

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

LEU

Support person present: No.

1. My name is LEU I don't have access to my birth certificate, but that is the name on my adoption certificate. My date of birth is 1997. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Background

2. I was born in London. I think it was in Newham. I don't know what my name was when I was born. I went onto a website called ancestry.com and I think that I found my birth certificate there. It only had my mother's maiden name on it, which was I don't know what my birth parents' names were. I don't know who was in my family before I went into care. Through DNA testing, I found out that I was Nigerian and Indian mixed with a little bit of white.
3. I think I was adopted in 2001, so I would have been three or four years old. I don't know whether I stayed with my adoptive family before I was adopted. My earliest memories are of being with them so I have no memory of places I was before adoption.
4. In December 2021, a girl called reached out to me on Instagram. She told me that I lived with her and her family before I was adopted. was about five at the time, so about three years older than me. She knew things that I didn't know. I was quite happy when she reached out because I didn't know anything before she did so. She was telling me some stuff about the way I was, which I thought was nice. She also told me why I was taken from my birth mum, which was quite sad. told me what

the social workers had told her family. They said that my birth mum was addicted to either drugs or alcohol. They said that she was sleeping with a lot of different men. Because of these things that were going on in her life, she used to neglect me. She would lock me in the bathroom and leave me there, sometimes for days. The neighbours heard my cries and called the police. I was then removed from my birth mum's care. That was it, they just took me away.

5. After I was taken away from my birth mum, [REDACTED] told me that I went to stay with her family. [REDACTED] told me that I was around one and a half or two years old. They were fostering me in the London area. I lived with [REDACTED] her mum and dad, her brothers and some other foster children, who were girls. She said that I was quite happy there. [REDACTED] told me that I was hungry all the time. Her mum knew what had happened to me before and they thought that it was a side effect from having been starved. I used to want to eat food every single hour. They had to keep feeding me. [REDACTED] also said that I was quite timid and fragile. I would just listen to everything that her mum said. If the kids got told to stop doing something or sit down, I would do it. I didn't behave badly at all.
6. [REDACTED] told me some memories she had of me living with her family. She said that me, her and another foster girl who was about the same age as us stole make up from [REDACTED]'s mum. We hid behind the kitchen door and put it on. One of us was keeping watch to make sure that nobody was coming. My brother's name is [REDACTED]. He is two years younger than me. He is mixed race Indian, white and something else. He wasn't born when I went to stay with [REDACTED] and her family. I asked [REDACTED] whether he came to live with me when I was with her family, but she said she didn't remember me having any siblings.
7. [REDACTED] said that her parents tried to adopt me but for some reason it wasn't allowed. She mentioned it being something to do with age. I think it was the age of the foster parents. She told me that I got adopted and it was kind of rushed. Her family didn't think it was normal, but I was just taken to Scotland by social workers. [REDACTED] told me that I hadn't met my adoptive mother before I went to Scotland. She said that the social workers took me away from my foster family and I was screaming and crying. That was the last time they ever saw me.

8. I don't understand why I was given to my adoptive family or why it was done in Scotland. As far as I'm aware, my birth family had no connection to Scotland. My adoptive mum was a social worker. I don't understand social work and stuff so I don't know the processes or how it works. Because [REDACTED]'s family said it was rushed and it happened very quickly, I don't know whether it was influenced by my mum being a social worker.

9. Very recently, I learned from my brother, [REDACTED] that Barnardo's were involved in my adoption. I called Barnardo's because I wanted to make a complaint. I didn't expect to get any information because it's taken so long to get any information from Paisley Sheriff Court about my adoption. Someone called Linzi Mathieson did get back to me within three days and she started to tell me everything. Linzi is a practice manager of adoption services at Barnardo's. She mentioned that they didn't approve the adoption but they approved the adopters. LPR [REDACTED] and LPZ [REDACTED] were both originally approved as adopters. They were going to go ahead with the adoption together, but LPR [REDACTED] removed himself from the process. Although he stepped away from the process, he was still in the home when we were adopted. Linzi said that it was the London Borough of Newham that approved the adoption.

10. [REDACTED] told me that he had to be interviewed before the adoption as well, away from LPZ [REDACTED]. He remembered that he got coached because LPZ [REDACTED] told him that he wasn't allowed to say certain things. He also said that she had already been filled with anger and was abusive towards him before the adoption of me and [REDACTED]. I was told by Linzi that I was in foster care with LPZ [REDACTED] and LPR [REDACTED] for six months prior to the adoption. She mentioned that there was a matching process during the foster placement. She said that she couldn't confirm whether that happened in this case because it was so long ago. She advised me to put in a subject access request to Barnardo's and the London Borough of Newham.

11. I'm not sure where [REDACTED] lived before he went to stay with my adoptive mum. She told him that our mum gave birth to him while she was in jail in London. She was arrested or convicted for robbing someone with a knife. [REDACTED] was taken away from our mum straight away. My adoptive mother told me that she wanted to adopt my

younger brother. She wasn't allowed to adopt [REDACTED] unless she adopted me. She said that her boyfriend at the time was okay with taking me, but she wasn't okay with it. In recent months, my aunty, LPZ [REDACTED]'s sister, has told me that LPZ [REDACTED] didn't want to adopt again, but LPR [REDACTED] wanted to adopt another child. They were told that they had to take both of us as we needed to be kept together.

