

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

HPN

Support person present: No

1. My name is HPN. I like to be known as HPN. During my time in care, I was known as HPN. HPN was my stepfather's surname. I took on that surname when my mother remarried when I was about four years old. I changed my surname back to HPN in adult life. My date of birth is 1956. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. My father's name was . He was around for a while when I was younger. I remember that my grandmother used to take me to see him, but I saw him very irregularly. He eventually moved down to London when I was about four years old. I didn't see him again until I was about twenty-one years old. My mother's name was . She remarried a man called when I was about four years old. I have five younger brothers. All of them are stepbrothers. Their names are , , , and . has sadly passed away. We were a Catholic family.
3. I was brought up in Possilpark in Glasgow. Life at home was quite tough because we never had very much. It was a case of just trying to get through every day. At the same time there were some things that were enjoyable though. I started primary school at St Cuthbert's in Possilpark. St Cuthbert's was both a primary and a secondary school. I can't remember whether I reached secondary school age at St

Cuthbert's. If I did, I could only have been there for a month or two before I was placed into care.

4. It was only after I started getting into trouble that social workers started to get involved. I would have been about eleven when that started. I would play truant from school with a couple of friends. There were times when we would wander around for days before we were caught. I was quite bad with doing that. I ended up with a charge which resulted in me having to attend Glasgow Sheriff Court. I was the only one amongst my friends who appeared. My mother was there. I don't think I had a solicitor, but I think a social worker was present. There was nobody keeping me updated or telling me what was going on.
5. I knew about approved schools, but I didn't think that was somewhere I would be sent. However, after the appearance it was decided that I should be placed in an approved school. I imagine that some of my offending played a part in that. They initially put me into Larchgrove. I think I was placed there whilst they tried to find a place to put me more permanently. I was taken straight from the court appearance at Glasgow Sheriff Court to Larchgrove.

Larchgrove Remand Home, Edinburgh Road, Glasgow

6. Larchgrove was just opposite an institution I later went to called St John's. It was an approved school for boys from about eleven years old up to about fifteen. I was in Larchgrove for between four and six weeks whilst they waited for a place for me elsewhere. I would have been a few weeks off turning thirteen when I first went there so I would have been there at some point in [REDACTED] 1969.
7. I remember being scared the first day I was at Larchgrove. That was because of the place itself but also because I was in a place where I would be locked up. I felt as if I was put in amongst a whole load of bad boys of all different ages. I didn't know anyone that was there and was on my own. I remember that in the mornings the staff got you up. You then had to get ready and washed before going for breakfast. I think during

the day there was some cleaning and school involved. I remember that in the evenings you could either do night classes or watch television. That was the same routine for most the days I was there.

8. I was in a dorm with about seven or eight other boys. We mostly used showers to get washed. There were about eight showerheads in the shower room that everybody used one after another. There was one occasion when I remember being in a gymnasium area and being lined up with other boys. I remember a staff member walking along the line and putting some sort of lotion into our hair. I think they did that because of nits. We all then went for a shower. I think the food was mostly ok in Larchgrove. I remember they had big giant teapots which they used to give all the boys tea.
9. The school was inside Larchgrove itself. I can't really remember whether it was the staff there or teachers from the outside who took the lessons. There is something that makes me think it might be more likely that it was just the staff at Larchgrove who taught lessons. The lessons were much the same as the lessons I had at St Cuthbert's, the school I went to before Larchgrove.
10. I didn't get out of Larchgrove during my time there. I think my mother came to visit me on one occasion. I can't remember whether she was on her own. The visit took place inside Larchgrove itself. I can't remember any social workers coming to visit me during my time there apart from at the end. Looking back, I think their role was just to drop you off and pick you up again.
11. I don't remember any of the staff there. I was ok and didn't really have any problems at Larchgrove. I had no issues with any of the staff or the other boys. Looking back, Larchgrove was bearable, but it still wasn't a nice place to be. It had a bad atmosphere. I do remember it being strict and the boys having to walk about in lines.
12. Social workers came to collect me at Larchgrove to take me to St Joseph's. I don't think I received any notice that that was going to happen. I think the social workers just appeared. I think there were two of them and no one told me where I was going.

