

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

FKZ

Support person present: Yes.

1. My name is FKZ and prefer to be known as FKZ. My date of birth is 1950. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Background

2. When I left school I spent three months working as a miner. I then got a job as an apprentice plasterer and after finishing the apprenticeship I worked for two years plastering. The building trade went dead and I returned to mining. I stayed in the mining industry until the pit eventually closed. I managed to get a job as a builder working for the local authority. I took early retirement and then began working for a charity that was delivering fruit and vegetables to the elderly. This charity was funded by the NHS. At the age of sixty eight I finally retired.

Becoming a Foster Carer

3. I am married to FKX and during the early days of our marriage FKX was unfortunate to have some miscarriages. A later child was born to full term but due to a serious illness he passed away. We were told from the doctors that there was only a one in two hundred chance of conceiving our own child again.
4. We always wanted to have children and as such we considered adoption. Around 1973 or 1974 we started the process and while we were being interviewed the social worker told us that there might be a lengthy period before we might be given a child to adopt. He also pointed out we were young and there was a chance we could have our own child. He then asked us if we had considered being foster parents.

5. We were vetted prior to being taken on as foster parents. The social work came to us on probably two or three occasions, perhaps more, as part of the process. The application process was done through the social work department at Shrubhill, Edinburgh.

Training

6. I presume that as part of the process of becoming a foster parent that the social work would have spoken to any references that we had provided. I think the process would have taken around six months for all their checks to be completed.
7. When we started as foster parents we were probably quite unique as we did not have our own children and had no experience at that time in bringing up children. I think most of the other foster parents at that time had already had their own children first. This would have given them the experience needed to be carers.
8. To become a foster parent we were never given any formal training. The social worker described some of the issues that might arise as foster parents. He covered about the differences we might find with a child that may have suffered from abuse, to a child whose mother may have been in hospital for a short period.
9. I don't think there is anything about raising a child that you could teach from a book. Even when we later had our own children they were totally different from each other. That is the same as the different foster kids we looked after. We learned very quickly about what each child liked and disliked.
10. With regard to any child care qualifications, I have a grand daughter who is employed as a nursery nurse. She has studied and has the relevant qualifications for that role. But in her role she can go home at night and not have to worry about the children she looks after. When you foster children you need to have time to learn what they need and treat every one of them as individuals. You can't learn that from any book.

11. It may be different fostering today from when we started back in the 1970's. I am therefore not sure what improvements have been made or need to be made.
12. Our priority was to provide love and care and to give the child some sort of stability in their life. In those days we generally had to learn from each of the children we looked after and their different experiences as to why they ended up in care. We treated each child we looked after as a member of our own family.

Foster Care Arrangements

13. When we were allocated the different children through our time as carers each of the children would have their own individual social workers. We never saw the social worker who interviewed us again.
14. We never considered that we were employed either by the social work or as a self-employed member of staff. We saw ourselves as providing a service for children in care. In our minds fostering is not a profession but more a vocation. We enjoyed looking after the children and we gave them the same love and care we had with our own children. Throughout our lives we have always tried to help others.
15. If fostering was treated as a job you might lose sight that you were providing help for someone. Any job description could not cover the individual need for each child. If you are in it as a profession then getting the money could be more important than looking after the kids. That is not us.
16. When any request from the social work came in for us to take on any new arrivals we always had a choice to accept or not. If we had no spare room or perhaps about to go on a holiday then we were always in a position to say no.
17. There was never any request of matching particular kids when they came to us. I think it was more that the social work would contact us because they were looking for a placement at short notice, it was usually about twenty four hours. We realised that if

we were only being given that sort of notice then the social work must have very little notice themselves.

18. There was one occasion that we were asked at short notice to take three girls on as their mother was rushed into hospital and we knew that would only be on a short term basis.

Financial Support

19. We received a monthly allowance from the social work but I can't remember how much that was. This was supposed to help the families with any extra cost regarding food, clothes or activities that would be out with our normal outlay. I think it may have been a cheque sent out and paid for by the social work based at Shrubhill, Edinburgh.
20. Any of the money we received was all spent on the kids in our care. We never gave a thought whether it was enough. We were not in it for the money.

Foster Home Household

21. The first house we stayed in was at [REDACTED] Dalkeith. This was a brand new two bedroomed house and we were the first occupants. The living room and kitchen were downstairs with two bedrooms and a bathroom upstairs. At that time my wife and I had one room and the kids shared the second room. FJC [REDACTED] was about ten months old when she came to stay with us here.
22. Because the fostering was organised from the social work headquarters at Shrubhill in Edinburgh this meant that Midlothian Council refused to help with us obtaining a larger house. As a result we had to organise our own swap with another family in the area.
23. We then moved to a larger house at [REDACTED] Dalkeith, where my wife and I stay today. FJC [REDACTED] was about two years old when we moved to this house.

This would have been around 1976. There were three what we called five apartment houses in that cul de sac and we were near the end of the street.

24. On the ground floor we had the living room, kitchen, cloakroom and a bedroom. On the upstairs there were three bedrooms and a bathroom. The cloakroom on the ground floor was just a toilet with a sink in it to wash your hands. That was the toilet that the kids used most times as it was easy access when they were playing outside. There was a lock on the upstairs bathroom to give some privacy but there was none on the downstairs cloakroom. We removed it as it had a dodgy lock and one of the kids had got locked inside. When we moved to this house we had to redecorate throughout as it was really run down.
25. In the downstairs bedroom there was a set of bunk beds, two divans in the smaller of the bedrooms upstairs. In the other upstairs bedroom were two sets of bunk beds. We also kept a "z" bed in a cupboard as an emergency if needed.
26. ██████ was the oldest and he had the downstairs bedroom. He would have been about fourteen or fifteen when we moved to that house. ██████ was in the smaller upstairs room, ██████ FJC ██████ and ██████ were in the other bedroom. As ██████ grew older he moved into the room beside ██████ When ██████ left ██████ moved into that room and ██████ moved into her room. When ██████ left FJC ██████ moved into that room. That left ██████ and ██████ with their own rooms.