Living with my adoptive family

12. My earliest memories are of living in a house in Giffnock with my adoptive family. I just remember being in a dark room. We would turn the lights off. We had a torch that shone images. I remember doing that with my little brother. That's the earliest memory that I have. At that time, I was living with [REDACTED] and my older adoptive brothers, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. We were all adopted. [REDACTED] is two years older than me and [REDACTED] is about twelve, thirteen years older than me. He was a teenager when I first went to live with my adoptive parents. [REDACTED] is half Jamaican and half white. [REDACTED] is Somalian. My brothers were really nice. We'd fight and stuff, like normal sibling fights, but everyone was nice. I was quite attached to [REDACTED] my oldest brother. I don't know why I was so attached to him.
13. My adoptive mum's name was LPZ [REDACTED] I think her name was actually [REDACTED] LPZ [REDACTED] but she just went by LPZ [REDACTED]. She was from the Birmingham area, but she had been born in the Caribbean. She had a partner at the time, LPR [REDACTED] I think LPZ [REDACTED] would be in her late sixties if she were still alive. I think LPR [REDACTED] was old when I went to live with LPZ [REDACTED] because he was bald. I don't know whether that was to do with aging or whether he was just bald. LPZ [REDACTED] was a social worker for children with behavioural problems. She also worked with people who were in jail. I think the company she worked for was called [REDACTED] I remember it had a blue and yellow logo. She worked in the Glasgow area. LPR [REDACTED] wore a shirt and tie and dressed quite formally. I don't know what his job was, but I think he worked.
14. I went to a nursery near Pollok when I first moved to Scotland. By the time I started school we had moved to Neilston so I started in Primary 1 at Neilston Primary School.

I don't know why, but we moved quite a lot. I went to two different primary schools and three different secondary schools. I moved to Springhill Primary School in Barrhead when I was in Primary 2.

Abuse by LPR

15. My mum's boyfriend, LPR was always with me more than he was with my brothers. He used to take me to the toilet and clean me after I'd done the toilet. He would give me my shower and things. After we showered, there was a way that he would dry my back. He sometimes came into my room. I remember one time when he lay down on the bed. He put me on top of him. I don't know whether I had clothes or pyjamas on. I was lying down flat on top of him. He was moving down. I don't remember after that. I don't know whether I fell asleep. I was between the ages of four to six when that happened. I think it happened when we lived in in Barrhead, close to Neilston. I remember that everybody was at home when it happened, but at the time I didn't think that LPZ was aware of what LPR had done.
16. I can remember one further incident with LPR I don't know how old I was but I was potty training. I had a potty in the hallway. I think I was in his and my mum's room on my potty. He came in and he took down his jeans. He took his penis out. He told me to bite it so I did. I remember that he ejaculated and it went on the floor. He told me to wipe it up and I did. I only remember that because it was really sticky. I don't know whether LPZ was at home when that happened. I don't remember whether there were other incidents involving LPR
17. I don't know how old I was when that happened. I know that I was having accidents because I wet the bed until I was ten or eleven. I may have been past potty training age but still needing to use the potty. Around the age when LPR did that, I remember that I pooped behind the sofa. I would do the toilet anywhere. I don't know why. I got into trouble for it a lot from my mum. She would shout at me and scream at me and hit me. Eventually, I think it stopped. I don't know whether it happened at school, but I do remember I did the toilet behind the sofa at a friend's house. I went to high school with

that boy and he told me that had happened, which reminded me about it. I was really embarrassed.

18. I did tell some friends at school that I had been sexually abused by [LPR]. They were the bad kids at school so they would ask stupid questions. They asked if he raped me and whether I was bleeding when he did things. I couldn't really talk about it anymore. I didn't think [LPZ] was aware that I was sexually abused by [LPR] until I was roundabout the age of thirteen. I heard her say to her other boyfriend, [LPN] "Are you in her bedroom again?" I started to wonder why she said "again".
19. After the incident on the potty, I don't remember seeing [LPR]'s face again. I think he left when I was between the ages of five and seven, but I don't remember him leaving. After [LPR] and my mum split up, my mum would say that they had to adopt me because she wanted my brother. She would say that quite a lot, casually. She just wanted me to know that. She would tell me that [LPR] had adopted me, not her. [LPR] left me with her so I wasn't supposed to be with the rest of the family. I still felt connected to my brothers in my adoptive family, but my mum would say that sort of thing to me throughout my childhood.
20. I remember speaking to someone at school when I was in about Primary 3. I don't know whether or not the person was a social worker. I think there had been a complaint that my mum was leaving us at the sports centre in Barrhead. We would walk there after school until she finished work, then she'd pick us up. I think the head teacher was also concerned that I was dirty and my school uniform was dirty. My mum told me not to say anything to the school and that they should mind their own business. I can't remember any ongoing involvement with social work at that time.
21. My mum did tell me that I was adopted. She told me that I was mixed race Bangladeshi. She would use that in a mocking way. I thought that there was something wrong with Indian people because of the way she said it. My brother's name is [REDACTED] and I remember calling him "[REDACTED] Pakki" as a joke. I didn't mean it in the racist way. I just said it because it rhymed. My mum said that he wasn't a Pakki but that I was a

Pakki because I was Bangladeshi. She didn't speak about my background other than that, but she did tell me that my mother was mentally unstable.

