the boys probably had it as well. They were wilder and probably raring to go. I can't understand why they never ran away. We never heard of any of them running away or at least I didn't. If it was that bad, why did the children not run away. The authorities would not in any way have been sympathetic to them and they would have been returned, and I would say that would have been very difficult for the children.
77. I didn't use any kind of corporal punishment. Smacking would have been the norm for parents at that time, but I just genuinely never had to do that kind of punishment at all. Preparing for baths and things like that is where I saw some children struggle. That would be because they were afraid of water and I would be trying to put their hands in or especially I know some children didn't like their hair washed. Some of them probably never washed much before that either. If there was any struggle I helped them to cope with it, and reassured them and put a paper boat into the water and told them that they wanted a play mate and all that kind of thing.
78. I didn't see other sisters disciplining the children. I know one night that the television went off because three older girls were punching each other. I did hear twice that [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] who was [REDACTED] "will sort them out". That meant the big lads and they were wild. I think it was Sister [REDACTED] EAD [REDACTED] who said that. She was in her mid 30s and had all these big lads. I would have seen that she would have needed some help. I am not saying that he sorted them out the right way maybe, because I really have no idea, but I wasn't happy with him myself. I didn't like him and I can't remember why I didn't like him. I do remember one day I went up to the garden. I saw that there were blackberries and I went to take some. I got this yell from nowhere "Hey you leave that alone!" I hadn't seen where he was and then I answered him back and told him this was my garden as well as his, and then I disappeared quick.

79. I did not have a punishment book. I was never asked to have one, but I am only speaking for myself. I was not aware of any book until I trained which was the next year so I never had anything. I didn't keep a record of any of the children.

Abuse – general

80. With the exception of what I mentioned about [REDACTED] BAC I never saw or heard of anything that I considered was abuse of the children.
81. I have been asked whether the children ever said anything to me about anything that might have been abuse. I think my children were just too young. Sometimes they came home and they would say that maybe one of the boys wasn't nice to them at school today. I would say that some of the boys aren't so nice. I would tell them to keep away from him or something like that. That is as much as I ever heard, but you know we were outside of the bigger scene at Smyllum.
82. I have been asked whether the children ever said anything to me about whether there was corporal punishment at school. I don't think they would have come home and told me. I wouldn't have come home and said it to my parents, so I just assume that it is was very much within that kind of era of not saying things like that. I would have heard my own mum telling me that I might have deserved it. There was always something like that an adult said and it was always in favour of the adult.
83. I think that if one of the children that I had was upset I would know very quickly what was causing it. I have no recollection of the children saying that they were hurt or kicked or that anybody did anything. Upset children tell you what's happening to them at the time. I assume that I sorted it out like mums do and I was their mother figure.
84. We had a long settee in the room and we used to sit down and the children would come along and they would tell you all different kinds of things, probably everything that they wanted to say. I just kind of walked along beside them and I said I would

sort it out for them. By redirecting them away from their worries and their concerns, I also helped them to forget.

85. The kind of things that would worry them was if another child wouldn't play with them in school. I would say that the other child might be unhappy and needed them and so they should love them and they will be alright. It was that sort of thing really.
86. If there was anything that I was really concerned about I think I would have gone to Sister [BAF] when she came up to us. She spent time with me and us and I probably just told her all the kind of things the children were telling me at the time. There was that kind of openness and she was very trusting as well. She would have probably have gone over to the little one that I had spoken about and asked if she was alright now.

Allegations against members of staff at Smyllum

[BAC]

87. I have already commented on [BAC]
88. I have been asked about a child called [AAO] I have been told he was in Smyllum from 1961 to 1967. I didn't know [AAO] or any boys names at all. I definitely would not have known him if he only came in 1961. If it was before that, I might have met him on the holiday, but I don't know that child. I have no knowledge about this at all.
89. I have been told that a child called [AAO] has said that [BAC] beat him to the extent that he was in bed for a fortnight. That sounds awful, but I am not able to comment on it. I don't know. I have no knowledge about this at all.
90. I have been asked about a child called [ADN] or [ADN] who I have been told was at Smyllum from 1951 to 1962. No, I don't know this child either. I have no knowledge about this at all.

91. I have been told that a child called [ADN] or [ADN] has said children were beaten severely by [BAC] to the extent that his front teeth were knocked out. That sounds awful but I know nothing at all. I wish I could say either yes or no, but I can't. I have no knowledge about this at all.

Miss [IAQ]

92. I have been asked about a member of staff called Miss [IAQ] who was sometimes referred to as Miss [IAQ]. I don't ever remember her. She must have been on the boys side. I don't know, because she could have been there and I wouldn't have a clue. I have no knowledge about this at all.