Children Fostered

27. The first two kids we fostered were ██████ and ██████ We did not know how long they were going to be with us but it ended up being about six to eight weeks. When the placement ended they were both re-united with their parents. Although after leaving us they did return for a very short period before again going back home.
28. Not long after ██████ and ██████ moved out we were soon asked to look after other children. One set of kids we looked after were two who were in the foster system but their foster parents were going on a holiday and were not taking the kids. We looked

after those two for the two week period and then they went back to the other foster parents.

29. One of the other children we fostered was a girl called [REDACTED] who was about six months old. [REDACTED] was a Down's Syndrome baby and had other medical issues. The staff at the hospital called her [REDACTED] for some reason. Her mother had left her at the hospital and walked away. As a result of her condition and other health issues she was not expected to have a long life expectancy. We looked after her for about two to three months.
30. When we looked after [REDACTED] she was so young it was mainly feeding, changing her nappies and the main priority of providing her love and care.
31. Some years after she had left we received a letter from her mother checking in and wanting to find out how her daughter was getting on. We passed the letter onto the social work. They updated us that she had been in another placement and that when she was about four or five years old she had passed away.
32. There was a girl [REDACTED] that we looked after for a while. She also had a twin brother in care but he did not have anything to do with her. When she stayed with us the social work provided a taxi for her to continue attending [REDACTED] Primary School, which provided help for kids with special needs. She came to us on a transition period from her brother prior to her going to a home. When she left us to go to the home we were worried about her in the new environment. They told us that she settled really well and was running up and down the stairs having fun.
33. ^{FJC} [REDACTED] came to us when she was about ten months old and initially that was when we were still at [REDACTED]. She would have been about two years old when we moved to our current house. I think this was 1976 as it was the same year my daughter [REDACTED] was born. My son [REDACTED] was born two years later.
34. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] initially came to us in 1975 when he was around ten years old and [REDACTED] was two years younger. When we moved to the new house [REDACTED] continued

attending the old primary school as he was in his last year there. This was known as the combined school made up of Mayfield (Protestant) and St Luke's (Catholic). [REDACTED] went to Bryan's primary school. When they went to the secondary it was Newbattle High School.

35. FJC [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were our core three of foster children who we cared for on a long term basis. All the other children we fostered on a short term basis.
36. We did have two brothers who came to stay with us on short term basis. When they came they told us that whenever it came to their birthdays they were placed into care by their parents. They settled quickly as it was natural in their eyes to be in care.
37. We never had any preference as to the length of stay that a child would be with us. We fostered many different children and all for different lengths of stay.

Placement Preparation

38. Whenever a new child arrived with us the social work never gave us a definite date when they may be leaving. When a child arrived we were provided some verbal information by the social worker for the child. We would then be shown a basic information sheet with the child's details and that they were being placed in care with ourselves. We signed this sheet and received a copy for our records. If there was ever a care plan for any of the children we were never told.
39. Whenever a new child was being placed with us we always talked things over with our own children and with the children already being cared by us. We wanted everyone to be included in what was happening in the house.

Daily Routine and Sleeping Arrangements

40. In the morning I would leave the house about 5.40 a.m. to go to work in the pits and the kids would still be in bed at that time. FKX [REDACTED] did a lot of the preparation for breakfast the night before but would be up when I left.

41. I would get home either at 2.00 p.m. if I got a lift in someone's car and if I had to take the work's bus it was around 3.10 p.m.
42. As far as bed wetting was concerned I can only remember it happening when [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] first came to the house. The first night [REDACTED] wet the bed and we put it down to being in a strange place. We just got her cleaned up and changed the sheets. The following night when I was going up the stairs I heard [REDACTED] telling [REDACTED] that it was his turn to wet the bed. I went into the room sat both of them down, but did not let on that I had heard their conversation. When we spoke I told them if someone was having that issue on a regular basis then we would need to put a rubber sheet on the bed. I explained it was to protect the mattress but it was also very uncomfortable to sleep on. I also explained that if we had to spend a lot of time cleaning and changing the sheets then it would mean that we did not have much time to take them out anywhere. I left them with that hint. They were never given any punishment or row but after our talk we never had that issue again.
43. My wife ^{FKX} [REDACTED] would do most of the housework but the kids would take turns in washing and drying the dishes after each meal. They would be asked to keep their rooms tidy. Any other chores that would be needed around the house they would be asked to help ^{FKX} [REDACTED] but they were never forced to help. I did all the cooking in the house and they were not allowed to make meals. They would be able to put bread into the toaster but that would be the limit.
44. My wife ^{FKX} [REDACTED] did all the washing and ironing. She did this either at night or at the weekend. She might have one of the kids get involved in helping her if she was showing them what was needed. There was never any forcing to do any chores.
45. ^{FJC} [REDACTED] has given a statement to the Inquiry and in it she says she was woken early to do Saturday morning chores. She was never involved in being woken early, other than if she was going to the dancing. Her partner's mum was the one that took them to the dancing so she would have to be ready to get picked up. Her competitions were mostly held on Saturdays and rehearsals would be during the week.