Abuse by LPN

22. My mum got a new partner called LPN when we still lived in LPN LPN LPR seemed a bit more proper and educated than LPN LPN used to wear worn Air Max trainers and he smoked. He spoke in a really neddy way. I can't remember him working at all. LPZ was working with LPN's brother, who was in jail for the murder, rape and robbery of an elderly woman. I think that's how she met LPN I remember hearing that LPZ helped to get LPN's brother out of jail and I think she did that because she was dating LPN When I heard that, I was quite disgusted with her. We went to the house of the man who had been in jail a few times.
23. We were always at LPN's house in the Sighthill area of Glasgow. We were really integrated with his daughters. LPN was about two years older than me and we were close. LPN and LPN were older. LPN didn't live with LPN We would go to their house and they would come to our house. We went on holidays together. My mum paid for his daughters to go to dance classes with me. At Christmas time, she would buy his daughters gifts and they got the same amount of presents that we got.
24. By that time, we were living in Thornliebank. It's quite jumbled because I don't know how many times we moved and which year we moved. We also stayed in Crookston LPN Renfrewshire. LPN stayed over at our house sometimes but he never lived with us. LPN and LPZ stayed together until we moved to LPN LPN I think I was in first year of secondary school. They split up, but he came back again at some point.
25. LPN knew that my mum hated me. He knew that she was hitting me all the time. He used to stick up for me. If my mum said I wasn't getting something, but bought things for his daughters and my brothers, LPN would tell her that she needed to get me things too. He defended me a lot in those kind of situations. My mum would give in to

- what he said and treat me a bit better. I always liked [LPN] I used to ask [] to get her dad to ask my mum if I could go to their house. My mum would send me there.
26. I'd been to [LPN] house a few times and nothing weird happened. One time, he came into his daughter's bedroom and took me out of the bed. I don't know how old I was, but I'm sure it was before I was ten. I was okay with it and didn't think anything bad of it. He took me into the living room and put me on his lap. He started to touch me inside my pyjamas. I remember going back to the bed. I don't remember anything like that happening again in his house.
27. I do remember [LPN] came to our house when we stayed in Crookston. It was night time and I hadn't seen him during the day. [LPN] and my mum were downstairs in the living room. They were being loud so I knew he was there. I don't know what time it was but I remember it was dark. I heard [LPN] coming up the stairs. I shut my eyes and pretended to be asleep. He came into my room and started kissing me. I can still remember the smell of his breath. It was Chinese food mixed with beer. It was disgusting. He was being weird, like he might have been drunk. He started putting his hand down my pyjamas again. He told me not to tell my mum. I didn't say anything. I just lay there until he left. When he left, I shut my eyes tight and tried to get to sleep.
28. The last thing I remember [LPN] doing was when I was thirteen. We were living at [] in Barrhead. [LPN] and my mum had split up by the time we moved to Barrhead, but I don't know whether they had got back together when this happened. It was just me and my little brother in the house by then and we were both asleep. They woke me up again. It was late at night. I could hear [LPN]'s voice. I still hadn't processed in my head that it was him. I heard him coming up the stairs and coming into my room. This time, I said something. I asked him how he had got in the house. I hadn't seen him for a long time. I thought he was there to kidnap me or steal me. I was quite shocked.
29. [LPN] was completely naked. He came in and sat down on my bed. He was touching my face and my lips. I think I asked him why he was there. I heard my mum coming upstairs and asking him if he was in my bedroom again. I was really scared. He left

my room and I heard him punching my mum. I heard her scream. It wasn't until the next day that she reported that he raped her. I think that was what I heard. Because I was in so much shock myself, I couldn't focus on it. I was just thinking about myself. I really thought that he was going to kill me and I was going to die that night.

Reporting of abuse by LPN [REDACTED]

30. The police spoke to me after my mum reported that LPN [REDACTED] had raped her. I think my mum had told them that LPN [REDACTED] might have been sexually abusing me. I wasn't prepared for any of it because my mum had never spoken to me about that. I remember going into the police interview. I was laughing and smiling. I do that when I'm nervous or scared. They didn't know that so I don't think they believed what I was saying. I remember they told me that I had to use words like penis. I didn't want to but they told me that I had to. I think that made me laugh even more because I wasn't comfortable talking that way.
31. I tried to tell them some stuff but I couldn't tell them everything that I wanted to say. I still had to protect my mum. I couldn't tell them about her being abusive or that she asked if he was in my bedroom again. I told them about some of the abuse by LPN [REDACTED] and that was it. I felt like I couldn't talk. I'd never spoken to an adult or anybody about the abuse and it wasn't expected. I can't remember whether there was a social worker there, but I do remember being in a room with recording equipment in it. My mum was in a different room. She didn't speak to me before or after I was interviewed by the police. We lived in silence. I don't remember being updated about anything after I spoke to the police. I think my mum might have known stuff about the investigation, but she didn't tell me about it. I was never offered any counselling or any other kind of support after disclosing the sexual abuse.
32. About a year down the line, my mum and I got into an argument about what had happened. I was getting older and I wasn't as scared of her anymore. I remember shouting at her that her boyfriend had done this to me and she didn't even care. She screamed back at me that I was a liar and that it wasn't true. That was the first time I'd

ever said to my mum in words that this had happened. I'd never told her about it before she reported it to the police.

