

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

ELH

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is ELH. My date of birth is 1959. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was put into foster care at a young age and I don't know where we lived before that. My mother's name was and I don't know the name of my father. I have a younger sister called I have an older brother called and I don't know where he is and I've never met him. I understand he was taken away from my mother too. I also have an older sister called I didn't know her when I was a little girl. She was taken away as a child by our grandparents and lived with them. I met her later on in life, but we have no relationship.
3. I have a memory of being taken away in a big, black car. I was greeting for ages to be taken off my mother. I was only aged three at this time. It was just me who was taken away in the car, but my younger sister came to live in the same foster home later on. I don't know who was in the car with me, but they must have been from the local authority. I was taken to John Street in Glasgow. I vaguely remember being there and I was crying for my mother.
4. I learned as an adult, from my records, that I was taken away from my mother because where we lived wasn't clean. She was warned about it once or twice before I was taken off her. I think there was a social worker involved with my mum when I was very young.

My records state that I was taken away from [REDACTED] in Glasgow. Then [REDACTED] was taken off my mum later on. I think I first got put into a hospital because I had the chicken pox. Somebody told me that afterwards. I don't remember anyone explaining to me at the time what was happening. I vaguely remember greeting all the time.

5. After that I was put into a children's home but I don't know anything about it. I wasn't in there for long. What I do know I've learned from my records. I don't have any memories of being there. I don't know how long I was in the first place. The next place I went to was the foster home and I believe the family I lived with were Catholic and my care was organised through the church.

Foster care with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Glasgow and at [REDACTED] Glasgow

6. The names of my foster parents were [REDACTED] They had a son called [REDACTED] and he was aged twelve. I'm not sure if I was still aged three when I went to live with [REDACTED] or if I was a wee bit older. I think I had already started school when I went there, but I don't know.
7. Their property was a bottom flat. Sometimes it was clean and sometimes it wasn't clean. There were two bedrooms. There was a few foster kids that came after me and [REDACTED] There was [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] went to [REDACTED] with me and she was only six months old when she went. I think she had been in the children's home with me before [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were babies. I don't know how long I lived there before the three foster babies arrived. I think they stayed for a long time with [REDACTED].
8. I don't know where everybody slept. [REDACTED] had their own bedroom and the other children were in the second bedroom. I don't have memories of the bedroom. I have memories of the living room. I was afraid of spiders. I took unwell with the whooping cough and I remember [REDACTED] put spiders on me.

9. Mr **ENK** worked as an ambulance driver. I don't know how old they both were. They asked me to call them **ENJ** and **ENK**. No one said anything about how long I would live in their flat.
10. When I was about seven **ENJ-ENK** moved to **ENJ-ENK**

Routine at **ENJ-ENK, **ENJ-ENK**, Glasgow**

First day

11. I don't have any memories of arriving at **ENJ-ENK** flat. I don't know if they made any efforts to settle me into their home.

Mornings and bedtime

12. I don't know if I had my own bed in **ENJ-ENK**. When I got up I had to look after the other kids. **ENJ-ENK** were out all the time and they'd leave the kids. I looked after the other kids when I was five or six and got them ready for the day.
13. I have no memory of being put to bed myself at night. It was a nightmare at night time as I'd be kept wakened up by **ENJ-ENK**. Mostly that was myself they did that to, but sometimes the others too.

Mealtimes / Food

14. If I didn't have a breakfast on for their own son **ETE** I'd get leathered. I had to make him sausages or toast. I had to make him something before he got out of bed. I missed his breakfast once and got a tanking for it. Mrs **ENJ** did that. She beat me up with a belt.

15. I got nothing for my breakfast. We weren't allowed to touch anything in the cupboards. I don't know what the other kids got. We were too scared to touch anything in the kitchen. I didn't get any snacks or treats to eat.
16. I don't remember the evening meal. I don't remember eating at [ENJ-ENK] I have no memories of being fed. I had to steal food out of shops. I was caught and I got a tanking for it from [ENJ-ENK]. They found out because the police got me at the door of the shop. Then they took me back to [ENJ-ENK]. I was too scared to tell them why I was doing it. This happened more than once. I don't think school teachers ever noticed I was underweight.