I think I just got changed into my own clothes then was taken straight through to Tranent in a car. It was scary because by that time I had never really been outside of Glasgow before. The only time I had left the city was during one trip down to Irvine.

St Joseph's, Tranent, East Lothian

13. St Joseph's was kind of a middle approved school run by Brothers from an order. Younger boys would be sent to St Ninian's before starting there. Older boys would go to St John's when they turned about fifteen years old. I arrived at St Joseph's when I was either twelve or thirteen years old. I think I was just turning thirteen when I arrived and left just before I turned fifteen. I stayed there for nearly two years. That means I was there at some point between 1969 and 1971.
14. Everybody who arrived at St Joseph's was initially placed in the main building. If you behaved, or the staff thought you might do better in that environment, you were moved, after a certain period of time, into either North or South cottage. I was placed in South Cottage after a few months. I couldn't say exactly how long after I was moved to St Joseph's that I was sent there. I was in the cottage for a period before being moved back to the main house again. I couldn't say exactly how long I was in the cottage, but it would have been weeks or months. I think there was somewhere between eighteen and twenty boys in South cottage at any one time. It felt like an upgrade being moved into the cottages. There were less staff members watching you. The food was much better and there were areas where you could have more quiet time.

Layout of St Joseph's

15. As you drove in there were two cottages to the left-hand side of the drive which I think were called North and South cottage. The dorms in the cottages were smaller and there were some single rooms. There was a quiet room, a television room, a kitchen and a dining room. Beyond the cottages the drive led up to the main house. There was a big yard to the front of the main building. There was a low wall that surrounded

the grounds. It wasn't the sort of wall built to keep you in. You could easily get over the wall if you wanted to.

16. There were about ten steps leading up to a main entrance of the main building with columns either side. I think inside the main doors there were offices to the left-hand side. Beyond that there was a staircase that led downwards to the lower floor to the rear. That was where the dining hall and kitchen was located. Across from the dining hall was a gymnasium and a changing room. Upstairs at the top was where the dormitories were. Also within the building was a chapel, classrooms, a room that contained snooker, pool and table tennis tables, a tuck shop and a makeshift bank that was run by the staff and boys.

Staff

17. There was a mixture of Brothers and civilian staff who worked in St Joseph's. There weren't a lot of Brothers. I can only think of about five or six Brothers who worked there. There weren't a lot of staff members in total but there were always staff about mingling with the boys. There didn't seem to be a difference between what the Brothers and the civilian staff did in St Joseph's in terms of roles.
18. Brother PAF SNR St Joseph's. He was like SNR there.
19. Brother MJJ was SNR at St Joseph's. He stayed in South cottage. He was also the housefather in South cottage. He was quite old. He could have been in his sixties. He was a big man. I don't know where he went but he left during my time in South cottage. It would have been roughly during the last year I was at St Joseph's.
20. Brother zGTQ was the housefather in South cottage. I think he took over that role from Brother MJJ when he moved.
21. Mr MJL was a staff member at St Joseph's. He was in charge of one of the houses, St Andrew.

22. Miss MCR was the housemother in South cottage. MCR was her first name. I heard her surname a couple of times but don't remember it now. She was possibly between thirty-five and forty years old. She had blondish hair and didn't have a husband or a partner. She lived in South cottage itself.
23. There was a couple who were housemother and housefather of North cottage. They had two girls who were thirteen years old during the time I was in South cottage. I very seldom saw them because they were very seldomly in the main building. The only time I really got to mix in with them was at summer camp when we went berry picking. The couple brought their two girls with them.

The children at St Joseph's

24. It was all boys between the ages of about twelve and fifteen years old. All the boys were roughly secondary school age. I'd estimate there were between eighty and a hundred boys at St Joseph's at any one time. A lot of the boys had a history of breaking into places and causing havoc before they were placed at St Joseph's. There were some boys who didn't have families to go back to but that wasn't the reason why they were at St Joseph's. It was more that they had committed crimes and ended up there.