Abuse by my adoptive mum

33. My mum was physically abusive all the time. She did it to my brothers as well, but my abuse was more severe. She still liked my brothers, but she also hit them. There were quite a few times when she threatened to kill us all in the car. She'd start speeding and drive all over the place. On one occasion, she was driving so crazily that she drove up a roundabout. I remember my little brother was the most scared when she did that. He'd be sitting in the front of the car, screaming and asking her to stop it.
34. With my brothers, they usually had to do something for her to be physically abusive. When it came to me, she just had hatred. Just hearing me eat or seeing my face, anything like that could set her off. I often had bruises on my body as a result of the things my mum did to me. If any of my teachers ever noticed the bruises, they didn't raise it with me.
35. One time, she put a butter knife into my face. I was around twelve or thirteen years old. I thought she was going to kill me. She was really trembling when she was talking to me. She put on an accent, like an African or Caribbean accent. She would put it on when she was really angry. She was holding the knife to my face. [REDACTED] was telling her to stop it and to put it down. She kept pressing the knife into my face and her hand was shaking. She really wanted to do something to me that day, but she didn't. She pulled the knife away. My face was bleeding. I've still got a wee scar on my cheek from that incident.
36. On another occasion, I had a parents' evening at Barrhead High School. I remember I got a good school report and I felt quite happy with myself. It was winter time so it got dark early. My mum took my bag off me and told me to get out of the car. I didn't have my phone on me. I thought that she was going to come back for me, but she didn't. I just had to walk back from Barrhead to [REDACTED]. It was so dark. I followed the country roads through the bus route to Paisley. Eventually, I managed to get on a bus for free. I told the driver that I didn't have any money.

37. When I got home, my brothers said that mum had been looking for me. I went upstairs and my mum came out. She sat on top of me and she tried to strangle me. [REDACTED] thought that I was going to die. He smacked my mum over the head and she let me go. I think my mum wanted me to die that day. I feel that she wanted me to get kidnapped or murdered on the street and when I got home. When that didn't happen, she tried to strangle me when I got home.
38. [REDACTED] and I were with my mum the longest. We were very close. We had to team up to do a lot of things together. I remember [REDACTED] and I stole a George Foreman grill. We took food out of the fridge. We took it upstairs and cooked ourselves some stuff. We'd team up to steal money and help each other survive.
39. I tried to kill myself twice. The first time, nobody knew about it. I was quite scared and I was just thinking about doing it. I would self-harm, but then I would worry that I'd get a scar on my skin. I'd take care of it and treat it. The day we argued about her letting her boyfriend abuse me was the second time that I tried to kill myself. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] My little brother found me and told our mum that I'd tried to kill myself. She didn't care. She didn't take me to the hospital or for any medical treatment. I spoke to my brother for most of that night and then I slept for a long time.
40. My mum never took me to speak to anybody about what happened. I was never offered any support. The only time I ever spoke to a social worker or a guidance teacher at school was because of behaviour. The school thought that I had behavioural problems. That was the only time that anybody spoke to me about anything, but I don't think my mum told anybody what had happened to me. She just told everybody that I was a bad kid. She blamed everything on me. She would say that I was truanting from school, not listening and that she couldn't manage me. If there was social work involvement, it was always about my behaviour because my mum made me out to be very bad.
41. When I was about fourteen, I took pictures of myself without my clothes on. My mum phoned the police and told them that I was a prostitute and that I was taking these

pictures. She tricked me because I didn't know that the police were coming. She called me downstairs and then she disappeared. I heard her running down the stairs and she had my phone. I tried to take it off her, but she ran past me and gave my phone to the police. The police asked me why I was taking pictures like that. I said my mum took pictures like that on her phone and I'd seen her sending them to guys. I was being cheeky. It was just silent after that and they said they were taking my phone for evidence. I never got my phone back.

42. I don't know whether a social worker became involved because of that. It's quite jumbled up. Sometimes a social worker would come and my mum would be willing to cooperate with them. Sometimes I'd hear her on the phone to my brother saying that she didn't want anything to do with them. My mum had retired for health reasons by then. She was quite a hot and cold person. She wasn't straightforward. She had attitudes about different things and she was difficult to talk to. Sometimes, she'd do that with social work but sometimes she'd be willing to cooperate.
43. We had meetings with social workers at my mum's house. When we were in meetings with social workers, I used to pray that they'd see how bad things were. The house was dirty and disgusting. I hardly had any clothes. My hair was a mess. My skin was bad. They never, ever saw anything. I prayed that someone would notice and take me away from my mum and I prayed that she would die.
44. I don't understand why social services ever placed me with my mum. I think that she had a mental condition. It would actually make me feel better if I found out what that condition was. I would then be able to blame the condition instead of her. I overheard her talking about the fact she got electric shock therapy when she was younger, but that was all I heard.

Move to Govanhill and Holyrood High School

45. When I was at Barrhead High School, my mum didn't like the people that I was hanging around with. She kept me off school for months. They told her that I needed to attend school. She ended up sending me to live with my big brother, [REDACTED]. He lived in the

Govanhill area of Glasgow. My mum moved me to Holyrood High School. The arrangement was made by my mum and my brother. It wasn't done through social work.

46. I spent one year at Holyrood High School. In my first year of secondary school, I was quite smart. I enjoyed learning. I loved English and history. When I got to Holyrood, my second school, we were learning at different stages. My first school was in East Renfrewshire and my second school was in Glasgow. I couldn't really process it. They expected us to just know. I disengaged from education at Holyrood.
47. I got kicked out of Holyrood for truanting. When I went to Holyrood High School, there were other black people and people who looked like me. In Barrhead there was nobody like that. Everybody was white. I got bullied for being black and having curly hair. When I went to Holyrood, I was so happy to be around these people. I would ditch school. That's what those people were doing, smoking weed, drinking and having fun. I just wanted to do that too. I just wanted to be around them.
48. When I was expelled from Holyrood, I was moved to St. Luke's High School in Barrhead and I went back to live with my mum. I think I was in third year. I wasn't involved in that decision. I didn't like it. I asked my brother why I needed to go back and told him that I didn't want to. My brother told me that my mum wanted me to go back. I thought that maybe she would be fine with me and maybe she liked me now. I thought maybe it wouldn't be that bad. When I went back to live with my mum, she was fine for about the first week. After that, she became nasty again. By that time, she couldn't really hit me. She was quite weak. She would try to hit me but I would just push her away. She tried to keep me in my room all the time, but I would just jump out of the window and do what I wanted at that point.
49. I had to go to a Children's Panel when one of my friends got into a fight. She was beating some people up and their mums came out and started to beat her up. I was trying to help my friend get out of the situation. When we were at the Children's Panel, my mum left during it. She ran away. She told them that she didn't want me anymore and she left me there. I think she told them that she'd kill herself if she had to be around

me. I read that on social work records that I had access to last year, but she'd said similar things to me in the past. They had to do an emergency placement with my brother.