Washing / bathing

17. I had to bath the younger kids in the sink. I was doing my best to do things and I was only small. I wasn't allowed to have a bath myself. I don't know how I washed myself. We weren't allowed things like toothbrushes and tooth paste.

Clothing / uniform

18. I think the local authority gave [ENJ-ENK] money for them to buy stuff for us. I can't remember the clothes that we had. I don't remember getting taken to choose clothes or shoes.

School

19. I went to St Paul's school in Whiteinch. That was a primary school. It's likely I went straight into Primary 1 at this school when I moved in with [ENJ-ENK]. I think I wore a uniform for school. I think the social workers bought it. I had to walk myself round the corner to get to school.
20. [ETE] was at a different school from myself. He was at a secondary school, St Thomas Aquinas.

21. I can't remember if I had lunch at school. I walked back home after school. I came home in the middle of the day once and [ENJ-ENK] didn't like something I did so Mrs [ENJ] cut off all my long hair and sent me back to school the same day. She did it out of badness so the other kids would make fun of me.
22. I was kept off school all the time and fell back with a lot of things at school. When I was at school I would fall asleep with my head on the desk because [ENJ-ENK] were keeping me awake at night. No teacher asked me why I did that or why I was off school. There was no extra help for me. The teachers would favour the bright kids.
23. I fell so far behind that I went to a special needs primary school in Drumchapel. I don't know the name. I got taken there on a bus. One time I was taken home and someone came with me to chap the door for [ENJ-ENK] and nobody was in. I was left standing there. I don't know how long I was standing waiting for [ENJ-ENK] I just know I was left there.

Religion

24. [ENJ-ENK] went to chapel all the time. They were at St Paul's. I didn't go to chapel. I went to a Catholic school and I think I made my first communion there. I remember I wore a dress and I think [ENJ-ENK] provided it. It wasn't a nice memory and they didn't make a fuss of me.

Work/chores

25. I cleaned the fireplace out in the morning before school. After school I came home to tidy the house and look after the wee ones and get them ready for bed. I had to change their nappies and their clothes. I think Mrs [ENJ] was in the house when I came home from school. There was an old black iron and I had to iron the kids' clothes.
26. I did chores round the house at weekend as well.

27. The younger kids in the foster home weren't at school. I don't know if anyone was with them during the day if I was at school. Maybe Mrs ENJ was with them, but I don't know. I was left to look after the lot of them. I remember my sister told me years later that I got the brunt of everything.

Trips / Holidays

28. I wasn't taken on any trips anywhere or on a holiday. I don't think ENJ-ENK went on holiday themselves. I think ETE got to go out to places like the cinema and he got pocket money.

Leisure time

29. After school I had chores to do. There weren't any toys to play with or any books and comics to read. I didn't go to any clubs after school like Brownies.
30. They had a telly and I was sometimes able to watch it. I could put the telly on for the kids when they were out. When ENJ-ENK were coming back in we'd switch it off. If it was left on, hell would break out. That was the sort of time when physical punishment would happen to me.
31. The weekends were terrible. She would lie in her bed all day as well as Mr ENK and their son. I'd have to look after the kids as well as ENJ-ENK.

Personal possessions

32. I didn't get any pocket money. I don't remember having any personal possessions.

Birthdays and Christmas

33. There was no celebration of my birthday and I didn't even know when it was until I left. That was the case for the other foster children too. ETE had a birthday that was celebrated. They made a fuss of him and gave him a cake and presents. If we were

given things, like books, by other people in [ENJ-ENK] family, Mrs [ENJ] would take them off us and give them away. That happened to me when I was about seven or eight.