Washing and Bathing

46. When we bathed the children, including our own children, we may have bathed a couple at the same time. When they were being bathed it was always girls with girls as you would not have boys and girls in the bath at the same time. There may have been times when FJC [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] may have been bathed together when they were young, but it never included [REDACTED]. When the kids were really young it was my wife that bathed the children. When the kids were older, maybe five or six, they bathed themselves and FKX [REDACTED] would only be there if they needed help in washing their hair.
47. FJC [REDACTED] makes comment in her statement about cold water. That was never an issue as I was a miner and was provided with free coal and we had constant hot water. She also suggests that as a nine year old she was bathed in the sink. That never happened.
48. We never had an electric shower in our house, the best we had was the rubber tube that attached to the taps. Even today I don't have an electric shower it is a gravity fed one.

Clothes and Shoes

49. If any of the children had or received any toys we reinforced that they were in control of those items. If any of the other children wanted to play with those toys then we explained that they would need to ask the child who owned the toy for permission to play with it. That way the child who owned it remained in control of it.
50. We had one child, [REDACTED] who was brought to us straight from the hospital. He had been the subject of abuse having cigarettes burned on his skin. When he arrived with us he had no shoes and just a t-shirt and a pair of shorts. At that time I did not drive and we called a taxi and took him to get some new shoes and clothes. He settled very

quickly with us and after the court case was completed he was returned into the care of his father.

51. If any of the kids were needing new clothes then we would take them to the shops and buy what they needed. They were never given any hand me downs. From the age of six or seven ^{FJC} [REDACTED] wanted the up to date fashion and we would have to take her into Edinburgh to get the clothes she wanted. I have some photographs and it shows that the foster kids were given the same clothes as we bought for our own kids.
52. I would estimate that 90-95% of the children that arrived with us were in need of new clothes. We used the monthly allowance we received to pay for this. When the kids left our care they took the new clothes with them to wherever they moved on to. As far as we were concerned they were that child's clothes. We did get comments from social workers who were surprised we did not have a bank of clothes. We explained that any clothes bought went with the particular child.

Mealtimes

53. As I said I did all the cooking of the meals in the house. As for snacks, in the past and still today, we have a box with biscuits, sweets and crisps. So long as it was not near a meal then ^{FJC} [REDACTED] or any of the other kids and something from the box. It was the same if any of the friends came to the house. They would be able to get something from the box. Sometimes when they had friends round to play then it was not just the snack box, but so long as it was okay with everyone, then they would be offered to have the meal with us. I usually had the tea about 5.00 p.m.

Leisure Time

54. The kids did not get an allowance each as such, but if they needed money for any activity then we paid for it.
55. When it came to swimming I would be the one in the pool as ^{FKX} [REDACTED] did not swim. We took them to different swimming pools throughout Scotland, including

Newtongrange, Water World at Leith, Galashiels and the Commonwealth Pool in Edinburgh. I would teach them to swim. FJC even got to be part of the opening ceremony for the Commonwealth Games held in Edinburgh in 1986.

Trips and Holidays

56. Whenever we as a family were planning to go on a holiday we always included whatever foster child was with us. We tended to offer three different choices for all to choose from. We would then all sit and discuss what was the best for us all. We never went away on holiday without taking the kids with us. I remember some of the places we went to included Great Yarmouth, Morecambe, Butlin's at Skegness, Flamingo Land and we went to Blackpool four or five times. The only time we did not go on a holiday was during the miner's strike.
57. I can remember one trip we had already booked to go to Butlin's which included two foster children. Prior to the holiday the original two children left our care to go back with their mother and were replaced by [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. There was never any other thought than they would take their place on the holiday. They then stayed with us long term.

Schooling

58. If a child arrived with us and they were only going to be with us for a short period, such as two weeks, then the advice was we would not enrol him with the local school. If they were to be placed on a longer term basis then they would be enrolled in the local school, which was the combined school.
59. When the children came home from school we always made sure that if they had any homework then that was completed before we had our evening meal. If they needed help we would do what we could. When it came to exam times FJC and any of the others were given space and privacy for them to study for those exams.

60. When FJC [REDACTED] was going to primary school she decided she wanted to call us mum and dad. She also wanted to be known as FKX-FKZ [REDACTED] in the school. She did not want to be different at the school. The school were always aware she was fostered and that her own name was FJC [REDACTED]. It was the same when she decided later to revert back to her own name. We never had a problem, it was her decision. It was the same when she wanted to use her own name from the age of sixteen. That was her choice.
61. FJC [REDACTED] was a really clever girl and the only subject she ever had any difficulty with was Geography. We bought her a globe for her room that would light up. FJC [REDACTED] was so clever and I would be telling her the only thing stopping her succeeding was herself. When she was growing up she always wanted to be a lawyer.
62. My wife FKX [REDACTED] and I both attended the parent's nights for all the children we looked after. I remember one teacher making a comment that [REDACTED] would not be doing anything when he left school as that teacher felt he was not going to get through any exams. [REDACTED] has never been without work, throughout his whole life.
63. If there was a Xmas concert and it was at night then again we both went. If it was put on during the day then FKX [REDACTED] would go with her sister.
64. The primary school were fully aware of the status of all the foster children we had attending the school. I can only presume that they would have passed all the same information to the secondary school when any of them transferred there. We did not have to register the kids who were transferring and I never checked to see if they were aware.

Healthcare

65. If the kids we were to look after were staying on a long term basis we would need to have them registered with our local doctor. Apart from the normal health checks it was important for any of the children who had any known illnesses. This was particularly important when we looked after [REDACTED]

66. When FJC [REDACTED] or any of the other kids needed to then they would be taken to the doctors or the dentist. When FJC [REDACTED] came to us as a baby she had not had any of her inoculations so we made the appointments at our surgery for her to get them. As it was usually during the day for the appointments, then it would be my wife that would take her.
67. FJC [REDACTED] makes mention in her statement about a cold sore. I can remember that time and I thought it was a result of her habit of sucking her upper lip. We did not use whisky, it would have been a cream such as Zovirax. I don't think she went to the doctor, but then I don't think it needed to see a doctor. I don't know anything about the abscesses she talks about.

