

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

HFN
[REDACTED]

Support person present: No

1. My name is ^{HFN} [REDACTED]. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1971. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.
2. My mother's name was [REDACTED] and my dad's name was [REDACTED]. I found out recently, from his death certificate, that his name was spelled different from mine with a "u" instead of an "o". My parents weren't married when I was born. They got married when I was twelve years old.
3. I don't have any full siblings, but I have three or four half-sisters and a brother from my dad's side who I never met as a child. I also have two half-sisters and two half-brothers on my mum's side. I was born in Edinburgh and grew up in Wallyford.

Life before going into care

4. I lived at [REDACTED] in Wallyford with my mum and dad. Only one of my siblings lived with us as I was growing up, and that was [REDACTED]. He was my mother's son, and he was six or eight years older than me. The rest of my half siblings were older, and they had their own lives by the time my parents got together.
5. I remember that I had a social worker called Shona Stephenson. I can't remember why I had her, but I used to go and see once a week after school at the community centre in Musselburgh. I also remember being fostered out to the [REDACTED] for a few

weeks. I don't know why or how old I was at the time, but I am sure I was in primary school. They had a son called [REDACTED] who was a couple of years above me at school.

6. One day when I was about eight or nine years old, I was in school and I put my feet up on the desk in class because I saw another boy doing it. The teacher came over and smacked me over the head. I was fuming and was in shock. I picked the chair up and threw it at the teacher and walked out. I started skipping school after that.
7. I was skipping school for a couple of weeks. I would be out on the streets shoplifting with a guy called [REDACTED] who was also from Wallyford. We were on the bus going home after shoplifting one day. [REDACTED] had been stealing cutlery, and I had been stealing food. We got into an argument with a girl on the bus. Two boys stood up on the bus and threatened us. I pulled a knife out of the bag. The girl slapped me on the back of the face, and as I turned round, I cut her on the wrist with the knife. That was what put me into care.
8. Police officers took me to the police station after the incident to get finger printed. My parents came to the police station to see me that night. I spent the night in the police cells, and the police took me to a children's panel in the Brunton Hall in Musselburgh the next morning.
9. There were a lot of people sitting around a big table at the panel. I didn't know who any of them were. I think I had a temporary social worker there, and my parents were there. The panel decided that I was to be taken to an assessment centre. Life at home had been okay up until then. It was only after the teacher slapped me at school that I had started skipping school.
10. When I realised that I was being taken away, I clung onto the seat and the police had to shake me off the seat and take me to the van outside. The police took me to Howden Hall Assessment Centre. I think I was eight or nine years old.

Howden Hall Assessment Centre

11. It was scary arriving at Howden Hall. I didn't know what was going to happen to me or what the place was going to be like. I remember being taken in and sat in an office. I was told I would stay there until I went to another children's panel. I was then taken into a room with other boys and that was that.
12. There was a kitchen, school, yard and sitting rooms downstairs. There was also a massive dining room downstairs, as well as offices for staff. There were two boys' wings upstairs. In the wing I was in, there were ten dormitories. I didn't really go into the other wing. There were four or five boys to a room. There were a couple of cells as well.
13. I think there were about sixty boys in there altogether. The ages ranged from about my age up to fifteen or sixteen years old. The older boys were separated from the younger boys. We were in different dormitories, and we also had different sitting rooms. We still saw each other at mealtimes.
14. The girls' wing must have been at the other side of the building because I never saw it. We saw the girls at school and at dinner time. We came into the dining hall from different sides of the room, and we sat at different sides of the dining room.

Routine at Howden Hall

Mornings and bedtime

15. In the morning, we'd get wakened up by the staff, and then we would go to the toilet. There were communal toilets, showers and wash basins. In the morning, we washed, got dressed, and went downstairs to the dining room for breakfast. We went to school after breakfast. We had lunch during the day and then dinner later.

16. In the evening, you'd go upstairs and have a shower then go to your dormitory. There was a standard bedtime every night, but I don't remember when it was.
17. The doors would be locked at night time by the staff, so we were locked in the room. There was staff there throughout the night because they came into the room when there was a commotion.

Food

18. Meals were all served in the dining room. Mealtimes were standard breakfast, lunch and dinner. It was okay. I remember we got fish, chips and sweetcorn on a Friday - that was good.

Schooling

19. I think the guy who taught us was an art teacher. He was also in a band. I remember him drawing a hand reaching for an apple and a snake going towards the hand. That's all I remember about him. I don't remember his name or getting any homework. I don't know if he came from outside or whether he was a staff member.