Houses and numbers

25. They had a house system in St Joseph's. The house names were St Ninian's, St Joseph's, St Andrew's and De La Salle. There were between fifteen and twenty boys in each house. I was in St Andrew's. Separately, every boy was allocated a different number. My number was ■■■. That number was put on all your clothes. I think we were solely divided into houses to keep track of us and to divide us up into smaller groups when needed. It wasn't as if all the boys from one particular house were placed in the same dorm. I remember that sometimes during the day we would all have to line up in all our houses for various things.

Routine at St Joseph's

First day

26. It was scary pulling up to St Joseph's the day I was dropped off. I remember seeing the main house and the four big columns at the main entrance. It felt like I was arriving at some kind of Roman place. It felt like I was entering a coliseum. I think the social workers took me into the office inside before signing some papers and leaving. The social workers weren't around long after I was dropped off. They left straight away after signing their paperwork. It was either Brother PAF or Brother MJJ who first met me after I arrived. I remember that it was during a holiday because there weren't many boys there. A lot of the boys were on home leave.

Daily routine

27. The staff would get us up in the mornings. We would all then get washed and dressed before going for breakfast. After breakfast all the boys did housekeeping. Housekeeping was another name for chores. Housekeeping lasted between thirty and forty minutes or so. After housekeeping it was time for school. Lessons were held until lunchtime. After we had our lunch, we played in the yard. You either played football or just sat about talking during your lunch break. There were more lessons in the afternoon. You had about half an hour after afternoon lessons before you had your evening meal. After your evening meal you had recreation. I can't remember exactly what time bedtime was. It was sometime between 8:00 pm and 10:00 pm.
28. During the weekends, if boys weren't on home leave, we would play football, tennis or cricket during the day instead of going to school. We sometimes played volleyball and badminton in the gymnasium. You would either do those activities or play snooker, pool or table tennis. On Sundays we would go to chapel.
29. The routine was slightly different when you were in the cottages. You would have your breakfast and evening meals in the cottage rather than in the main house. You would

still go up to the main house during the day. It was only outside that time that you were in the cottage.

Sleeping arrangements

30. It was dorms in the main house. There were between six and eight boys in the dorm I was in in the main house. The boys were all mixed ages in my dorm. It was all single beds. There was a space where you could keep your stuff. In the cottage I was in there were two or three dorms and a couple of single rooms. There were about eight boys in the dorm I was in there. Unlike in the main house, I was later moved to a single room within the cottage.
31. The dorm's door wasn't locked either in the main house, or the cottages, during the night so you could have access to the toilets if you needed them. I remember that in the main house there would be staff patrolling the corridors during the night. I never had any issues with those staff members during the night.

Washing / bathing

32. The washing and bathing facilities were ok at St Joseph's. It was all showers. I think there were certain days when you would shower. Otherwise showering happened after you had been in the gymnasium. There were always staff nearby when you showered but they never over did it. They were there to make sure there was no trouble.

Mealtimes / food

33. It was three meals a day and there was always enough. If you were in a dorm in the main house, you had all your meals in the main house. If you were in the cottages, you had your breakfast and evening meals in the cottage. The food was a lot better when you were in the cottages. Your main meal was always at lunchtime. You sat where you liked during mealtimes across however many tables were in the dining hall in the main house. We weren't grouped together in any way in the dining rooms in the

main house. In South cottage you were given a place to sit and had to remain there. It was tables of six. I sat at the same table as the housemother, Miss ^{MCR} during mealtimes.

34. I didn't like onions and they were in a lot of the food which meant that I couldn't eat it. Most lunchtimes I wouldn't eat very much at all because of that. I don't think that was a problem in the cottage because we didn't have onions for breakfast or at teatime. There weren't any repercussions for not eating your food, but I think it was noticed. I know the staff in the main house noticed that because I remember a staff member seeing I wasn't eating and asking whether I wanted something else brought in. I said "no" because I didn't want everybody else wondering what was going on.

Work / chores

35. Chores, or housekeeping as they called it, were undertaken each day after breakfast. Everybody had a designated job to do. You might be given a corridor or a room to clean. It was things like brushing up. Housekeeping was actually ok. It didn't feel like too much.
36. I remember that during the time I was in South cottage my housekeeping role would mostly be helping Miss ^{MCR} the housemother of South cottage, in the cottage's kitchen. I sometimes was made to clean the windows.