93. I have been told that it has been said that she was involved in beating children to the point that they fainted or lost consciousness and she used a belt. I really genuinely don't know. I have no knowledge about this at all.

[ACF]

94. I have been asked about a member of staff called [ACF]. I don't know who she is.

95. I have been told that it has been said by children called [ABK] and [JAA] [JAA] that she beat children including using a coat hanger. I don't know about this and I don't know these children.

Allegations against sisters at Smyllum

Sister [ADG] Sister [AHN] Sister [AFU] and Sister [HBP]

96. I have been told that allegations have been made that relate to those four sisters, although it is not always clear which sister is said to have done what.

97. I have been asked about Sister [ADG] I knew her. I saw her as in charge of the older girls. My memory of her is that she was tall and gentle. She had a presence. She had a quiet voice, was moderate, serious, and introverted. She was very much the lady.
98. I have been asked about Sister [AFU] I don't know who she is.
99. I have been asked about Sister [HBP] The Sister [HBP] I knew was the cook on the girls' side. She wouldn't really have had anything to do with the boys in the time that I am speaking about.
100. I have been asked about Sister [AGI] I did know Sister [AGI] She was a member of the Community. Sister [AGI] had a loud voice. She was small, but well-built. She was funny, extroverted, and happy. She was a Scot who I saw spoke the children's language.
101. I have been asked about a child called [REDACTED] who may have been in Smyllum from 1957 to 1968, and who had a sister called [REDACTED] I don't remember these children I have been told that [REDACTED] has said that people were cruel to her in Smyllum and mentioned a Sister [REDACTED] Sister [AHN] Sister [AFU] and Sister [HBP]
102. I have been told that it has been said that the child [REDACTED] was dragged by the hair and was beaten at the same time; that the child [REDACTED] was forced to watch; and she was beaten to the extent that it caused black eyes and a gash to the nose. I'm afraid I do not know about this.
103. I have been asked about a child called [REDACTED] who may have been in Smyllum from 1952 to 1961. I have no recollection of names at all.
104. I have been told that [REDACTED] has said that children who wet the bed were slapped and humiliated, allowed little liquid to drink throughout the day, lay in wet beds all night and were offered no extra baths; that Sister [ADG] regularly slapped, punched and pulled her hair usually unexpectedly and hit other girls with

her keys including a child called [REDACTED] and that she had a swollen mouth caused by a heavy back-handed blow. I have no knowledge of this. It seems impossible that it could be the same Sister [REDACTED] ADG [REDACTED] that I knew, but I have no knowledge of this. I could never imagine her doing the kind of things that they are saying. I would say that she was possibly strict with twenty teenage girls or more to look after, but that is different to what is being said.

105. I have been asked about a child called [REDACTED] who may have been in Smyllum from 1958 to 1963. I do not know her.
106. I have been told that [REDACTED] has said that Sister [REDACTED] ADG [REDACTED] punished the "fish" who wet the beds with the flat part of the hair brush or with her hand on the inside of the arm; that she also pinched her and slapped her legs too many times to mention. I have no knowledge of the girl. I never heard the word "fish" ever used in that way. It is really extraordinary.
107. Sister [REDACTED] ADG [REDACTED] was a gentle lady. I am not saying it didn't happen, but it is not coming together for me. It sounds really awful if this ever did happen. The thing about Sister [REDACTED] ADG [REDACTED] was that she and Sister [REDACTED] BAF [REDACTED] were really good friends and they worked very closely together while in Smyllum.

Sister [REDACTED] AGI [REDACTED]

108. I have been asked about a child called [REDACTED] AAI [REDACTED] who I have been told was in Smyllum from 1959 to 1963. There was a [REDACTED] but not in Smyllum, or even in Scotland in my time, but I don't know if it is [REDACTED] AAI [REDACTED]
109. I have been told that it is said that Sister [REDACTED] AGI [REDACTED] slapped and kicked a child called Sammy Carr. I have been told that Sammy Carr died in 1964. I recognise the name, but he would have died quite a long time after I left Smyllum. I didn't know him.
110. I have been told that [REDACTED] AAI [REDACTED] said that Sister [REDACTED] AGI [REDACTED] took his penis and rubbed it between her fingers. If that happened to a child, I would be questioning

could there have been a reason why she even actually looked at his penis? Could it have been because he said his penis was sore? I feel that she would have taken him over to Sister **FAM** the nurse, to have it checked.

Sister **EAA**

111. Sister **EAA** was the head teacher. She was private, holy and prayerful. She was posh as we saw her and gentle. She had a lot of responsibility and I never knew her to be involved out of school. She was an organist as well.