Leisure time

20. There was a yard that you could play in. The door to get into the yard was in the older boys' sitting room. The yard was a closed off area. One wall had big open windows to the older boys' sitting room, and the other side was just walled in with buildings. There was a wood chop workshop to the right of the yard, but it was for the older boys. I would play football, basketball or just walk about with other boys in the yard.
21. We could go out to the yard on our own. Sometimes the staff would be in the yard also having a kick about. It was a secure place and you couldn't really leave.

22. There was a telly in the sitting room where the big boys sat. We were allowed to go in and watch telly with them on the weekends, but we had to stay in our own wee sitting room during the week.
23. There was the odd comic in the younger boys' sitting room, which we could read. I don't remember any toys there.
24. I don't think I had a birthday or Christmas there, but I don't really remember.

Day trips and running away

25. I only remember being taken in a minibus to go to the hills out in the Borders. There were no houses around, and it was just a big valley with a river or stream. The first time we went, the boys walked up the hill and the staff shouted at us to come back.
26. The second time we went to the hills, me and some boys climbed the hill but the staff didn't climb it with us. When we got to the top, a couple of the boys had an idea to run away. I wanted to go home too, so we just took off.
27. We went over the hills and fields, and then came to a cottage. We asked the woman for a lift home. We said we were on a day trip from Niddrie in Edinburgh, and that we had wandered off and got lost. The woman gave us a lift to Niddrie. One of the boys knew that the back door in a particular close was always open, so we went in the front door, and straight out the back door. We left the woman sitting in her car.
28. We found an old flat that was empty and the door had been kicked in. There was a radiator, which was on. I slept on a ledge behind the radiator and managed to keep warm all night.
29. The following day, I managed to get to Wallyford to see my mother. I was in the house, and saw the police coming through the front door, so I ran out the back door. I managed to get to Musselburgh before the police picked me up and took me back to Howden Hall.

Visits and inspections

30. I think my mum and dad may have visited me in there once, but I don't really remember.
31. No social worker visited me.

Medical treatment

32. I am sure there was a psychiatrist. You would get called into a room and be asked daft questions, so you would give daft answers.

Discipline and punishment

33. Everything was fine for a few weeks. I was just getting used to the routine there and how everything worked.
34. There was a young lad in there who was a bully, and I had been warned against him. I had tried to stay out of his way, but he started punching and kicking me when he passed me. I don't know why because I hadn't said anything to him. This happened for about a week before I hit him back, and then he beat me up. At night, I put a chair over the boy's head as he was sleeping. Another boy called [REDACTED] dragged me off him. [REDACTED] later ended up in prison for trying to rape a girl in Tranent.
35. I was put into a cell for the night because of that incident. There were cells in the assessment centre. It was like a normal prison cell, but they had perspex windows. After that either the boy or me were moved to another room. I know we were separated.
36. Nothing was actually said or explained to me about how to behave. They just expected you to behave I suppose.

Abuse at Howden Hall

37. There was a staff member who put me in the cell once and threatened me. He said something along the lines of smashing my face in if I didn't behave. I don't know what I had done. Maybe I was mouthing off or something. Five minutes later, an older boy, who was about fourteen or fifteen years old, came in and punched me in the face. The staff member opened the door for him and let him into the cell, and stood at the door watching as the boy punched me. That was the only abuse I received in that place.
38. I don't remember the staff member's name. He was about six foot tall, dark haired and had a moustache. He wasn't heavy-built, he was quite fit. I had seen him upstairs before, but I don't think he was a teacher. He was between 30 and 45 years old.
39. I was let out the cell after a few hours and taken downstairs for something to eat, and that was it. I didn't tell anybody because there was nobody to tell. I was only in the place for a few weeks so I didn't really know anybody to tell.

Leaving Howden Hall

40. I was in Howden Hall for between six to nine weeks. I don't remember much of it. Nobody really told me what was happening. I was told by the children's panel that I was going there, and once I was there, I was told that another panel would decide what happened to me next. I just waited.
41. After six to nine weeks, I was told I had another children's panel coming up. I think the police picked me up and took me to the panel, which was in Brunton Hall in Musselburgh again.
42. My parents were at the panel. There was a different social worker there from the first panel. The panel agreed that I was to be moved to a List D school called St Joseph's

School. It was in Tranent and I was to go there after a few weeks. The police officers came into the room and took me back to Howden Hall after the panel.