██████████ kinship foster care

First day

50. When I was placed with ██████ by the social work department, they tried to get my belongings from my mum. She refused. She said that if we came onto the property she would phone the police. I had to leave all my stuff at my mum's. The social workers took me to my brother's. They explained that it was something to do with kinship care. They said that they would give him some money. I think the social workers had to apply to get some money so I could buy clothes. I needed some things because I wasn't allowed access to my stuff at my mum's.

Social work involvement

51. While I was still living with my mum, I had been put onto a project for vulnerable women. It was about grooming by men. When I was living with my mum, she found receipts from older men. They were purchases for me. It was true that I was sleeping with guys for money at that time. My mum refused to buy me my school uniform and things like that so I had to get money.
52. I was still involved in that project when I lived with ██████ in Govanhill. I'd either get the bus or she'd pick me up and drop me back home. I went to a building in the Calton or Bridgton area of Glasgow. I worked with someone called ██████. She was really lovely. She taught me about the dangers of grooming, what it is and what it looks like. I had to do some tests with her. She would teach me stuff and then she'd test me at the end. She'd ask me questions. It was the first time I'd had any one-to-one support from a professional. I saw her once a week.

53. I think social workers did come and speak to [REDACTED] when the kinship care started, but I don't think he was given much support. When I went to live with my brother, there were meetings with social workers in a social work office in Govan. I was assigned to a different social worker, Ross Gibson. He was a nice person and he was good. I fell pregnant when I was seventeen. Ross Gibson was there throughout my pregnancy. He'd ask whether I'd eaten and he'd ask me about my relationship with the father of my baby. He helped me to get furniture for my baby. I feel like all the support came when I was with my brother. Prior to that, nobody cared.

Relationship with kinship carer/financial arrangements

54. [REDACTED] was in his mid-twenties. Living with him was the best. He was living with his friend, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were so nice to me. My brother was the one who taught me how to be clean. I was always dirty because my mum taught me nothing. I had really bad dry skin on my face and he taught me about the creams that I needed to use. He was the one who treated that and helped me to get rid of it. [REDACTED] taught me about make-up and how to do girly stuff. They both bought me stuff. They were just good people and they were really nice to me. My brother was a very relaxed and chilled person.
55. After I was placed into kinship care, things started to get better. I felt sorry and I started to realise that some of my previous actions had been wrong. I realised that [REDACTED] didn't deserve it. He hadn't done anything to me. I started to calm down and I tried my best to be good. There were times when I felt guilty that I was living with [REDACTED] and that I was in his life. I knew that he was still young. He'd still go out with his friends at night sometimes. I felt that it wasn't fair for [REDACTED] to have to take on my mum's role. I felt like it was all her fault and I used to blame everything on her.
56. [REDACTED] was supposed to get Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit, but my mum was stealing it. She was still my brother's mum and he didn't want to report her for it. I can remember my brother talking about the benefits with a social worker. They told him that he should inform the benefits office so he could take over the claim, but he didn't want to do so because my mum was committing fraud. We didn't have a lot of money,

but my brother couldn't do much about that. My mum was still taking the money and spending it, but I wasn't living with her. I never got any of my stuff back from my mum. All my things from childhood were left behind. Even the things that I'd got from older men were with her. I know I'd got them in a bad way, but I had to do disgusting things to get those things. She kept it all.

57. [REDACTED] did get a kinship carer payment, but it wasn't enough. He used to give me his money. He wasn't working at the time. I think it was quite a lot of pressure on him. He'd never done anything like that before and he was still young. He would always make sure that I was fed, but he didn't have a lot of money to let me go out with my friends. He tried his best for me.

Schooling/work

58. When I first went back to St. Luke's in Barrhead, I started to like education again. I always tried to finish my work first. I was quite competitive with some of the people in my class. After a while, there was so much going on at home that I couldn't be bothered with school anymore. I just found the whole school environment difficult. If there was a non-uniform day, everybody would have the latest stuff. My mum didn't do anything like that for me. I always looked terrible. That was one of the main reasons that I often didn't want to go to school.
59. I left school early and got a job at KFC. I was sixteen and I was living with my brother at that time. I was pregnant at the age of seventeen. I got fired from my job when I was pregnant. I couldn't stand the smell and I was being sick. I didn't know anything about the welfare system so I didn't have any money.

Contact with family

60. I didn't have any contact with my mum when I was living with [REDACTED] My brother [REDACTED] was still living with her. Recently, I asked him if she continued to hit him after I left. He said that she didn't hit him. She was getting sicker and she no longer had the energy. I didn't get to see [REDACTED] when I lived with [REDACTED] My mum was quite jealous

of our relationship because we were really close. When she hit me or tried to strangle me, [REDACTED] would come to save me. He would smack my mum on her head and scream at her to get off me. My mum hated that. She loved [REDACTED] more than anyone. He was her favourite child, but [REDACTED] loved me too and she hated it.