34. I don't remember Christmas with [ENJ-ENK] or the flat having any decorations

Visits / Inspections

35. When social workers were coming we were told to keep our mouth shut. I used to hear Mrs [ENJ] saying don't mark them in case the social workers see it. The social workers came in and never said a thing to me.
36. I didn't have any visits apart from the social workers and I didn't have any contact with my own mother.

Healthcare

37. I didn't have any dental care. I remember our doctor was in Partick, Dr McKimmins, or something like that, and they'd make sure we didn't have any marks. We used to get a medical from him every year and social work organised it. Social work didn't go to the meeting though. Mrs [ENJ] would say to Mr [ENK] you can give them marks after they've been examined. I heard her say that. I don't remember what happened at the medical. I think it was something the social workers asked for.
38. I don't remember being taken to see a doctor regularly or if I was unwell.

Bed Wetting

39. I don't have any memories of myself or the other children wetting the bed.

Discipline

40. Physical punishment happened to the other foster children as they got older. They were coming up to toddler age, but still babies.

Abuse at [REDACTED]

41. Mr [ENK] broke my leg and there was nothing done about it. He flung me. It happened in the hall at [REDACTED] I don't know why he did it, maybe I was naughty. I was in a lot of pain. I had a plaster cast on my leg for a wee while so I was taken to hospital at some stage. When Mr [ENK] did that Mrs [ENJ] was around so she saw what happened. When I went to Oakbank Hospital nobody asked me what had happened. I was aged five or six, maybe seven when it happened. Nobody at my school, St Paul's, asked me what had happened.
42. Mrs [ENJ] stabbed a pencil into my forehead. I have scar now. I was maybe seven or eight when she did that. I don't know what the lead up to that was. I didn't get any medical attention. There was a cut on my head. None of the school teachers asked me about it. I misbehaved at school all the time.
43. [ENJ-ENK] used to keep me off school if I had bruises on my body. I fell behind with school work. I can't write to this day. Social workers told me years later that when they took me from my mother I was a normal child, but [ENJ-ENK] kept me off school because of the bruises. I missed a lot of school as I often had bruises. They used belts too and they used them on all of the kids and that was both [ENJ-ENK] who did that. That was their kind of discipline.
44. A bone in my nose was broken. I was born with [REDACTED] and had [REDACTED], but my nose wasn't as bad as it is now. The bone was broken in my nose. Mr [ENK] used to punch me in the face. I don't want to go into the details.
45. Another time, my finger was broken and they didn't take me for treatment. They used to pull our hands and fingers back. I don't know if that was punishment for something, I think it was done out of cruelty.

46. Sometimes they'd take it into their heads to make us stand for a long time on a pouffe and make us stand there in a corner all night with our hands behind our back and wakened. If you tried to sleep you'd get a leathering for it. They did it to all of us, but me mostly. They decided when we could go to sleep. They'd punch us to stay awake. We were kept awake in the living room, not in the bedroom.
47. Mrs ^{ENJ} had a dancing school with her sister. I don't know if she was a teacher. I think they put me in front of people with a stookie on my broken leg and nobody questioned it.
48. I used to get it flung into my face that my mother was a whore or a cow, your mother was this, your mother was that. I found out years later that she wasn't. My life was this and my mother was that. I was told I was just a foster kid. This sort of thing was said to me by both of ^{ENJ-ENK} all the time.
49. My sister told me about being abused later on and I was surprised as I thought it was only me it happened to.

Reporting of abuse at

50. I think the cruelty people came to the flat at one time, but nothing was done. I think it was when my leg was broken. It wasn't just for hitting me, it was for hitting all the kids. A neighbour had complained. They must have heard us screaming when we were getting hurt or we were left on our own. I must have heard ^{ENJ-ENK} saying it was the neighbour that complained.