112. I have been asked whether Sister **EAA** was Sister **EAA** was the head teacher. was not. is a Daughter of Charity. She is a radiographer and she has been in nursing care all her life. I wouldn't have thought she was ever in Smyllum at all.

113. I have been asked about a child called **AAJ** who I have been told was in Smyllum from 1955 to 1960. I do not know her.

114. I have been told that **AAJ** has said that Sister **EAA** kicked her when she spilt water on her shoes; dragged her out of bed, bent her over the bath and whacked her with strap and a cane. I can't really make any comment, because I had never known Sister **EAA** visit the groups as she had too much responsibility otherwise as head teacher.

Sister **EAD** (**EAD**)

115. Sister **EAD** was in charge of the boys and had nothing whatsoever to do with the girls.

116. I have been told that it has been said that Sister **EAD** threw a child downstairs; and beat a child with a steel handle of a knife in the kitchen; and that a child, who may have been in her care, was hit on his bottom with a pool cue by **BAC** The children on the girls' side weren't allowed into the kitchen. I remember Sister **EAD** telling us one evening that she had just come away from playing a game of pool, so

they had a pool table there. I was delighted that they had a pool table because that was way ahead of the time. Throwing down the stairs is very extreme. She played with the lads. They were growing young men. They weren't children, but they were under age I suppose, and they needed discipline. Discipline was part the era. I don't think they could have escaped everything all the time. There were probably days when she had too much from them. Whether that is right or wrong is another thing.

Sister [BAF]

117. I have been told that it has been said that Sister [BAF] humiliated a child. Sister [BAF] was in charge. She was one of those Sisters who really knew each child. She talked to them and she may well have told somebody off publicly. She said what she had to say if somebody asked her to speak to one of the girls. That was my concept of her. She was interested. She stood back. She knew all the children. She came to see us often. She probably had more to do with the girls than even with me. She was very observant and if someone had stepped out of line to the point of it being unacceptable in the culture at the time, then that would have been humiliating. All children are humiliated if they do not get what they want. It is all part of growing up. I think she really loved the children and expressed it.

Allegations about the regime at Smyllum

118. I have been told that it has been said that there was a regime at Smyllum that involved children being slapped, punched and kicked; punished for bed-wetting; the force-feeding of children; placing a child on the doctor nun's breast; serving inedible food and making a child eat their vomit if they were sick; and locking children in cupboards. I have never seen or heard of any of that. That sounds sick basically. It doesn't mean to say that it may not have happened to an individual. I did not witness it. In my three years, there was no regime, only twenty-four/seven care during the fifty-two weeks in every year.

Prior Statements

119. I am asked whether I have given any statements before about my time at Smyllum. I gave a statement recently to Clyde & Co, solicitors who act for the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul. I remember writing a letter some years ago. I was asked to write a letter just giving reference to my time with the children to one of the lawyers.

Reporting of abuse

120. I have been asked who children could speak to if they felt they were not being properly treated or were unhappy about their care. I have already explained that the children could have spoken to me or Sister BAF who was in charge.

121. I have been asked if I know whether any of the behaviour I have been asked about has been reported to the police. I don't know anything about the police being involved.

Records

122. I don't remember there being any records about the children.

Closing thoughts

123. I have been asked that given all the allegations of abuse at Smyllum and that the Inquiry has received a lot of information about the effect on people's lives of their experiences of abuse at Smyllum, why there might be allegations if nothing of that nature happened.

124. These were poor children and they are special to us. They were taken from the city streets. The people that they trusted let them go. Even if they were neglected, they

still lost them. Even if they did want to stay with them, they couldn't. They were driven away and landed in a country fortress at least over an hour away. It was a village without shops. They were separated according to age and from there on everything was done within the same environment. It was also an institution. Some had no recovery resources. In my three years, I only saw one mother and a grandmother visit, and when they did it was like all the child's Christmases had come together. They left and I never saw them again. I have since heard that she and her brother were fostered by an aunt. I couldn't understand why they couldn't have been taken to the aunt at the beginning.

125. I think that sums it up. They were poor and some of them have been very impoverished as a result of everything that happened to them in life, most of all starting with their family and their environment, and then the authorities and ourselves. I just have to express that. They were our poor and we loved them and we still do.

St. Vincent's, West Denton, Newcastle

Background – 1972 - 1973

126. Twelve years after the three years I was in Smyllum I was at St Vincent's from [REDACTED] 1972 to [REDACTED] 1973. There were about forty-five boys and girls at St Vincent's. I think they were aged from five to fifteen years. I was in charge of, and responsible for, the Sisters at St Vincent's. I was not involved in the day to day care of the children. The children were in three units. Two were in the main building and one was in a quite separate house.