Leisure time/peers

61. Everything was really good when I was living with [REDACTED]. I got to do things with my friends, which I hadn't been able to do when I was living with my mum. I had a boyfriend and [REDACTED] let me be around my boyfriend. I fell pregnant when I was seventeen. I had broken up with my boyfriend before I found out that I was pregnant. I found out that I was pregnant when I was already four months pregnant. I told the baby's father, but he just told me to get an abortion. We just left it at that.
62. My mum was disgusted when I was pregnant. She made it known to the family that she knew I was going to get pregnant. When I had started my period, I didn't tell her for about a year. I was scared to tell her because she never talked to me about stuff like that. When she did find out that my periods had started, she told my brothers that I thought I was a woman now and I was going to fall pregnant.

Abuse in foster care

63. My boyfriend was quite abusive towards me. His name was LEV [REDACTED]. It wasn't as severe as the abuse by my mum or her boyfriends so I didn't recognise it as abuse until I was older. What he did doesn't really affect me, but I do know that it's abuse. It just wasn't affecting me anymore because I'd already been abused so much. I didn't care that someone was doing that to me.
64. LEV [REDACTED] lied about his age. I was fifteen and I thought that he was eighteen. We were having a sexual relationship. After we broke up, the girlfriend he had after me got in touch and told me his real age. I think he would have been 23 or 24 when I was with him. I do remember that I had to lie when we went to his uncle's house. My boyfriend

told me to tell his uncle that I was eighteen. I just thought he wanted me to do that because he was eighteen and older than me.

65. During the relationship, LEV [REDACTED] was quite manipulative. He was the first person I had been in a relationship with so I was infatuated with him. I agreed with everything he said. I found out quite early that he was cheating on me with loads of girls. When I'd ask him about it, he would get aggressive. If he couldn't lie about it, he would tell me that he was really sorry about it. He was quite over the top and dramatic. On one occasion, I was at the gym. I wasn't talking to LEV [REDACTED] because I had found out that he'd cheated on me. He came to the gym and got down on his knees in front of people. He would be very dramatic for no reason. Sometimes he'd hit me or grab my wrists. He'd threaten to leave me. I didn't want him to because I was really in love with him.
66. When I was fifteen and still living with [REDACTED] there was a man who tried to pimp me out. I think he was maybe in his thirties. His name was LEW [REDACTED] and he had a shop in the Govanhill area. He was going to get me clients to have sex with and he would take a cut of the money. I hated asking my brother for money. I really didn't like it. I was old enough to understand that me staying with him wasn't benefitting him at all.
67. LEW [REDACTED] sent me to a man and told me to tell the man that I was eighteen. I did sleep with that man and he gave me money. When the man was dropping me back to the other man, I felt really bad. I felt like I had been tricking the him. I told him that I was fifteen. I thought he'd be angry, but he wasn't. He was quite disgusted. He was supposed to give me £40 but he ended up giving me £100. He told me not to do it and that it was wrong. He asked me whether I had any sisters or a mum. I told him that I lived with my brother. He said that I shouldn't be doing what I was doing and that it wasn't clean.
68. I don't blame the man that I slept with. I had lied to him. He also told me that what I was doing wasn't good. If he hadn't done that, I would have continued to do it. I stopped after that and I never slept with a man for money again. I remain friends with that man. He helped me out financially when he could and he'd still help me if I needed him. I stopped speaking to LEW [REDACTED] My brother didn't know that this was happening.

I never told him because I felt too ashamed. I've told my current boyfriend about this, but I've never reported it to the police.

Reporting of abuse whilst in foster care

69. When I was pregnant, quite close to my due date, I had a meeting with my social worker and the police. I think Ross Gibson, my social worker, arranged the meeting. It was at a police station near Royston. The police interviewed me about my relationship with [REDACTED] I'd split up with [REDACTED] by that time, but they made me realise that what my boyfriend had done was quite abusive.
70. I don't know whether anything ever came of the statement that I gave to the police. About two years after I'd given birth, I actually met [REDACTED] on the bus. He told me that I'd got him into a lot of trouble. He said that he went to jail. I didn't know that because I didn't attend any court hearings, but that's what he said. I don't know whether or not he was lying about that.

Leaving foster care

71. I planned to live with my brother after having my baby, [REDACTED]. I could see that my brother and his friend were getting more annoyed. [REDACTED] became really moany about everything. She would complain about money all the time. My brothers and I aren't emotional. We hide things with sarcasm and stuff. I don't think he would ever have told me that I needed to leave. When I left my brother's, I pretended to be homeless and went to a homeless shelter. I just left. I told my brother that I was leaving and he was quite annoyed.
72. I think I started to become less cooperative with social work before leaving my brother's. [REDACTED] was younger and it was taking up so much of his life. I could see that he was becoming more frustrated with having to go to all these meetings. I could feel that. I started to ditch it because I felt like I was burdening him a lot. I didn't want to

burden him. He never said anything to me, but I just felt it. When I left my brother's, social work weren't really involved with me. I'm not sure whether I was offered any kind of through-care support, I just remember going to less appointments.