Clothing / uniform

37. St Joseph's provided you with your clothes for daily use. You wore normal day to day clothes when you went to school. There wasn't a uniform or anything like that. On a Sunday we wore a blazer and a pair of flannels to go to church. There was a different coloured blazer assigned to each house. I was in St Andrew's so I wore a blue blazer. We were also given a suit for when we went home on leave. Your clothes were changed and washed once or twice a week.

Pocket money

38. You received pocket money weekly. It was something like twenty-five pence. The money was provided by St Joseph's. It was announced how much you would receive every Friday in the gymnasium. Your name would be read out, what your marks were and how much pocket money you would be getting. It could be less than twenty-five pence if you had had marks deducted for bad behaviour.
39. They set up a wee bank in the room where the table tennis table was for you to get your cash. The boys would run the bank. I wasn't involved with that because I wasn't regarded as sensible enough by the staff. It tended to be boys who were a wee bit more educated who were involved with the bank. You would have to fill in your details to have your pocket money issued. You would then take your pocket money and spend it in the tuck shop they had within the building or during a trip if you were taken out. Looking back, all of that was actually a good idea because it taught you about money.

School

40. School was attended in the main house. I am not too sure how we were all divided up between classes. We were all separated though and stayed in the same group throughout the day. I found the education in general great. I remember that before I went to St Joseph's I was always second last in class because I was playing truant all the time. I remember that at St Cuthbert's, the secondary school I attended, I would sit at the back of the classes. I couldn't see anything because I needed glasses. Once I got to St Joseph's that was all different. I started reading books and things like that. The classes were a lot smaller than at St Cuthbert's and I found that the teachers picked up on a lot more. If you needed a bit more help, they would be across talking to you. The schooling was good like that.

Leisure time

41. There was access to a television and books. After lunchtime you would be out playing in the yard. Even if it was snowing you had to go out. There was football and things like stilts that the staff had made that you could play with. At the weekends there were big football pitches where we played football. In the evenings we all congregated in an area where there was a snooker, pool and table tennis table. I would usually play table tennis because there was always a wait for the snooker and pool tables. There were different classes you could go to in the evenings if you wanted to. It was drawing and things like that. It was all voluntary and you could pick what you wanted to do.

Religious instruction

42. You had to go to Mass in the chapel in the main house on Sundays if you weren't away on home leave. A priest would come in from the outside to take that. You just had to go to that and couldn't avoid it. I didn't like Mass and hadn't really attended that when I was at home. It was all in Latin which didn't make it any better. Nobody helped you out to understand what was going on. Confession was available but not something that you were made to do. I very seldomly went to confession.

Trips / holidays

43. They had a bus which they would use to take you places. They sometimes entered us in marathons and long walks at places for charity. There was a big hill that they sometimes took you out to climb. They sometimes took us to the pictures in Tranent on Saturdays during the day. Sometimes we would spend our pocket money in the shops there. All that felt like you were getting a small amount of freedom but there would still be staff about. Either that or the staff would tell you to be in a certain place at a certain time.
44. There were two occasions when Miss MCR, the housemother in South cottage, took me and another boy out. The first time I was taken out it was to the pictures in Edinburgh. It was just the three of us present. The second time was to visit either a

family or an old person in Grangemouth. We just sat around and drank tea with the family or old person. That was again just the three of us. I can't remember whether it was the same boy who was with us on both occasions, but the trips were some time apart. I don't remember Miss MCR taking anybody else out from South cottage. That definitely didn't happen. Looking back, I do wonder whether the other boy coming on those trips was to provide some sort of cover to allow Miss MCR to take me out and to make things less noticeable.

45. During the summers they took you to a farm near Montrose to pick berries. That lasted between four and six weeks. There was something like a holiday camp or barracks where we would stay. I remember sleeping in bunkbeds. The farmer would collect you in the morning and take you to the drills where the berries were grown. You'd pick the berries during the day before being taken back. You were paid for your work and the money was placed in your account. You could earn up to £20 doing that. In the evenings you might be taken to the pictures, or you would be taken into Montrose. Otherwise, you'd climb trees or play in the countryside. There were lots of things to do during those holidays.