Foster care with ^{ENJ-ENK} at Glasgow

51. The worst of it came at because I was getting older. I was aged about seven when we moved. They moved because they needed a bigger house. It was an

up and down house and there were bedrooms up the stair. There was a wee cupboard bedroom, two bigger bedrooms, a kitchen down the stairs, a living room. I shared a bedroom with [REDACTED]

Routine at [REDACTED]

52. I still had to look after the other kids and make sure they went to school like I did when we lived in Whiteinch. They were old enough to be at school by this time. The day to day routine was like it had been in [REDACTED] and I was doing a lot of chores.
53. All the kids staying with [REDACTED] got abused. At [REDACTED] Mr [REDACTED] used to hold the kids up by the hair and their pigtails on the back of their head. It was horrible. The [REDACTED] still had the foster kids called [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and my sister [REDACTED]. All of us were long term foster kids. The [REDACTED] treated [REDACTED] differently from the others. I don't know why. They never touched him.

Food/mealtimes

54. I didn't get much food to eat at [REDACTED] and that was still happening at [REDACTED]. I was stealing food from shops when I was at [REDACTED]. It happened a few times. I still had to prepare food for [REDACTED] at [REDACTED]. I don't remember much about mealtimes at [REDACTED]. I have a memory of [REDACTED] eating but not me. We got something but it wasn't like what [REDACTED] were eating. I'd be doing the dishes.

Clothing/uniform

55. I was becoming a teenager when I was at [REDACTED] but I wasn't allowed to choose my own clothes. My friend from school [REDACTED] gave me some clothes.

Washing and bathing

56. I can't remember what the arrangements were for bathing and washing. I still had to bath the younger ones.

Chores

57. I had to clean out the coal fire. Nobody had washing machines and I had to hand wash all the kids' clothes and hang them out in the back.

Religion

58. ENJ-ENK continued to go to chapel, but I didn't go. I think I did my confirmation but I don't remember much about that.

School

59. I changed schools when we moved to [REDACTED]. I forget the name of the school I was going to next. I wasn't there often enough. I never went to school. I was kept off because of the marks on me. I was kept off school so much and had fallen behind, I ended up being sent to [REDACTED] at the age of twelve. It was a special needs school. Before that I never got any extra help at school. This school was two bus rides away for me. I was still kept off school by ENJ-ENK but would go if I had the chance.
60. I had a good friend at school called [REDACTED] and I went about with her all the time. I used to walk home very slowly as I didn't want to go home. I went to [REDACTED]'s house in Maryhill and her parents were good to me and gave me some dinner. I used to go home late as I didn't want to go home. I'd get beaten when I got home late. That was when I got a bit older.

Christmas and birthdays

61. I don't have any memories of Christmas at [REDACTED]. The same with my birthday. I didn't even know when my birthday was.

Visits/inspections

62. Social workers came and never picked up on anything going wrong, apart from one. I was older then at fourteen. I used to pray social work could tell by my face I was being hurt. I wanted Social Work to take me away. I was threatened into silence. I was too scared to disclose the abuse. With my own grand-kids I can tell by looking at their face if there's anything wrong with them. Social workers saw us in the living room where Mrs ENJ was too. We were displayed like dolls. They were never alone with us. They would talk to Mrs ENJ and watch us.
63. I was hoping they'd be able to tell there was something wrong with us. I couldn't open my mouth as I was threatened with Beechwood and didn't want to be put away there. We would all be quiet when the social worker came and they would see us all together. I don't know how often they came, but maybe once or twice a year. Different social workers came each time. I can't remember any of their names. I was kept off school all the time and that was never discussed.
64. I think the social workers offered to take us out and ENJ-ENK were afraid we'd open our mouths and told me to say no. It was mostly Mrs ENJ who said that. There was nothing done when the social workers came out. ENJ-ENK made sure there was no belt marks on us when the social workers were coming. ENJ-ENK seemed to know when social work were coming out to see us and I think they got a letter.
65. I didn't have any visits apart from social work.

Healthcare

66. I don't remember getting annual health checks at [REDACTED] and that was mostly at Whiteinch. I didn't get taken to the dentist. I went myself with my friend [REDACTED] in Maryhill to get my teeth checked when I was older. I think I was about fifteen or sixteen by that stage. Some of my teeth had to come out and I'd not had a tooth brush when I lived with the ENJ-ENK [REDACTED]

67. When my periods started nothing was ever spoken about it and I didn't know what was happening to me. We were told about it at school. Me and my sister were called 'cows' and told we were just like our mother when that started. I didn't have access to sanitary products and had to use toilet roll.