Christmas and Birthdays

68. When it came to birthdays and Christmas we would treat the foster kids the same as our own. They would be asked what they are looking for then within reason they got that gift. All the kids had the same value spent on each of them.
69. I remember the tricycle FJC [REDACTED] was talking about in her statement. It was blue coloured with red handlebars and a red bar along the back. I am not sure what happened to it in the end. If it was good enough condition, it would be given to someone who was less fortunate and if it was in bad condition we would have scrapped it. I don't remember her mother and father ever buying her any toys. They did but some clothes or drawing books and pencils.
70. If any of my family were giving birthday presents to any of my children then they also had to include the foster children. I always insisted to get the wider family to accept the foster kids as my own family.

Discipline

71. We were never given any advice on how to discipline any of the children. Our way of dealing with this was if there was a problem we tried to speak with the relevant child and try to find out why they were doing the things that were wrong. The first preference was to talk but if the particular child needed a row then that was done. If that was not working then they may be grounded. There was never anything physical.
72. If there were issues in the household we sat down together and had family discussions and that they were always included in those discussions and the decisions. The kids did have arguments, but that was only natural. The kids who were falling out with each other would be sat down until we were able to resolve their problem.
73. There was one occasion when some money went missing. It was not a great amount but we felt it needed to be dealt with. We spoke with the boy and tried to find out why he had taken the money. We explained to him that if he needed money for something all he had to do was ask. The boy then offered to return the money but we told him to keep it, it was his now. We never had that issue arising again with him.
74. I don't recall many issues with any of the children. Either our own or the foster kids. We never had any parents coming to the door being upset with any of the kids. We also did not have to attend very often at the school for any misbehaviour there. The one time was another [REDACTED] we looked after. We tried to find out why she was playing up and after discussions with the school all seemed to be alright. When she went back to stay with her parents I later found out that her behaviour had gone downhill again. She came back with us for a while and again we got her calmed down again. The social work said they were sending her back to her parents and at that point we said if that was the case we could not have her back. The social work respected that.

Relationship with Foster Children

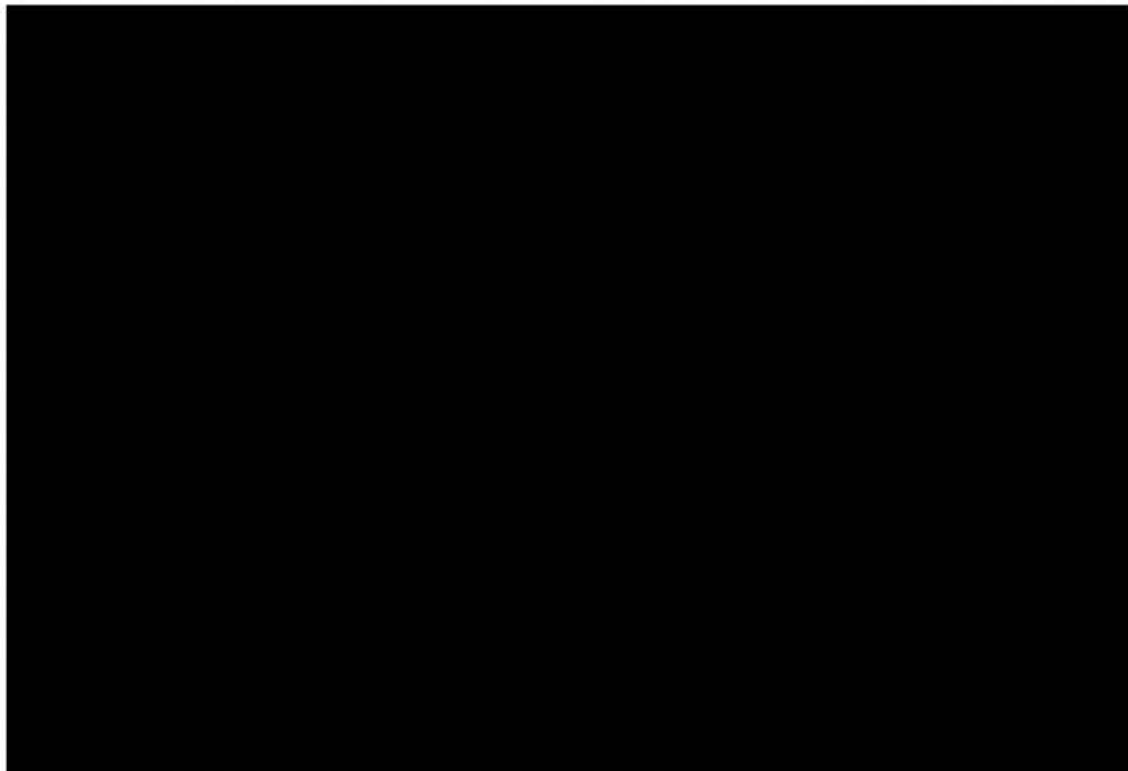
75. I always thought we had a good relationship with all the children we looked after. They were always free to come and tell us anything that was troubling them.

76. There was a time during our relationship with ^{FJC} [REDACTED] that the social work had asked whether we were interested in adopting her. Part of this process was the social work needed to get the agreement of her parents. When they managed to get in touch with her parents and the result was they objected to the adoption.
77. They started contact again and wanted to take her out, but it was only her father that ever came. ^{FJC} [REDACTED] would have been about four or five then. Her father would take her to Cameron Toll Shopping Centre and then bring her back home again. That type of visit went on until she left our home. The only time he was not able to see her was when we were away on holiday with her.
78. We never had any issues with her seeing her parents, but it did have an impact on our day. When ^{FJC} [REDACTED] was with her father we tried to plan to take the other kids out during the same time. Sometimes ^{FJC} [REDACTED] and her dad were back at different times either 5 p.m. or 7 p.m. But if they came back at 3 p.m. it did not leave us much time to plan any day out.