Life after leaving foster care

73. After moving out of my brother's, I did have a housing support officer. She told me about rent and how all that kind of thing works. She was really nice. I was put into a flat, but there was a fire when my daughter was still a baby. I was in the house with my daughter and three of my friends. I'd left oil in the kitchen and went to put my daughter to bed. My friends were arguing and it distracted me. I forgot I'd left the oil on and there was a fire. Everything was destroyed. All of our things were smoke damaged and we didn't have anywhere to go.
74. I asked my friends if I could stay with them, but I couldn't. I ended up going to stay with a man called [REDACTED] I was friends with him, but he was a drug dealer. I didn't want my daughter to live there. I phoned my brother and asked if he could take her. He told my mum and my mum wanted to take her. I didn't want [REDACTED] to be in the house with a man she didn't know who dealt drugs. She stayed with my mum for about two weeks until I was able to get somewhere else to live. There had been no smoke alarms in the flat that I had been in. Because of that, I think the housing association felt responsible. They got me somewhere else to live very quickly.
75. We lived in [REDACTED] in the Royston area of Glasgow. My mum became more involved again. She was being nice to me and I believed her. I thought she hates me but she loves her granddaughter. I let her become involved, even though I didn't want to. She did help me. I was young and I could go out with my friends when my mum looked after [REDACTED] I started college as well. I didn't have childcare in place yet so my mum helped with that.
76. My mum was trying. She was disabled by that point. I think she was in a wheelchair. She put [REDACTED] into gymnastics classes and took her to the zoo. It seemed like she

liked [REDACTED] I then started to notice scratches on [REDACTED] My mum said it had been the cat. I believed her because it looked like cat scratches. I then noticed bruising on [REDACTED] My mum would say that she had banged herself on the wheelchair. I still believed my mum. I didn't think my mum was hitting my daughter. I didn't think she seemed well enough to hit my daughter.

77. [REDACTED] hated going to my mum's. She didn't like it. I did feel guilty afterwards that I let her go to my mum's, but I was just young. I needed some space. It got to a point where I just couldn't take my daughter there anymore. She started asking if she could take her to Spain or take her to London to visit her boyfriend. When she started talking about men and her boyfriends, that was it. I would refuse and I wouldn't allow her to take [REDACTED] She got more annoyed with me again. I saw that hatred coming back.
78. The parents of [REDACTED] who lived with my brother, became really involved with my baby. They really wanted to help me with her. They were kind of like a nana and papa to [REDACTED] They taught me how to bath her and feed her and how to do stuff. They took her at weekends so I could still have a social life. They were helping me a lot. I loved them and [REDACTED] loved being with them. When my mum got involved, she was very jealous. She didn't want them taking [REDACTED] anymore.
79. My mum had been okay towards me when she first became involved. Further down the line, her true colours started to come back. The year before she died, she didn't invite me for Christmas. My brothers and I had agreed that I would take over Christmas that year because my mum wasn't able to do it. Everyone was going to come to mine and I was going to cook. My mum didn't like it. She told me that she was going to do Christmas. Because she was their mum, my brothers listened to her and they went to her house for Christmas. She didn't invite me. She died in 2018, just before I gave birth to my son.
80. I studied IT, administration and business at college. After that, I went on to study legal services. I liked being busy and getting to do my own thing. I liked the kids being in nursery and learning things there. I enjoyed college. I finished my legal studies course in 2021. I was trying really hard to go to Glasgow University to study law. I managed

to get a place, but my anxiety got worse and I couldn't take up the place. I really do want to go to university. I've always wanted to be successful. I feel like I was on that track and I'd really tried. Now, everything has come crashing down.

Impact

81. When I see children on the street, it can be difficult. If I hear certain names, like LPR LPN or LPZ that's it. I could be in the middle of a lesson and someone says one of those names. That's it. I just start thinking about everything that happened and I can't concentrate.
82. My anxiety had become really bad. Everything has stopped now. I don't study. I don't work. I've turned down jobs. It's quite horrible. I did go to the doctors but I felt like they weren't listening to me. My period stopped for a whole year. I told my GP and they didn't care. They just said that maybe I was stressed. They just wouldn't listen. I just wanted a diagnosis. Whatever has happened to me, I wanted to deal with it and know what it is.
83. I ended up moving GP practices because I couldn't deal with my previous practice. I reached out to my health visitor. She had always been kind. She was nice and she spoke to my doctor. She told them to listen to what I was saying. My new GP has been better since my health visitor spoke to them. They ask me how I'm doing. One of the doctors said that she'd write a letter to get me seen quicker by a counsellor or psychologist. At the moment, I don't see a way of getting over what has happened.
84. I feel like I'm quite emotionless. If someone tells me that their nan has died, the first thing I do is smile. I have to apologise and tell them that I always do that. It's just the way I deal with bad things. I laugh and smile. To other people, I can look like some kind of psychopath but I can't help it. I've tried my best to get rid of it.
85. My experiences growing up affected my relationships as I got older. If someone is doing something bad to you, as long as it's not as bad as what you've been through,

you just accept it or forgive it. I feel like I did that. I find it hard to say no to people. Even if I have a friend who is asking for money or to borrow something expensive, I can't say no. Even if I can't afford to give them it or I don't want to give them it I always say yes. I feel that I've friends who have taken advantage of me because of that.

86. I have to do everything fairly with my children. If my daughter gets a scooter, then so does my son. If one gets an iPad, so does the other one. I feel like I need to do that. I've put myself in some bad financial positions because of that. If it's one of my children's birthday, I get the other one a gift so they don't feel sad.
87. I think what happened to me has made me really protective of my own children. I don't trust people with my children. My boyfriend's sister helps with my kids sometimes. She has a boyfriend, who is her daughter's dad. He is a good person, but I worry about [REDACTED] being in the house with him. I speak to my boyfriend about it and ask him whether he might touch her. I question things. I feel like it's not appropriate sometimes. It just comes into my head. I feel like everyone wants to abuse my kids.
88. My experiences growing up have had an impact on my identity. When I started meeting other black and Asian people, I just didn't know where I fitted in. I grew up around white people and my adoptive family were Caribbean. I didn't know which culture I was supposed to belong to. My mum didn't really care about culture. When I met other people who were more like me, I felt left out. They knew stuff that I didn't know. They had their own twang on how to say and do things. I don't connect in that way and I wish that I did. I had to find out about my ethnicity myself. About two years ago, I found out through DNA testing.
89. I know that for a lot of people, including myself, who have been abused in childhood it can be really difficult to see a future for themselves. It's difficult to think that everything will take time to heal and everything will be okay. I don't think doctors and other people take it seriously enough. They just think it's all in your head and it's up to you, but it's really difficult. It's really difficult to come out of that space in your head, to try and get better and do things. They've not experienced it so they don't understand. I think they need to know what child abuse is.