Running away

68. I ran away quite a lot from [REDACTED]. I used to get beatings. I used to have to jump out of the windows to get away from it all. The police would bring me back and tell me off and say not to do it again. They didn't ask why I was running away. I was too afraid to tell them anything as I wouldn't get believed in those days. I started running away when I was fourteen. I ran away three or four times. I would sleep up closes and coal bunkers and stay away overnight.

Personal possessions

69. I never got pocket money at [REDACTED] and had no possessions. I wasn't able to go out to places like the cinema or to swimming baths.

Abuse at [REDACTED] Glasgow

70. Mrs [ENJ] used to get her brother to watch us and abuse happened in the living room. Her brother sexually abused me. I don't want to go into any details. It happened every time he came to the house. I can't say how often he came to the house. I was only aged seven and eight and it continued until I left the house at fourteen. I never told any social workers about it. Her brother's name was [ENL] and I have no idea how old he was at the time. I think Mrs [ENJ] knew what her brother was doing. Something tells me that was the case. Years later my sister told me that Mr [ENK] sexually abused her.

71. The ENJ-ENK son ETE sexually abused me as well. That happened in [REDACTED] I was about ten or eleven. It happened once or twice. When he did these things ENJ [REDACTED] was out of the house. I prefer not to give any details. He was twelve years older than me. He was in his early twenties and living in the family home in [REDACTED]. I don't know if he did these things to any of the other children.
72. The sexual, physical, emotional and psychological abuse took place daily and didn't stop until I ran away.

Leaving foster care with the ENJ-ENK [REDACTED]

73. I left ENJ-ENK [REDACTED] when I was fourteen. There were belt marks on me on my back and arms and legs, and I showed them to staff at [REDACTED] school and they phoned social workers and they saw the marks. They took me to the Burgh Hall in Partick. Burgh Hall was the building where all the social workers were.
74. They took me away to a children's home in Castlemilk. That was a female social worker with black hair and she took me in a car to the home. I told the social worker that ENJ-ENK [REDACTED] had caused the belt marks, but nothing was done about what the ENJ-ENK [REDACTED] had done to me. No action was taken.
75. When I left ENJ-ENK [REDACTED] I didn't have any personal possessions. I never ever had anything of my own.
76. I got told years down the line by another social worker that the one I knew at fourteen had an idea there was something wrong with me and wanted to pull me aside to take out of ENJ-ENK [REDACTED] flat. I did tell her years later. I don't remember her name. She came from the Burgh Hall office.

Life after being in foster care

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

77.

78.

79. I think I was in another home after Castlemilk and it was near to the Southern General hospital. I'm not sure of any details. It was a short stay. It was ok. I don't have many memories of it. There were young children and babies staying there.
80. Then I went to stay with [REDACTED] and her family for about a year. I don't remember social work coming to check that address was ok for me to stay in. I think the family phoned the children's home to tell them where I was as they had contacted the police. I was happy staying with [REDACTED]
81. Then I went back to stay with [REDACTED] ENJ-ENK. I was so mixed up and confused when I was about fifteen. My head was that wasted. It was the only place I had to go. They were ok with me for a wee while and then they started to lift their hands to me. Social workers were not aware I'd gone back to stay with [REDACTED] ENJ-ENK. I don't think I was there for more than a month and I was away again. My sister [REDACTED] was still living with [REDACTED] ENJ-ENK. [REDACTED] ENJ-ENK didn't get charged with anything after the belt marks were found on me and they still had the other foster kids when I left them.
82. I left school when I was fifteen or sixteen and I worked full time in a bakery in Whiteinch and that was the first time I had money. Then I was able to buy clothes and things for myself and go out places.