79.

80.

81.



82. Again from her statement she says I called her a "Walking abortion". That never happened, I would not call her anything bad like that [REDACTED]. I am aware that FJC [REDACTED] was told by her mother one day that her father wanted to have her terminated when her mother was pregnant. Her mother told her that her wider family were not even aware that she existed. When she was told that we told her she was loved by us and we would always look after her.
83. I liked to think that I always showed affection to all the kids. I often gave them cuddles as I did with my own children. If any of the kids were upset I would sit them down to talk and put an arm round them to reassure them. I always thought that FJC [REDACTED] got on well with my own children. I have not asked them but it is just the impression I had.

Visitors

84. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]'s father would visit every three weeks or so. He usually came on a Saturday and if it was a nice day they would go out for a little walk. He was an alcoholic but he never drank when he was with them. If he was there near any meal time he would eat with us. He kept those visits up for about six months before he passed away. We always encouraged that sort of contact. The night of her father's death we took [REDACTED] in a taxi so she could visit with him before he passed away. We also took them to the funeral afterwards.
85. FJC [REDACTED] and her parents saw her about once a fortnight when she was a baby. Her parents did not get on with each other. They would stay for maybe an hour to an hour and a half. After about eighteen months maybe two years, they disappeared. We updated the social work about this. Although we moved address in between times we still had the same landline number. After a long period it was obvious they were not interested in her.

Review of Care/placement

86. When it came to the longer term kids the social work would visit every couple of months and check on the kids. If it was any of the short term kids it could be as much as every week or until any update about what was happening to any of the kids. Either way the social work would sit down with the kids and ask if they were still happy to stay with us. They would also ask us the same, whether we were happy having the kids in our home.
87. The visits from the social work would normally take place in the living room. It depended on each social worker as to how long they wanted to stay and speak with the kids. FJC [REDACTED] says that it was me that was orchestrating the visits. That could not be the case as we had so many different short term kids staying and we never knew when the social workers were to visit.
88. With regard to any allegations there has to be a different way to deal with any issues. In our time they did not have anyone other than social workers to speak to. There should be an independent person who they could speak to and any issue that they raised be dealt with right away. This protects the child and would offer protection to the foster carer.

Leaving the Care System

89. When [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] reached the age of sixteen and were no longer under the care of the social work department, they continued to stay with us. They were notified by the social work sending them a letter, just before their time was coming to an end. Her father had died and their aunt could not look after them. Very soon after the care ended [REDACTED] got a job and when he was nineteen he was able to move out and get his own place. This was much the same pattern as what happened with [REDACTED]
90. I still have a lot of contact with [REDACTED] and when he got married we were invited to his wedding and we have the some photos from that day. He still calls us mum and dad and his kids call us gran and grandad. There is also another photograph of us going

to a family wedding and both [REDACTED] and FJC [REDACTED] are in the photographs and another at [REDACTED] son's first birthday.

91. FJC [REDACTED] was in full time education and I am not sure if that was the reason her term was longer and that she never received that letter about her time with the social work coming to an end. The social work gave her a life book and another book which had some monetary value. She too stayed after her time with the social work came to an end.
92. Whenever the short term kid's placement was coming to an end we sit them down and tell them that perhaps their mother was due out of hospital or whatever the circumstances were. We would tell them that they were going back to their own home.
93. Apart from the core three, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and FJC [REDACTED] the longest any of the other kids stayed was about two or three months.

Complaints

94. If we had any issues with any of the children we were looking after our contact would be with the relevant child's own social worker. We would phone that social worker and have a discussion about whatever the issue was. We never had a specific social worker that was our single point of contact, but then we never felt the need for such a contact.

Allegations of Abuse

Awareness of Abuse

95. I am not aware of any abuse either carried out by my wife. Neither am I aware of any abuse carried out by the kids on the other kids in our care.

Reporting of Abuse

96. I would not have known anyone to report any abuse to other than the social worker for each of the children. We did not have an allocated social worker for ourselves. If I had any concerns about any abuse the only people I could think of would have been the staff at Shrubhill, Edinburgh.
97. If any of the children were wanting to report anything I believe they had opportunity to speak with any of the social workers that came to the house. I am not aware of any of the children making any report of abuse carried out by me or my wife.

Allegations of Abuse for which there has been no Criminal Conviction

98. FJC [REDACTED] says she had a job. I have no recollection of her having a paper round. She definitely was not out delivering papers at 5 a.m. The system was such that in those days people either paid for their papers at the newsagents or paid at the door to the delivery person. Any money the delivery boy or girl received was handed to the newsagent. If someone did not pay it was the newsagent who dealt with that and it did not affect the money paid to the delivery boy or girl. Sometimes the boy or girl might be given a tip, which was the only extra they got.
99. FJC [REDACTED] never had to buy anything, including any sanitary towels or the like. There was a cupboard in the bathroom which my wife looked after and she stocked this on a regular basis.
100. FJC [REDACTED] talks about a school outdoor activity. One of the kids we looked after went to Lagganlia. I cannot recall which one it was. I know it wasn't [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]. It had to have been either [REDACTED] or FJC [REDACTED] but knowing [REDACTED] she did not like that sort of thing so it had to have been FJC [REDACTED].
101. We received a letter from the school about the class going on a trip which would last four or five days. You were given the cost for the trip and you were to reply to the letter

with either agreeing or disagreeing. If yes we paid the money. The school would not have been angry with her as they had a reserve fund to cover any kids whose parents did not have enough money to cover the cost.