Leave home

46. If you behaved, you were allowed home leave after six weeks of you being at St Joseph's. Whether you continued to get home leave depended on what marks you had under the marks system the Brothers operated. The number of marks you had depended on how well you had behaved during the week. I think you needed at least thirty marks to be awarded home leave. Home leave was every two to three weeks. St Joseph's had their own bus which they would use to take you to Buchanan Street in Glasgow on a Friday. Beyond that they gave you a bus fare to get home. You had to be back at Buchanan Street to be picked up by a certain time the following Sunday.

Birthdays / Christmas

47. I can't remember whether birthdays were celebrated. You would spend Christmas at St Joseph's if you didn't have home leave. There was a festive meal which was quite good, and activities would be put on.

Visits / Inspections / Review of Detention

48. Nobody visited me at all whilst I was at St Joseph's. You got home leave so you would see your family regularly if you behaved anyway. I can't remember ever being visited by social workers. I think we all viewed the staff who worked in St Joseph's as sort of social workers even though they weren't. I never saw anyone inspecting St Joseph's or checking up on my welfare.
49. Nobody kept me updated about what was going on whilst I was at St Joseph's. One of the things I didn't really like about my time there was that nobody told me how long I was going to be there. I knew that boys were only there for months, but others were there for years. Beyond that I didn't know when I was leaving. It would have been a lot more bearable if someone had given me a release date.

Letters / Parcels

50. You could write home once a week if you wanted to. The staff told you what to write. I would say that they would more give you ideas what to write rather than actually telling you what to put in the letters. At that age I wouldn't have known what to write anyway. I can't remember whether the letters were read by the staff before they were sent out. I don't remember whether my mother wrote back to me. I know she did when I was at other places so she might have done at St Joseph's.
51. I remember that Miss MCR sent me a couple of parcels whilst she was away from St Joseph's during my time there. That might have been during the Christmas and the summer holidays. The parcels contained sweets. I don't remember Miss MCR sending any of the other boys parcels. I am certain about that.

Healthcare

52. You could report sick if you got poorly. They had a nurse you could see. If you needed any treatment, she would arrange for a doctor to come in. I was never sick and never saw anybody else who was sick. I never had any injuries that needed treatment beyond sunburn. I think the nurse treated me for that. I don't remember there being any dental care but there might have been. I imagine there would have been because the staff made you brush your teeth every day. The staff were pretty good at making sure you did things like that.

Running away

53. I ran away from St Joseph's on a number of occasions. I can't exactly remember how many times I absconded. I ran away the very first day I got there. I absconded with a boy who had arrived the day before me. I hadn't a clue where I was. The staff caught me within twenty minutes. I think they expected that to happen with me and didn't hold it against me on that occasion. There was only one time when I made it to Glasgow. I walked to Edinburgh then skipped a train to Glasgow. You wouldn't get any home leave for six weeks if you ran away or absconded. You may also be given the belt by Brother PAF but that wasn't always the case.

Bed-wetting

54. Bed-wetting was never an issue for me, but it was for other boys. They had a dorm in the main house named Killiecrankie where they would place all the boys who wet their beds. I have since found out Killiecrankie is a place next to a river so that makes sense. There were about eight boys in that dorm. They had special beds with plastic sheets. I don't know what else the staff did with the boys in that dorm because I was never in there.
55. I don't remember there being any punishments for those boys who wet their beds. However, placing them in a separate dorm didn't particularly help them because everybody else would know why they were placed there. That would lead to them

getting some stick from the other boys. That wasn't a constant thing but now and again it would be mentioned.

Discipline at St Joseph's

56. You were supervised everywhere you went. The only place where there was less supervision was in the cottages where there weren't really Brothers around. You felt as if you weren't under supervision all of the time when you were there. That was unlike other areas within St Joseph's.