83. I stayed with Mrs [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] Glasgow for three or four years. She was a lady that I worked with in the bakery and she had a spare room. It was a happy time for me. Mrs [REDACTED] was lovely and kind to me and I didn't know how to take that as it was the first time I'd experienced kindness. I was with her when I realised when my birthday is as it was never celebrated with [REDACTED] ENJ-ENK.
84. I was still under the care of social work and they said I could stay there. I had a male social worker who came out to see me at Mrs [REDACTED]'s house. She wasn't receiving any payments for social work as I had a job at the bakers by then. I think a social worker came out to see how I was until I turned eighteen. I was told in advance that they would stop being involved with me when I turned eighteen. I didn't get any support at all after that.
85. I had a baby boy of my own, my son [REDACTED] when I was nineteen and he's forty now. [REDACTED]'s dad wasn't involved in his life. I went into my own home that had just bare floor boards. I didn't have anything of my own. That was very hard. Other people, like the people from my work, had to give me things for the new home. I lived like that for the next three years. I was able to work at the bakery when [REDACTED] was in nursery but then I left my work.
86. [REDACTED] ENJ-ENK looked after [REDACTED] when he was about three or four but they hurt him as well. I was all mixed up and my new partner [REDACTED] couldn't take to him as [REDACTED] wasn't his son. I wanted to get him back and [REDACTED] ENJ-ENK wouldn't give him back. They wouldn't even let me see him. That was a few months later. I went to the social work office at Partick, Burgh Hall and explained what had happened. The social worker who dealt with me as a kid went and lifted him back and she said to me never let them look after your kid again.
87. [REDACTED] came back to me calling me names. My boy told me when he was a bit older that they used to hit him with a belt. That was the only involvement social work had with my boys.

88. The ENJ-ENK wanted to foster a wee girl and I got a phone call, I think they got my number from my sister [REDACTED] from Mrs ENJ to tell me to take my story back and tell the social workers nothing had happened to me with them. I wouldn't do that. I didn't want another kid to go through what I did. They wanted to foster a wee girl for their son's daughter to play with and the social work said no because of the marks found on me. I believe this was around thirty-eight years ago because of the age of my son. I'm so relieved that the social worker told them they couldn't do it because of the bruises found on me.
89. I met my long term partner after [REDACTED] was born and after that and we had three sons together, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. The relationship was on and off for a long period and there were issues with his drinking and we separated and he was involved in their lives. When he was aged about two and three [REDACTED] paternal grandparents favoured him as their first grandson and they took him to live with them. I was so mixed up that I let it happen. I link that back to my experiences as a child. I wasn't able to argue and fight against them and just let [REDACTED] go. I didn't want any conflict.
90. After I had my second son I remember my sister [REDACTED] phoning me and I think Mrs ENJ had found out about what her brother had done and Mr ENK gave her a black eye. They put [REDACTED] out of the house and she ended up going to a hostel up the town. She said the money that they got from social work to keep her had finished. [REDACTED] had turned sixteen.
91. I don't know what happened to [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I hope that kids like that would be removed from the home now after what happened to me. I know that [REDACTED] ended up in jail later on and [REDACTED] told me that. That will have been because of how ENJ-ENK treated him. I don't know anything about the others.

Impact

92. When I had my own children it took me a long time to be able to cuddle them. I didn't have any affection when I was fostered by ENJ-ENK and I didn't know how to show

it myself. I had no role models. I needed other people to help me. I used to walk up to people and accuse them of talking about me and start screaming, but nobody was talking about me. One day, I was afraid my own kids would be taken off me. I was frightened all my young life that if I opened my mouth and reported [ENJ-ENK] I'd get put into Beechwood and I don't even know what that was, but it was always their threat.