102. I interpret the comments ^{FJC} [REDACTED] makes in her statement different from how the Inquiry sees it. I see it as she is saying that she had to pay on the day for the trip. That was not the case. We had several weeks to pay for it either as one sum or pay it up. If she did not go on the trip it is because she did not want to go. [REDACTED] went to different countries, including Russia, Finland, Norway and possibly Germany, and we paid for that, which was much more than the £30 they wanted for the trip to Lagganlia.
103. ^{FJC} [REDACTED] enjoyed her ballroom dancing. She did that for around four years. When her love for ballroom ended she took up disco dancing. Each dress for her ballroom dancing had to be specially made and they each cost in the region of £200. We paid for each of them as she grew out of the old one. This was the same for her dancing shoes. I seem to remember we went to Blackpool to get the shoes. The dancing was roughly £12 per week for the classes. I think she was about ten or eleven when she started and finished when she was fifteen. She stopped the ballroom when her partner stopped going, but she continued with her disco dancing. The outfits for that were much less expensive. Finance was never a problem for her or any of the other kids.
104. ^{FJC} [REDACTED] makes mention that on Monday mornings my wife ^{FKX} [REDACTED] would stay in her bed suffering a hangover. We rarely went out on a Sunday night. Saturday was our night out and we would go to the club with some friends and we arranged for a baby sitter. The baby sitter was never a young girl as we knew an older woman that we knew who helped us out. We could not afford to go out every night of the weekend.
105. ^{FJC} [REDACTED] also makes mention of being sent to a bookie. At that time I did not bet much and I never knew anyone who worked at the bookies. We did have a bet each year on the Grand National and we would have the kid's pick their horse and I am not sure but they may have walked down to the bookies on that day with me.

106. She says that we had to get credit from the local food van. There were two vans that operated in Dalkeith at that time and I knew both of them. Neither of the guys would allow credit and we only ever used them as an emergency if we had ran out of something and could not get to the shops before we needed it again. The other thing is that both vans came around our streets about 10 or 11.00 a.m. and FJC would have been at school.
107. I find her statement relating to her time with us to be a complete fabrication. The dates she has given are wrong, but I can forgive that. The only thing near the truth was the remarks about the hairdresser. We did have this guy come to the house to cut the kids hair. He did make a mess of all their hair and we never used him again. He went on to be a famous hairdresser in Manchester. I have a school photograph about that time and even complained about it. I also have other photographs showing that the girls often wore the same patterned and coloured jumpers. That was what they wanted.
108. I remember FJC was clever and she was confident, happy and bright. I did not have to give her any sanctions or punishments. I have never abused FJC FJC

Reporting to Police/Criminal Proceedings

109. I am not aware of any of the children reporting any issue to the police. I am also unaware of any issue being raised by any of the children to staff at the schools they were attending.

Specific Allegations Against you that have been made to the Inquiry

110. FJC has said in her statement "There was one occasion when I received an injury or a bite to my knee which I persevered with for some time and still carry the scar. FKZ decided he knew what was best and instead of going to the doctor he was going to treat it. He came back from his work at the mines with a poultice which he applied to the injury. He heated the poultice on the stove till it was boiling hot and

then ^{FKX} held me down while ^{FKZ} painted it on to me. It was absolute agony. This treatment was repeated many times and I believe it unnecessarily prolonged the infection and pain I suffered. It also left me with avoidable permanent scarring." I have no knowledge whatsoever of that. It didn't happen.

111. In ^{FJC} s statement she also says ^{FKZ} then decided that there was a root of poison in the wound so they again held me down and squeezed the injury until a solid piece of poison about the size of a two pence piece came out of the wound. It was again absolute agony. I was in primary six at the time." No, that did not happen.
112. ^{FJC} goes on to say "I was with my foster parents and my foster father was holding ^{FKZ} who was a small baby, above his head. ^{FKZ} was being held upside down and dangled by his ankles. ^{FKZ} was threatening to drop ^{FKZ} on his head. ^{FKX} was crying and screaming ^{FKZ} don't do it". I was panicking and ran out of the house and into the garden. I ran up the garden to the fence and stood there overwhelmed with fear. I wanted to get away. Although the baby was not injured it did set the tone for the rest of my foster placement." That didn't happen. ^{FKZ} had a heart murmur when he was born. I certainly wouldn't do anything like that. Can I point out she say she was two years old. ^{FKZ} is four years younger than her. Couldn't be him, he wasn't there at that time. That didn't happen. It is a complete and utter story. If she is two ^{FKZ} does not exist. It is an utter fabrication, I can't hold someone who isn't there. Do you understand that? I wouldn't do it with any kid. It's pure stupidity.
113. ^{FJC} then says ^{FKZ} was a miner. He was a heavy drinker and was a very violent man. There were lots of incidents of domestic abuse when he assaulted his wife ^{FKX} " Never. By the way I was never a heavy drinker. Never have been. Two or three pints if I was out on a Saturday night.
114. ^{FJC} goes on to say "You could tell that there was going to be domestic abuse as you could sense it in the air. It usually involved ^{FKZ} being drunk. There were many instances of violence involving ^{FKZ} ^{FKZ} had no boundaries and would punish you and humiliate you at the same time. He wanted to exercise his

control over you." No. Again I am just trying to prove what she is saying is lies. If I went out, it was at night time, usually a Saturday night, unless there was a specific dance. We went out on a Saturday night and I had a couple of pints. By the time I came home all the children were in their bed. So they wouldn't see me anyway. I was never drunk. I had a drink, but I was never a staggering drunk. It never happened. I have never had a drink in the afternoon. Even if I go to a wedding in the afternoon, I would have an Irn Bru. I would wait until night time. I have never drank in the afternoon.