90. When something hasn't happened to you personally, it can be hard to relate to what someone else is saying. In the past, I've seen that professionals don't always care because they haven't been through something like that themselves. It makes you feel embarrassed to have had these things happen to you. It can make you feel like you're too dramatic or you're going mad. Because I had to come out of college and I couldn't work, I was struggling financially. I was advised to apply for Personal Independence Payment. I told them everything, but they made me feel I was lying. It just made me feel like I didn't want to tell anybody because I don't want to have to experience that feeling again.

Reporting of abuse

91. I was watching something on TV at the start of 2020. It was about somebody who had been abused and they went on to sue social services for it. I kept thinking about it. I then contacted a lawyer from Thompsons Solicitors because I wanted to sue social services. I told the lawyer that social services had ruined my life. I don't understand how I could have been placed with LPZ Thompsons said that couldn't sue social services because they didn't have evidence. I could feel myself starting to get issues with anxiety and depression. I wanted to get over it. I felt that if I got justice for this it would help me to feel better and move on.
92. Thompsons did say that because the sexual abuse by one of the men was reported to the police, they could do something about that. They were going to apply for Criminal Injuries Compensation. They had to stop it because I had an ongoing court case. They told me to get back in touch when my case at court was concluded.
93. I spoke to the police about LPN when I was thirteen and then I spoke to them about LEV when I was seventeen. I went back to the police again, but I'm not sure which year it was. It was quite recently. I saw LPN in my health centre. He had a fruit stall with some woman. From that point, my anxiety got worse and I feel everything has gone downhill for me. I spoke to the police in the hope that they would arrest him or do something. They took a full statement from me. The police just said

that they couldn't do anything without any new evidence. I don't know whether I told them about the abuse by LPR [REDACTED] I remember thinking there might not be any point because I didn't know where he lived. He had reached out to me on Facebook when I was older, about thirteen. I replied and said that I remembered what he had done. After that, his profile was gone and he just vanished. I couldn't see anything from him again.

94. I feel like I was robbed of my opportunity to tell my story. My mum had put me there to give a statement when I was thirteen. I wasn't ready at that time. I feel like it was for her benefit because of what had happened to her. She wanted the case to be stronger for her. I don't think she should have done that.

Records

95. One of my friends is a housing officer. She told me about financial redress for children who have been abused in care. She thought that I might be eligible for it. She told me to look into it. I called someone from redress and I was put in touch with Birthlink. They advised me to go to the Registrar.
96. I spoke to somebody called Steve Bruce at the National Records of Scotland in March 2021. I asked about my adoption. He was able to look at my entry on the Adoption Register. He informed me that I had been adopted on [REDACTED] 2001 at Paisley Sheriff Court. He said that I was entitled to see all of my court adoption papers, which are still at Paisley Sheriff Court. He advised me to contact the Civil Department at Paisley Sheriff Court. I've been trying to do that since March or May of 2021.
97. I've been trying to obtain my records since March or May of last year. It's been a really slow process. I had access to some of my records last year, after I contacted Thomsons Solicitors. After a while, I just forgot about it because they were taking so long to get back in touch with me. I had a bit of a mental breakdown. I was done with everything. That was when I reached out to the Inquiry.

98. [REDACTED] told me that my social work records from London are held in Newham. She said that I could get them there. I want to do it, but right now it's difficult to add something else. Very recently, I learned that Barnardo's were involved in my adoption. I made contact with someone called Linzi Mathieson there. She advised me to put in a subject access request to Barnardo's and the London Borough of Newham to obtain more records about the adoption process.

Lessons to be learned

99. Before taking a child out of a traumatic experience, they need to do in depth research into the person they are being placed with. If a child is being taken off someone because of child abuse, it should be an extra step to make sure they're going to someone who is stable in every way possible. They need to be able to deal with children who have been through abuse.
100. I feel that there are signs of child abuse. I think the signs were so evident in the way I was. It was so obvious that I was being abused and nobody picked up on it. At one point, I think my primary school picked up on it but it didn't go further than that. The schools, the police, the social work didn't pick up on it. I just felt that one person from one of those agencies could have recognised child abuse. Today, if I saw a child with these things, I would be concerned. Nobody ever knew the signs. I thought it was part of their job, working with children.
101. Schools and police and social workers should be trained to recognise what abuse is and what it looks like. Now it's 2022, I think that every adult should know what child abuse looks like. Adults in those positions should have training. I hope that children are never placed in a situation like I was. I hope they introduce a mandatory course for police, schools, GPs so that they recognise these things. They should never place abused kids with another abusive family.
102. I think the government needs to do more for people who have been adopted. I think there should be a whole department for adopted children who have suffered abuse. I

feel like they don't talk about it. When you've been adopted, they take the view that it's not their responsibility but it was the government that put you into these places and said that it was safe enough for you to go there.

103. It can be overwhelming to make appointments and go and talk to your GP. I think that people who have suffered should have someone to do these things on their behalf, so it's easier.

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

Signed..........

Dated..... 07 February 2022