43. After a few weeks, I was taken to St Joseph's. I stayed there until I was fifteen years old.

St Joseph's School, Tranent

44. I think a member of staff from St Joseph's had collected me to bring me to the school, but I can't remember who.
45. I got taken into a room in a part of the main building and to a room upstairs, where I got given clothes. I got a shirt, hat and a jacket. The jacket was red on the outside and tartan on the inside. They were called Harringtons. I got bell-bottom flared jeans and a jersey as well. The school provided the clothes, and all the boys wore the same.
46. There was a big playing field, a big main building and four small buildings, which were called cottages. The four cottages were named Ogilvie, Benildas, Savio and Sinclair. I think they were the names of Benedictine monks, because the school was run by Benedictine monks. We had to call them "brothers". There was also a church within the grounds.
47. The school was in the main building. The private residential rooms for the monks were on the top floor in the main building. I think there were about ten brothers altogether, but we didn't meet them all. The reception and headmaster's office were on the middle floor. ^{SNR} [REDACTED] of St Joseph's was Brother ^{MJG} [REDACTED] when I first arrived. He later ^{MBU} [REDACTED] and Brother ^{SNR} [REDACTED]. Mr Roachford was the headmaster of the actual school where we had our classes.
48. There were offices on the bottom floor, which the social workers used. A new part had been added to the building, which was where the gym hall was.

49. It was an all-boys school, and we lived in the cottages. Civilian staff also stayed there and ran the cottages. There were about twenty boys in each of the four cottages, so there were about eighty boys in the whole school. Each cottage had a few dormitories for boys to sleep in.

Routine at St Joseph's

50. I was in the Ogilvie cottage. On the ground floor of the cottage, there was a toilet and a cloakroom where shoes and coats were kept. Also on the ground floor were the kitchen, dining room, a pool table room and a sitting room. The pool room and the sitting room could be divided with a wooden door.
51. I slept in a dormitory with about five other boys. The dormitories were upstairs on the left hand side. Brother Benedict also stayed in my cottage. He had his own quarters on the same floor as the dormitories, but on the right hand side of the landing. There were also single rooms in the cottages. I got my own single room after three or four years.
52. Our housemother was Mrs [REDACTED]. She was the only housemother that didn't stay in the cottage with the boys. She had a [REDACTED] son who she stayed with in a little house [REDACTED]. It had a connecting door into our kitchen, but also had its own separate front door. She would come in at breakfast and teatime. She was nice. I remember getting hugs from her.

Mornings and bedtime

53. We got woken up in the mornings. We brushed our teeth, got dressed then went downstairs for breakfast. Mrs [REDACTED] would come into the kitchen in the morning and start the cooking. The cups and plates would already be set up from the night before.
54. After breakfast, we cleared the table, done the dishes and cleaned the floors. We set the table for teatime. We had a rota for doing duties in there. I was always washing

dishes, which I didn't mind. After cleaning up, we went back upstairs to make our beds, and also to sweep under our beds.

55. The beds got inspected to make sure we had folded the corners properly. It took me a few months to get it right. If it wasn't done properly during the inspection, the person inspecting it would strip the bed and throw it on the floor, and you would have to do it again.
56. After the housework, we would line up outside in the yard for school. We had lunch in the main building, then classes in the afternoon.
57. After school, you would go back to the cottage and have tea, clean and wash up. We would relax for a while, and then we would go out for activities from 6pm to 8pm.
58. We went back to the cottage after activities, went upstairs and had a shower. Staff would wait outside while we showered. We would have our supper at 8.30pm, and be in bed by 9pm. I think some of the older boys got to stay up until 10pm. A night watchman would come on at night.
59. If anybody had wet the bed, they would get a plastic sheet. Their covers would be taken down for washing and the staff would deal with it. Nobody said anything to them about it.

Leisure time

60. We had a tuck shop twice a week, which we got access to after our tea. Mrs [REDACTED] ran it. We were allowed to go and get things worth a certain amount. You could also spend any money that you had gotten from your parents at the weekend.
61. We could buy cigarettes and tobacco from the brothers or the headmaster. I was told I couldn't have them at first because I was too young. I would just get somebody else to get them for me and I told the brothers this so they just started to sell me them.

62. We would do gardening in the summertime. We would pull weeds, do borders and cut the hedges. I didn't mind it, but I got sunburn on my ears one year, and was given sun cream for it.

School

63. Our classes were numbered, and you had to line up in your own class number for school in the yard in the morning. There were day pupils who came in just for schooling. They wore their own clothes. The rest of us wore the same clothes, which the school gave us.
64. All the schooling was done in the main building. We went to classes in the morning, had lunch in the main building, and then had classes in the afternoon.
65. We went to different classrooms for different subjects. The art class was on the top floor, and Bob Atherton was the art teacher. He was good. Mr ^{GFJ} [REDACTED] took the modern studies class, and we had a great laugh in that class. He would assess the level of ignorance and send people out for things like tartan paint. He would sometimes get boys to lie on the table, and put a meter stick in the bottom of your bell bottom trousers and lift your leg up. Then he would pour water down your leg. The water would have reached your bum before you got a chance to jump up. He liked to have a laugh.
66. The teachers at St Joseph's came from outside for the day, except for Mr ^{GFJ} [REDACTED], [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Mr Roachford was the headmaster of the school. He used to be a brother, but he had left the order and got married. He would decide what class you would get put into. He was alright.
67. There was only one female teacher in the school. She got abuse from one of the boys called [REDACTED], who threw a chair at her once. I stepped in and hit him with the chair. Mr ^{GFJ} [REDACTED] came in and broke that up. He took me out to calm me

down. [REDACTED] got taken somewhere else. I was asked what happened and I told him. Nothing happened to me for it. I don't know if anything happened to [REDACTED].