115. FJC [REDACTED] next says *"I recall one incident when I was in Primary four or five when FKZ [REDACTED] came home drunk. He was wearing a pair of steel capped boots. He kicked a glass coffee table and it smashed everywhere."* It didn't happen. As far as the steel toe capped boots I did wear a pair at the pits and they remained at the pit. When we came up out of the pit we took our dirty clothes off and put them in the dirty locker. You went for a shower. You went to your clean locker and changed into your own clean clothes and went home. They were never on my feet in the house and never would be. It just didn't happen.

116. FJC [REDACTED] then says *"FKX-FKZ [REDACTED] warned us not to speak or tell anyone about what was happening at home. I recall on one occasion I confided in a friend and she told her mother and then it spread round until it got back to FKX [REDACTED] and I was punished for that."* I have no knowledge of that. No knowledge whatsoever.

117. FJC [REDACTED] then says *"I was regularly beaten by both FKZ [REDACTED] and FKX [REDACTED] but mostly by him. He would beat us for no apparent reason. I never once saw either of them raise their hands to beat (the child) or (other child) who were their own children."* No, didn't happen.

118. FJC [REDACTED] goes on to say *"On one occasion when I would be nine or ten years old I had come home from school at lunch time. I washed and dried the lunch dishes and accidentally smashed a cup. FKZ [REDACTED] beat me badly and I had to compose myself and return back to school."* I would never be in the house when she came home from school, I would have been at work. The only time I was in the house was during the miner's strike. The likelihood of me being in the house is low as I would be picketing

or at the committee room. Normal everyday life I would not be at home during the day, I would be at work. I have no knowledge of it happening.

119. FJC ██████ then says *"If you sat in his chair in the sitting room and he caught you he would hit you across the back of your head. I think that when I was a bit younger than five or six he would smack you with his hand. I recall him coming in drunk sometimes and taking the tray that his meal was served on and him throwing it up in the air. FKZ ██████ was served his dinner whilst sitting in the chair in the sitting room. He would put the fear of death into us and we would have to clean up the food and hope that he didn't lash out at you. On other occasions FKZ ██████ would pull down my trousers and pants and smack me on my bare backside with his hand, a slipper or sometimes a belt."* I have two photographs of FJC ██████ sitting in that chair. Again I never drank in the afternoon. I did sometimes get my dinner on a tray in my chair but that was because room at the table was getting tight as the kids were growing and there was less room at the table for us all. I would never come home drunk as I never drank in the afternoon. I would be at my work and when I came I would make the dinner. The tray being thrown in the air did not happen. With reference to the cleaning up the food and pulling her trousers down, I never hit any of the kids.
120. FJC ██████ goes on to say *"We would sometimes visit FKX ██████'s parents who lived in nearby Gorebridge. If they visited I would have to go upstairs so they couldn't see the bruises we had got from FKZ ██████ hitting us. Visits were also cancelled if FKX ██████ had sustained visible bruises from assaults by FKZ ██████. This happened regularly."* FJC ██████'s mother and father when they visited they came to see the kids they didn't come to see us. The kids were never sent up the stairs and she never had any bruises. I never hit the kids. It didn't happen. The visits from her mother and father were never scheduled. They might have been in the area for the day and just came to see the kids and have a cup of tea. The only scheduled time would have been at Christmas.
121. FJC ██████ then says *"There was an incident when I didn't finish a meal that I was eating. They put the meal into a bowl and put my hands behind my back. They made me kneel down like a dog and eat my meal out of the bowl. I can't remember if it was*

FKX or FKZ but it was very humiliating. I am not sure how old I was but I guess I would be about eight." Definitely not. I do have a thing about finishing a meal. When I was at school, in my house I was never forced to finish a meal. But when we were at school there was always a woman standing over the top of you stressing you finished. Because that happened to me I made sure I never did that with any of my kids. I told all the kids if you did not like or could not finish the food then just leave it. That never happened. I would never do that to anybody.

122. FJC goes on to say "I remember an incident on Christmas day when I think that I had an argument with (child) and FKZ reacted by grabbing hold of me by the neck and throttling me while pushing me up the bedroom wall. I was completely off the floor. He was choking me and I couldn't breathe. I would be in primary school but I am not sure how old I was. I was sent on an errand to FKX's sisters' house. She lived nearby. I told her what had happened and she consoled me and then sent me back up the road to FKX-FKZ. No one spoke about it." First of all FKX's sister would have been in our house on Christmas day. All the family came to our house for Christmas dinner and I made the dinner. They would all would be in our house until around 8 o'clock. She wouldn't have been sent on an errand. It didn't happen.
123. FJC then says "I only ran away on one occasion. I was in first or second year at high school. I don't know what the lead up to this was but it culminated in FKZ grabbing me by the hair and banging my head repeatedly off the door. I believe that I broke my nose and still have a piece of bone jutting out." No it definitely didn't happen.
124. FJC goes on to say "I ran out of the house and went to the Combined School where I knew my friends would be. I told them what had happened. Not long after FKZ came looking for me. He now had a car and was driving round the streets. He asked my friends if they had seen me but they covered up for me. He told my friends to tell me to get home or else. I felt hopeless as I had nowhere to go and no money. It was cold and dark and I had no choice." No. I certainly can't remember FJC running away.