127. The Sisters at St Vincent's, during my time there, were Sister [REDACTED] AFY [REDACTED] Sister Evelyn Warnock and Sister Marie Byrne. There were other Sisters but they were not involved in the child care. There were also staff in each of the group, but I don't remember their names.

128. I have been asked about the [REDACTED] children. I don't remember any of their first names but there were three boys together in the Seaton Group. They were aged about seven or eight, twelve and fourteen. They were wild and wonderful, untamed and cheeky. They were basically just boys. Sister Marie was the sister working in the Seaton Group at the time. I know that they were from around Glasgow, and that they had an older brother. They also had a sister in foster care.

129. I had quite a lot of input in the Seaton House. Marie came two days before me and she needed support and supervision. She hadn't been in child care prior to that.

Allegations of abuse at St Vincent's

130. I have been told that [REDACTED] AAI has made allegations of what happened while he was in St Vincent's. I have been told that he may have been there from about 1963 or 1964 to about 1969.

131. I have been told that [REDACTED] AAH has made allegations of what happened while he was in St Vincent's. I have been told that he may have been there from about 1969.

132. I have been told that [REDACTED] AAF has made allegations of what happened while he was in St Vincent's. I have been told that he may have been there from about 1970 to about 1975 or 1976.

Sister [REDACTED] IAG

133. I have been asked about Sister [REDACTED] IAG. She wasn't there during the time I was there.

134. I have been told that [REDACTED] AAI has said that he was slapped once by Sister [REDACTED] IAG. I have no knowledge of this.

135. I have been told that it has been said that Sister [IAG] gave out "hidings" and the nuns hit children with implements rather than their hands. I have never heard anything about that.

136. I have been told that it has been said that Sister [IAG] slammed a football into [AAF] face, hitting his head off a wall and making him bleed. I can't comment on this as I wasn't there at the same time as Sister [IAG] I have never heard anything about that.

Sister [IAC]

137. I have been asked about a Sister [IAC] I don't remember a Sister [IAC] The year I was at St Vincent's there were only the three sisters involved with the children whom I have already mentioned.

138. I have been told that [AAI] has said that Sister [IAC] was really violent, and she used to kick the children with her pointy nun shoes; that she dropped and kicked a two year old child called [] and that she whacked [AAI] on the head with the boiler house key. This is not something I can comment on. A Sister [IAC] was not there at the same time as I was there. I have no knowledge of this.

Sister [AFB]

139. I have been asked about two nuns both called Sister [AFB] I don't think we had a Sister [AFB] I did not know a Sister [AFB] at St Vincent's.

140. I have been told that [AAI] has said that one Sister [AFB] ripped a girl's ear half off; and another Sister [AFB] held him off the floor with a butter knife to his neck for talking in the queue. I don't know about this. It was a family group home and queues would not be normal in such a home.

Sister AHQ

141. I have been told that it has been said that Sister AHQ hit a child on the toe with a garden hoe. I don't remember all the names, but if the name was mentioned to me, I would remember. There was no one of that name there at St Vincent's. I have also been asked whether anyone called Sister [REDACTED] was there. I do not remember a Sister [REDACTED] being there either. I have no knowledge of this.

IAF [REDACTED] IAD [REDACTED] and IAE [REDACTED] volunteers

142. I have been asked about [REDACTED] called IAF. I don't remember anyone of that name or a gardener. I had nothing to do with the gardens.

143. I have been asked about volunteers called IAD and IAE. I don't know if there were volunteers. There could have been young men there who were preparing for the priesthood. They came once a week to do pastoral work and engage with children in Catholic care. I don't know. The names do not mean anything to me. Young men preparing for the priesthood did not come during the time I was at St Vincent's, as I remember.

144. I have been told that it has been said that children were sexually abused by these people and an unnamed female staff member. I have never heard of this.

Bernard Traynor – a trainee priest

145. I have been asked about a trainee priest called Bernard Traynor. I did know Bernard, but not in relation to St Vincent's. St Vincent's did have student priests who came once a week or maybe once a month. It was a pilot scheme to introduce men into child care so the children would have male and female role models. It would also have broadened the student priests' experience of pastoral care. They were formally introduced to provide that experience, and they were supervised by the Sister in charge of the group. However, that pilot scheme had not yet begun at St Vincent's whilst I was there, as I remember.

146. I have been told that it has been said that Bernard Traynor sexually abused children at St Vincent's. I know nothing about this. He was just one of a group of students that I knew.

147. 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 as true as I perceived them from my memory of fifty-six years and forty-four years ago.

EAE

Signed.....

Dated *November 6th 2017*.....