68. There was a teacher there called [REDACTED]^{MHC}. We called him [REDACTED]^{MHC} for short. He was an outside teacher that came in every day to teach English. Nobody liked him.
69. The metal works teacher was called Mr [REDACTED]^{MJK}, who was also an outside teacher. He was a grumpy git. There was a hole in the floor of his class with metal grilles over it for cars to go on, so you could lie in the hole underneath the car and work on it. One time [REDACTED]^{MJK} flicked something into the hole, which everyone thought was a cigarette, so they dived into the hole to find the cigarette, but it was just a piece of chalk. It was funny.
70. [REDACTED]^{MJK} never gave anybody cigarettes, but you could actually buy tobacco and cigarettes from some of the teachers in there. Even when you were ten years old.
71. I actually quite liked school. There was a physical education teacher called Dougie Dyer who was really good. He was six foot and seven inches tall, and would take us out jogging. He used to play a game called "murder ball". There were two teams, and he would kick a rugby ball in the middle and we just had to go for it. The only rule was that you couldn't kick anyone in the head, and if you did, he would stop the game.
72. I was good at maths, but I didn't like English. I actually think I am a bit dyslexic because I get my letters all jumbled up. My maths teacher was Mr Robertson, and he was really good. I told him I didn't like [REDACTED]^{MHC} so he would give me books to read for English as well as teaching me maths. He would encourage me to write from the books, and tell me to take my time. My English was better when I was with him.
73. We had assembly once a week, and a letter would be read out every week from a boy who used to be at St Joseph's, but was at that time in jail. It would talk about how awful the jail was and tell us to keep on the straight and narrow, and to keep out of trouble.

74. It was just certain teachers, like ^{MHC} [REDACTED] and Mr ^{MJK} [REDACTED], who abused you that I didn't like. I ended up getting on quite well with Mr ^{MJK} [REDACTED] towards the end of my time there because I had done everything in his class. I started to help him and other staff out in the office after a while. I would do photocopying and other things.
75. They tried to get me to go to an outside secondary school in Dalkeith called St David's high school. I started first year there when I was twelve years old. That is the school that I would have gone to if I had stayed in Wallyford with my parents. I think they were trying to get me back into a normal school, but that didn't last long. I was there for about six months but ended up getting into a fight with a boy who used to be in St Joseph's. I didn't go back to St David's after that fight.
76. I sat a City and Guilds maths exam. You normally had to go to college to sit one of them, but Mr Robertson signed me up for it. I passed it and got a certificate when I was fourteen years old. There was an English one too, but I hated ^{MHC} [REDACTED] who took English class so I never sat that one.
77. All the other brothers, including Brothers ^{MBU} [REDACTED], ^{MJG} [REDACTED] and Cuthbert were nice, well-spoken and had nice manners. The teachers were nice too. I never saw Bob Atherton or Mr ^{GFJ} [REDACTED] hit anybody.

Food

78. We would have breakfast in the cottage. It was normally toast and orange juice, or something like that. We could have cereal if we wanted. We had a choice. It was fine. Tea time in the cottage was nice too. Mrs [REDACTED] prepared the meals. She was a good cook.
79. Dinnertime was always in the big hall in the school at lunch time. We had dried mashed potatoes with our meal every single dinner time. I never ate the mash. I couldn't eat potatoes for years after I left St Joseph's. If we were lucky, we would get fish and chips about once a year. That was the best meal of the year.

80. There was no issue if you didn't eat the food. Nobody really said anything.

Leisure time

81. There was a television in the cottage which was in the sitting room and also a little library in the corner. I only read one book the whole time I was in there and that was 'The Outsiders.' We had some free time between having our tea and tidying up, and going for activities at 6 pm. We could do what we wanted in that time.

82. We had activities each night at 6pm. Some of the brothers and teachers would take groups of boys for different activities. Some of the activities were brilliant. Mr ^{GFJ} liked being outdoors and I loved that as well. We would meet up at 6pm outside for activities during the summer, and we would meet up inside in the winter. In the winter, we could go to the gym hall and play five-a-side football, or play snooker in the room above the gym hall.