125. FJC [REDACTED] then states *"I went home expecting to get a real punishment but I think on reflection they were just relieved that I had come home. They sat me down and although they gave me a row, that was all that happened. I had a badly bruised nose and two black eyes from my head being banged off the door."* She says she had two black eyes. I am sure if she went to her friends with two black eyes, they would have told their mother and the inevitable would have happened. It didn't happen. I would also like to say that come the Sunday she would have gone out with her dad, she would still have had the black eyes and he would be asking what had happened. It didn't happen, it just didn't happen.
126. FJC [REDACTED] goes on to say *"[REDACTED] was used as a servant by FKX-FKZ [REDACTED] and she would have to do all the housework."* She did chores as I described earlier but that was all.
127. FJC [REDACTED] then says *"I was about seven or eight when [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] left closely after each other. There was an incident when [REDACTED] and I squabbled and I ended up crying in order to get [REDACTED] into trouble. [REDACTED] had hit me and so FKZ [REDACTED] beat him up. He ran off and took up with his girlfriend who is now his wife. He never came back to FKX-FKZ [REDACTED]. I think that he was in his later teens."* First of all it didn't happen. I have never known [REDACTED] to lift his hand to anybody. In all the time he was in my house, since leaving my house and setting up his own house. That part is complete fabrication. [REDACTED] left when he was about nineteen to move in with his girlfriend who was pregnant or maybe the girl was just born. She got a house and [REDACTED] was moving in with her. He left with our full blessing. We still have contact today and see each other. I go to his house and help him with things and helps me with things. Total fabrication. My recollection is definitely not affected by the passage of time and I cannot think why she said anything these things now. We have photographs showing this.
128. [REDACTED] did get beaten up by a guy connected to his sister, but that was after he left our house. He got a severe beating, which was the only time he was ever beaten.

129. █████ left of her own accord when she was eighteen.
130. █████
█████. I asked if she wanted a job and spoke with the bar steward at the club. She got a job in a club clearing tables. We thought it would be a good chance for her to meet some new people and maybe make some friends. Her best pal moved away to East Lothian. She then got a job working in █████ at Cameron Toll Shopping Centre and was working four days a week.
131. After a couple of months of her working there we said she should make a contribution to the house and that █████ was paying £5 a week. She had a small argument saying we were not getting anything from her wages. She was going out with her dad and we said we would discuss it when she got back. She went out and when she came back she said she was moving out and staying with her dad. She was ranting and went to her room and packed her bags. I spoke to her dad and he was saying sorry that he didn't know what was going on.
132. We told her she was free to go when she wanted and if she wanted to ever come back she would have been welcome. When she left we assumed she was going to be staying with her father. I never really saw her again until some years later. She did turn up to █████'s niece, █████'s funeral. We never spoke to each other
133. When █████ was about twenty five she turned up █████'s work and asked what she thought if she was to turn up at mum and dad's door? █████ said she did not know and she would have to find out herself. She never came.
134. She was never told to leave and when she left she was told that the door was always open to her. If she had turned up six months later she would have been welcoming. That might not be the case today. No way did we ask her to leave.
135. I don't know why she felt the need to go to █████ to see if she would be welcome back. If the second part of her statement is true and that she had nowhere to go then

I wish she had come back. We could have helped her. But I don't know if the second part of her statement is true as the first part is not. I don't even know how she knew where [REDACTED] worked, [REDACTED] was pregnant at the time. She had just turned up out of the blue. I feel so sad and sorry that she had nowhere to turn. I she had turned to us she would have got all the help she needed.

Personal recollection FJC [REDACTED]

136. When we started fostering, we had numerous children come to us for care prior to FJC [REDACTED] moving into our home. When FJC [REDACTED] moved in she was the only child we had at this point, we did not know how long she would be with us as some children could be here for a couple of days, weeks or sometimes months. Never did I think we were going to have FJC [REDACTED] as part of our family for a fantastic eighteen years. As a young child FJC [REDACTED] had no interest in toys, however with continual encouragement and support from us she did overcome this. Her mother and father attended for visits regularly in the early part of FJC [REDACTED] stay with us, however they just stopped visiting or making contact. Her mother was always insistent she kept her name as FJC [REDACTED]
137. The social work department approached us and asked if we would consider adopting FJC [REDACTED] to which we were delighted to be asked and said yes. We started the process with the social work department and during this process they informed us FJC [REDACTED]'s parents wanted to restart the visits and they put the adoption process on hold to see if her parents continued with the visits. Her father would attend regularly and take FJC [REDACTED] out, however her mother never again attended our home.
138. The visits with her father continued until FJC [REDACTED] left with her father when she was eighteen years old. During one of her days out with her father she informed us that her mother informed FJC [REDACTED] that her mother's family were not aware of her existence and that her family initially wanted her mother to abort he rather than have her. We were unsure why she would have said this upsetting information to FJC [REDACTED] however we had long discussions with her to ensure her that she was loved by us as one of our own children.

139. We always had a loving and caring family home for all children within our care and they were all treated equally. We would also welcome all the children's friends into our home or along on family days out. FJC I would regard as our first child of what would become a family unit of five children. FJC was a happy and content girl who was loved and cared for throughout her eighteen years as part of our family. FJC was a bright and intelligent girl who would always do well at school, she would attend the Girl Guides along with ballroom and disco dancing which she was very good at.
140. We would have family meetings in which everyone attended to discuss such things as holidays, chores or any problems/concerns anyone had as we believed communication was key to a happy family. We had many great family holidays to places such as Skegness, Great Yarmouth, Centre Parks, Flamingo Land, Morecambe Bay, Scarborough and the family favourite was Blackpool so we attended there on numerous occasions.
141. I was hurt and upset when I was informed at what FJC was alleging in her statement as I could not understand why she would say these things as they were not my recollection of family life during her eighteen years as part of our family. I regarded her as a daughter, she was a sister to our and When FJC decided to move out of our home I was devastated as we all were as she left a big void in what was a very close and happy family home. We did not expect FJC to leave as there was no warning, she just came home following being out with her father for the day and informed us she was leaving. Her father even apologised to us and thanked us all for all we had done for FJC over the last eighteen years. We were under the impression that she was going to live with her father, but we did inform her that our door would always be open to her.

Lessons to be learned

142. I have been away from foster caring for a number of years and I am not sure what improvements have been made to make comment on what needs to be changed now.

Other information

143. 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 ^{FKZ} 

Dated 17/3/2022