93. I had to get help. It's only in the last fifteen or twenty years that I've begun to calm down. If anybody would come near me I would get very anxious. I've had to get counselling all of my life. I didn't know how to interact with people. I wasn't used to mixing with other people as I was kept in the house all the time as a child.
94. I was always depressed and I am on anti-depressants to this day. I didn't tell any of my doctors about my experiences in care. I have only ever shared my experiences with a support worker Nusrat and we have known each other for ten years now. She is from Family Support Service which is a social work resource. I had so many barriers up that I don't know how Nusrat got the story out of me. I think her service started working with me around thirteen or fourteen years ago when my GP referred me and I was looking for my social work records. The first support worker left and then Nusrat came along and both were working with me on issues with mis-trust of services, anxiety and flashbacks and nightmares. I didn't share my experiences with the first support worker, so Nusrat is the first one I opened up to. We continue to speak on the phone now.
95. I couldn't mix with people and accused people of talking about me and shout at them. I didn't trust other people and would fall out with them and start arguments with them. My experiences affected my self-esteem and I was afraid [ENJ-ENK] would come after me. I blocked out my memories, but I have flashbacks of my time with [ENJ-ENK] if there is a trigger like seeing a man with glasses who looks like Mr [ENK] If I see someone who looks like him I have to turn my head the other way. I have nightmares about my experiences and I still have to sleep with a light on at night as that's when things happened.

96. I've never spoken to my boys about my experiences with [ENJ-ENK]. They know I grew up in care and my oldest has told me recently he could tell that something was wrong with my background. I have a good relationship with my sons and I'm close to my seven grandchildren.
97. I continue to get telephone counselling now and that is with regard to the loss of my second son [REDACTED] who died twelve years ago. We speak about [REDACTED] and his death but not about my experiences in care.
98. Regarding my birth family, I think my mother fought to get me back for years, but I didn't know that until I saw my records. Social work didn't allow her to see me. My son [REDACTED] has met the family but I didn't want to. I never knew where my mother's grave was. I found out that she stayed in Partick not far from where I was fostered out. I never saw her after I left [ENJ-ENK]. I regret that now. I didn't see my brother and sisters either. I saw my older sister [REDACTED] years later but she didn't want to know any of us.
99. To this day I can't write and I need other people to help me write letters. That was because I was kept off school. It's affected my ability to get work too.
100. I grew up not knowing who I was or who I belonged to or who I came from. When I was getting married I contacted a chapel to get my baptism certificate and the priest told me on the phone that he knew my mother very well and I told him I didn't know her and I asked to see him when I went to the chapel in person. When I went there I saw someone different and she didn't want to chat to me at the door so I never found out anything more.

Reporting of Abuse

101. I've never reported what happened to me to the police. [ENJ-ENK] will be dead now, but their son might be alive. I'm not scared to talk to the police, but I don't want them coming to my door.

Records

102. I wanted to see my social work records and that was when I first encountered Nusrat's service. At first it was because I wanted to find out where my mother's grave is. I went to the social work department in town to ask about my records. They could find them and tell me about them, but we weren't allowed to see them. I don't have copies of any of them.

Lessons to be Learned

103. Social workers should let the kids in care see their parents. Social workers need to look for the signs of abuse in the children's faces. See if there is a sign there that they are trying to tell you. Look at how the children are acting around adults in the home. Visit more often and ask why the kids are not in school. Be firmer about seeing the children alone and not with the foster parents. Nobody picked up on the signs and indicators for me like running away, broken nose and finger, starved, went to school with belt marks, no action was taken by Social Work. The Health Visitor asked about my nose, which had been broken, but didn't do anything about it.
104. The school should have been firmer about me being sent to school. I missed so much schooling, but nothing was ever picked up on.
105. We should have been told about our birth families and I should have been told about my siblings and allowed contact. I didn't know anything about my mother other than the lies **ENJ-ENK** were telling me.

Other information

106. I applied with Nusrat's help for criminal injuries compensation through the Legal Services Agency. I wasn't able to speak to the police so there was no crime reference number as I wasn't ready to do it because I was fearful of repercussions. I was turned down and took it to appeal but still didn't get anything. It was a long, difficult process and devastating to have nothing to come out of the appeal. I felt like I wasn't being believed.
107. 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..... ELH

Dated..... 23 11 21