83. Brother Benedict's activity class was called "Brother Ben's club". He had an air hockey table, a pool table, train sets and a little booth you could go into to listen to the radio. He also had the Atari tennis game. It was all new at the time. I started trying to avoid going to his class because he would give people electric shocks at the end of each night.

84. We would have some time after church on a Sunday, and we would go over to the snooker room for juice and a biscuit. There were wooden cupboards in the snooker room that were always being moved about. I opened them up once to have a look, and they were all full of cans of Tennent's lager. The Brothers drank alcohol. I caught them drinking cans of Tennent's in the snooker room.

Trips and Holidays

85. I used to go camping with Mr ^{GFJ} and other staff for a week in the summer. We would go somewhere just outside Peebles. We would go fishing, gorge walking and

orienteering. It was great. They were the best trips. I learned how to fish. When we came back with a catch, Brother ^{MBU} would give you a pound for every pound of fish you'd caught. I even won an award for camper of the year once.

86. We also got trips out to the countryside with Mr ^{GFJ}. They also organised a cycling trip one time. They kept us busy with activities. That was the good thing about the place.
87. I think I would get home for a week over the Christmas period, and I think also for two weeks in the summer time. I was kept in St Joseph's a couple of times in summer for running away or misbehaving.

Religious instruction

88. There was a church within the grounds. I think we went every Friday for an hour. We had a choice though and didn't have to go. We could play football or sit in the assembly hall if we didn't want to go. I always went to church though because I was from a Catholic family. I met ^{LRM} one time, and I was an altar boy for a while. I would help myself to their wine. They had Blue Nun wine.

Birthdays and Christmas

89. I had a birthday soon after going into the school. I don't remember getting anything. I don't remember any birthday celebrations while I was in there. You also didn't tell anybody about your birthdays because you got the dumps.
90. I don't think I ever spent a Christmas at the school. I think everybody got home for a week over Christmas. They would have Christmas decorations up around Christmas time, and kept them up until after the New Year. They would have Christmas parties sometimes.
91. One time they brought girls in from another school in the West. We had a party with music and everybody danced. Nobody wanted to dance at first, then a boy called

█ got up and started dancing. We were allowed to wear our own clothes for the party, and █ had a mod jacket on. He started doing this really good dance with his feet, and then everybody else got up to dance.

Healthcare

92. There was a nurse in the school. The doctor would come by now and then. He would come to give us our injections, like our BCG vaccination.
93. I would get taken to Tranent for my dental treatment. I remember getting fillings. I was scared to get the injection, so I got the filling without the injection.
94. Mrs █ used to give us treatment for lice once a month to make sure we didn't have head lice. We called the treatment "jungle juice".

Visits and inspections

95. My mother used to visit me once or twice when I first went into the school. Then I was told that I could go home at the weekends, and I would go home most weekends. This meant my mother didn't need to come and visit me. The only time I wasn't allowed to go home was if I got into trouble for running away or misbehaving.
96. My mother would come to the open days, which happened every year. One year Alan Rough, the goalkeeper, came to the school. I was allowed to have three shots of kicking the ball against him, but he saved them all. It was for charity.
97. If you were going home, you would get a half day on a Friday and get to wear your own clothes to go home. The school owned a bus and Brother Benedict would drive all the boys home. I would get dropped off in Wallyford, and I think he drove some boys to train stations and some boys all the way to Glasgow. We had to come back on a Sunday night for school on Monday morning so Brother Benedict would pick everyone up in the bus again on Sunday evening.

98. I used to get a lift to begin with, but then they stopped taking me. I would have to try and get a lift or make my own way. As I got older, I was allowed to stay home on Sunday night and get a bus back to St Joseph's on a Monday morning.
99. I had an outside social worker called Shona Stephenson who was great. She would come to visit now and again.
100. I also had a social worker called Pa Glen who was also a member of staff at St Joseph's. Sometimes he would come to activities, and sometimes he would take me back to my cottage and sit with me until I went to bed. He was like a key worker. I would have a review with him in his office every six months or so to see how I was getting on. We would talk about my school work and where I was getting better or going wrong. We would talk about events that were coming up like camping or trying another school. He was always around so I could speak to him whenever I wanted to.
101. I don't remember anybody coming out to inspect the school while I was there.

Abuse at St Joseph's

102. Brother Benedict stayed in my cottage. He would give you a slap across the head now and then if you were messing about or mouthing off to him. It was as a chastisement and a warning. Brother Benedict was a really strong man. I saw him restrain a boy once for kicking off, and there was nothing the boy could do.
103. Brother Benedict battered me a couple of times. The first time was in the courtyard. I was eight or nine years old. We were on our way to another part of the building for activities and I went to put a piece of paper in the bucket across the square. He shouted on me to come back three times. I put the paper in the bucket before coming back, so I think he attacked me because I didn't come back straight away. He slapped me a couple of times across the face and head, then picked me up and threw me down on the ground so I bounced off the concrete. He slapped me again,

grabbed me by the hair and dragged me backwards across the yard. I didn't get to choose my activity that day and had to go to his club. I'll never forget that.

104. Brother Benedict ran his club every night during the week from 6pm to 8pm. At the end of each night, he'd bring out a wee box, which had two copper handles with wires attached to it. We all had to stand around the pool table and hold hands. He'd wind up the box and give us electric shocks with it. He'd start by winding it slowly, and then he would speed up. The faster he wound it, the more electricity went through it. I think the game was to test who was the bravest and could hold on the longest. It was like a knockout competition
105. At first it seemed like a game, but if I was stuck between two people who didn't let go of my hands, I got electric shocks so badly that it felt like my bones and wrists were going to break. I didn't know what the point of the game was. I started to refuse to do it. I didn't want to play anymore, but I got physically dragged into it by two boys and I couldn't let go. Brother Benedict would encourage you to take part and say that you could be the first out. He wanted everyone to take part. If you didn't want to take part, other boys would say you were letting the side down.
106. This game happened every night at the end of Brother Benedict's club, and I remember it happening from when I went in at eight years old right up until I left at fifteen years old. I started trying to avoid going to his club and tried to go to other activities. Sometimes other activities would be full and it was a choice of going to Brother Benedict's club or back to the cottage to watch telly on your own. On those occasions I would go to his club because at least I could listen to music there and there were other activities.
107. The second time Brother Benedict beat me was in the summer time. I was anywhere between 10 and 14 years old. I had been kept back at school for the weekend and hadn't been allowed home. Maybe it is because I had done something wrong and run away or something. I was cutting the grass with another boy and I saw the boy sniffing something. I asked him what he was doing and he said he was sniffing

petrol, which he had got from a petrol machine and dabbed onto his clothes. I tried it too and Brother Benedict saw me. He beat me up again.

108. It wasn't as bad as the first time he had beaten me though, because when he bounced me on the ground this time, it was on the grass. I do remember him punching me, and repeatedly kicking me with his big boots as I was lying on the ground.
109. I can understand getting battered for buzzing petrol, but not for throwing a piece of paper in the bucket. I never saw him batter anyone else.
110. One time, a boy called [REDACTED] and another big lad were arguing, and Brother Benedict told the pair of them to either stop arguing or to go outside and fight it out. The big lad was happy with that, but [REDACTED] didn't really want to. Everybody was looking at him so [REDACTED] had to fight or he would have looked soft. He had to go out into the corridor and fight the boy. Brother Benedict just stood and let it happen. He used to do that in the cottage as well. He would stand in the corridor and watch as two boys fought it out.
111. I saw hundreds of fights between the boys while I was there. There was staff out and about but, boys could go into the main building, the toilets or the corridors to fight. All the other staff members would break a fight up if they saw it happening.
112. ^{MHC} [REDACTED] had two blackboard dusters that he had taken the pads off. He had named them "Wee Eck" and "Big Bob", and he would throw them at your head in class if you weren't doing your work. I got a duster thrown at me lots of times. If your head wasn't down in your book, he'd throw one at you. He would throw it even if you lifted your head for a second to think, so you would keep your head down even if you weren't working.
113. ^{MHC} [REDACTED] would also sneak up behind you and clout you on the back of the head if he thought you were day-dreaming or anything. He had a clear glass jar with clear liquid in it. When you were new, he would take the cork off it and ask you to smell it.

It was pure ammonia and would burn your nose. He done that to every new person that came into the class. ^{MHC} was in his thirties I think.

114. A boy called ^{KCS} stood up to ^{MHC} once and told him he wasn't going to put up with him throwing things. He told ^{MHC} it was against the law and that he was going to report him to the headmaster. ^{MHC} told him to go ahead so ^{KCS} walked out. The next thing we heard was a commotion outside the classroom and someone shouting "You back-stabbing bastard!" ^{KCS} told us later that ^{MHC} had followed him out, shoved him from behind into the wall and hit him, and then shouted those words at him. Mr Roachford had come down to see what was going on, and ^{MHC} told him that ^{KCS} had hit him. I don't believe that ^{KCS} hit him, but I didn't see what happened.

115. Mr ^{MJK} was the metalwork teacher and we used to call him ^{MJK}. He used to throw hammers at boys' legs if they weren't doing their work. I was hit two or three times in the legs for not doing my work. He would throw a ball-pointed hammer from about a fifteen foot distance. It would be sore because it was a hammer. It hit me on the thigh or shin and would bruise. I did see ^{MJK} throw the hammer at a boy's head once because he was mouthing off. It only just missed his head, but it would have killed him if it had hit him. ^{MJK} was in his forties or fifties. He was quite a wee guy.

116. All the other brothers and teachers were nice. It was only ^{MHC}, ^{MJK} and Brother Benedict who were the bad ones.

Running away

117. There were times I would run away. The place wasn't locked up so it was just a case of leaving and running. You could just say you were going to the toilet and run away. I must have ran away about twenty or thirty times. I was only down the road from my pals and my house. A few times I would be sitting in my mum's house and would see Mr ^{MJL} getting out of the car. That's when I knew my mum had called the police. I would run out the back door.

118. There were many reasons for me running away. One time I ran away because I heard my uncle had died. I got up in the morning and just bolted. I was in Prestonpans and on a bus by the time they realised I was away. Another reason for running away was if other boys had battered me. I realised after a while that there were a few gangs of five or six boys. A boy called ██████████ stuck a lit cigarette in my face once. I am sure I told Pa Glen. I don't know if anything happened. You were already locked up in there, so what more could they do.
119. They could send you to what the boys called a "closed block" if they felt they couldn't handle you. There was one on Rossie Farm. It was like a jail cell in a children's home. A boy called ██████████ was sent there after he had a fight with Mr ██████████, but Mr ██████████ had started it. Once you were sent to a closed block, you didn't come back. I never saw anybody come back.
120. One time when I ran away, I broke into Wallyford primary school to get food. I got caught by the police. They dragged me off the roof, slapped me and put me in the car. Another time the police caught me, the police dog bit me and I had to get a tetanus injection for that.
121. One time I ran away after getting beaten by Brother Benedict. Two policemen caught me. They hit me and took me back to St Joseph's. I was in Brother ██████████'s office with the two policemen, when Brother ██████████ said that he'd take me back to my cottage. I had said: "Aye, so that Brother Benedict can give me another doing." The policemen didn't take any note of it. They asked who was hitting me and I told them that Brother Benedict beat me up for throwing a piece of paper in the bucket. They just shrugged their shoulders. They thought their job was just bringing me back.
122. I spent one night away from St Joseph's once when I ran away. I found a garage in an abandoned building in Wallyford to sleep in. The window had been smashed and been boarded from the inside. I climbed onto the roof and swung my legs through the window and got in. There were piles of wood and a dust sheet, which I used to cover me. Every other time I ran away, I would get caught before night time.

123. The punishment for running away would be that you got kept in school for that weekend, and you would lose other privileges.
124. I remember getting hit a few times by the boys if you ran away. The boys would give you what we called a “kangaroo court” for letting the cottage down. They would stand in two lines, and you had to run between the two lines, which was called “running the gauntlet” as they punched and kicked you. This would happen in the corridor outside the dormitory. The staff didn’t have anything to do with it. Sometimes boys would just make up a reason to have a kangaroo court.

Leaving St Joseph’s

125. I was fifteen years old when I left St Joseph’s. The school said I could move home. I was to go back to St David’s high school in Dalkeith. I don’t remember having to go back to a children’s panel or anything before leaving St Joseph’s. There might have been one but I can’t remember one.

Reporting abuse at St Joseph’s

126. I told Pa Glen about Brother Benedict after the first time he beat me. He told me to leave it with him, but nothing was done about it. He never came back to speak to me about it.
127. I told Mrs [REDACTED] about being beaten by Brother Benedict as well. She was shocked and I think she was the one that told me to tell Pa Glen. Pa Glen was not there the second time I was beaten so I didn’t tell him about that. Nothing could have been done about it anyway.
128. It was the same when the police slapped and kicked you. There was nobody to tell. I can’t remember if I told my mum.

Danderhall Hostel, Edinburgh

129. I went back to St David's high school in Dalkeith for a while when I moved back home. It was only my mum and dad at home by this time. They had gotten married in 1984. I'd only been home for about six weeks when I got into a fight with my dad. They both came home drunk after being out at the club one night and my dad started punching my mum. I got my dad off her and started punching him.
130. The social worker, Shona Stephenson, came to the house the next day and said I couldn't live there. I said that was fine because I didn't want to live there. I was worried about my mum. I think she left my dad a couple of times but went back again. That was the first incident that I had seen between my mum and dad. I am not sure which one of them phoned the social work department.
131. The social work department found me a place to stay at Danderhall Hostel on Kaimes View. I think Edinburgh social work department were responsible for running it. Shona Stephenson took me there. I moved in there when I was still fifteen years old.

132.

133.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

134.

135.

136.

137.

138.

139.



140. I decided that I didn't want to put up with that anymore so I left the hostel. I was sixteen years old when I left. My contact with social workers also ended when I left.

Life after care

141. I moved in with [REDACTED] after leaving the hostel and started working for Tam Paton. We lived in a house in [REDACTED] near Gogarburn, out in the country. I stayed there for over a year. Tam owned flats in Palmerston Place and we would go and decorate them. I would paint, varnish and tidy up. There was also another boy called [REDACTED] who would do the electrics and we would work with him. I was also signing on. [REDACTED] and I then moved to Bathgate for a while.

142. I moved back to my ma's when I was seventeen or eighteen years old. I stayed there for a couple of years, and then moved to Ormiston in East Lothian. I rented a flat through somebody [REDACTED] knew, and the council paid my rent. I stayed there for a couple of years then left because my flat was damp.

143. I got a job at a place called [REDACTED], and moved back in with my mum. I worked for no money for two weeks to see if I could get the job. I got the job and was making legs for tables with their machinery. I ended up becoming the foreman, and later the manager. I worked with them for two years. I left because the money was not right.

144. I then got a job with a place called [REDACTED] I was making flight cases, for instruments to be taken on aeroplanes. They had said I could get a pay raise after a year because I was only on £5 an hour. I left after a year because they wouldn't give me a pay rise. Then I got a job painting and decorating. I told them I had already worked for a company that had gone into liquidation. I hadn't actually worked for that company. I could do the job but I just didn't have four years of work experience behind me to make it a trade. I knew they couldn't check the reference because the company was no longer there.
145. I was self-employed for a while as a decorator. I have had other labouring jobs where I was digging holes and moving bricks. I even worked at St Joseph's as a [REDACTED] for a while.
146. I also worked at a gardening company. They had the army contracts and then the airport contracts. I worked at the airport for the last few years of working for that company. I was taken on full time for doing the hedges and gardening in the summer, and the gritting in the winter. We also got water samples from burns to give to universities for testing.
147. Working at the airport was my favourite job. I had to get an airside driving licence. I went on all these courses on how to lift boxes and a fire course. It was really good. I worked there until eight or nine years ago.
148. I met my partner [REDACTED] about nineteen years ago. We started going out a couple of years later, and had a son called [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was only nineteen at the time. After a couple of years, she met somebody else and we split up. [REDACTED] would still stay with me every weekend. She tried to stop contact for a while, but I took her to court and we agreed contact again. [REDACTED] had another two kids with this new man, and then became a heroin addict.
149. About eight years ago, I got a phone call from [REDACTED]'s mother. She asked me to take [REDACTED] because [REDACTED] was on drugs and not able to look after him. [REDACTED] came to stay with me. He was nine years old at the time. Two years ago, I got legal custody

of him, which [REDACTED] didn't contest. That's when I realised that my name wasn't even on his birth certificate, but I don't need that to know that he is my son.

150. I stopped working because I became a full time carer for [REDACTED] who has [REDACTED]. I looked after him from when he was nine until a month ago. He is sixteen years old now and moved out last month. I looked after him for seven years. I have been offered a job painting and decorating now, but I am waiting for [REDACTED] to get settled before I start working again.

151. My mum and dad both went into a care home in North Berwick three or four years ago when my dad developed dementia. He died last year. My mum is still there

Impact

152. The worst thing at St Joseph's was the violence. I tried to keep out of trouble because they used to read out letters from people in jail, but I ended up in jail once. I spent two days in Saughton prison for not paying fines.

153. I made sure that I looked after [REDACTED] because I didn't want him going into care in a big place that was like the assessment centre. I have looked after him. I didn't want him to go into care ever.

154. [REDACTED] changed my life. I have never been in a fight since he came along, but I should have been able to change my life before then. When you have been in care, you mix with other boys and learn tricks of the trade, which can get into you. Most of those boys probably ended up in jail and a few even committed suicide.

155. I try to think of the good times in St Joseph's, and try not to think of the bad times. I did learn a lot of skills while I was in there. I learned metal work and wood work, as well as fishing.

Records

156. I don't have any records. I was in court once because I got caught selling cannabis, and the court asked if they could retrieve my records from St Joseph's before sentencing. I said that they could. They got access to my records. I got sentenced to the maximum number of hours of community service. I never saw my records.

Other information

157. Back when I was in care, kids had social workers and key workers, but they didn't ask any questions. They would ask about school work and general questions, but not if I was having any trouble.

158. I would like the Inquiry to do something that will help children in the future so that they will have a better life, and not be abused. If they are abused, then there should be ways that kids can say something. I would like children to be safer.

159. 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..... 7 / 8 / 2017