57. They had a marks system at St Joseph's. Everyone was given twenty marks a week. Bad behaviour during the week would result in marks being taken off. That could be for things like talking back. Some of the things they took marks away for could be quite silly like kicking a ball too high in the yard. You might get five marks deducted for that. If you were below thirty marks you weren't allowed home leave. You may also get money deducted from your pocket money if you had marks taken away during the week. It was possible to end up with more than twenty marks at the end of the week. You could get extra marks if your behaviour was particularly good. Staff could recommend that.

58. The only time they gave you the belt was if you absconded. I don't remember it being used in the classrooms or as part of your schooling. It was used purely for when boys ran away. In my experience the belt wasn't always used when you ran away. I think it only happened once to me. I don't know whether that was because, in my case, I still ran away after they gave me it. Brother PAF SNR was the person who administered the belt. When you received that punishment, it was given in his office and there was no one else there. He would hit you six times over your clothes on your backside.

Abuse at St Joseph's

Miss MCR

59. Miss MCR was the housemother attached to South cottage. She and Brother MJJ were the only staff members who were in the cottage. Miss MCR stayed at one end of the cottage and Brother MJJ stayed at the other end. They had their own rooms or apartments. It was very seldom that Brother MJJ was around in the cottage. He was quite busy all the time because he was SNR at St Joseph's. He was always away doing his business. I remember that he was ultimately replaced by Brother zGTQ as a housefather during my time in the cottage. I don't know where Brother MJJ went after he left. Miss MCR was the staff member who did all the work looking after the boys in the cottage.
60. I was eventually moved to South cottage. I'm not sure exactly when that happened. It would have been months rather than weeks after I arrived. It all began in the dining hall in South cottage. There were about four or five tables in there. I remember that during mealtimes Miss MCR was the only adult who would be present. Brother MJJ ate all his meals elsewhere. I used to have a bad habit of leaning back on my chair and one breakfast Miss MCR told me off for doing that. I later finished my meal, asked to leave the table and Miss MCR refused. I might have been a bit abrupt in asking her that because she had told me off earlier. I ignored her, stood up and walked out anyway. Miss MCR followed me out and got me in the hall outside. She had me up against the wall and gave me a talking to. She was close to me and I couldn't move. I can't remember exactly what she said but it was along the lines of "you don't behave like this." She then made me stay in the corridor for a good twenty to thirty minutes whilst everyone was getting ready to go up to the main house for the day. At the time I thought she was just pressurising me and had been a bit too close to me when she told me off.
61. After that incident it was as if she was concentrating on me all the time. It wasn't anything bad she just paid me a lot of attention. At night-time in the dorm, she would come in, sit on my bed and talk to me for ages. It could have been twenty minutes to

half an hour each time. Other boys would be there trying to sleep in their beds. Eventually a single room became available, and I was moved into that room. I can't remember whether I was due to go into a single room or not. Miss MCR continued to come in and sit on my bed and talk to me after I was moved into the single room. We would talk for ages.

62. It was all gradual and didn't all start happening in one night. It all could have happened over a period of weeks or a month. After some time, she started touching me. It quickly escalated to her touching me in a sexual manner. Things snowballed from there. She would come into my room every night. She would stay between half an hour and an hour. After a while she got me to touch her in a sexual manner. I don't think I was sexually active by that time, so everything was new to me. It didn't progress to anything further. That was basically it.
63. I don't think Miss MCR was doing the things she was doing to me to other boys. I remember her being particularly friendly with a boy who arrived at the cottage before I arrived, but I never saw anything happen. I don't know whether she progressed things with him in the same way as she did with me.
64. After some time, I went away on home leave and failed to return. The cottage was a place for those boys who behaved so when I was caught and brought back, I thought I would be moved back to the main building. However, that didn't happen with me. I was moved back into South cottage. Looking back, I think Miss MCR made sure I was returned to the cottage. A few weeks later I absconded again. I was away for about eight hours with another boy before being caught. When I was returned to St Joseph's I was told that I was getting returned to the cottage. It could have been Mr MJL who told me that, but I can't be sure. When I was told that by the staff member concerned, I told him I didn't want to be returned there. When I said that he asked me why I didn't want to go back to the cottage. I made up that I was getting too much stick from the other boys in the cottage. It was all an excuse to try and get out of the cottage. That night I stayed in the main house. During breakfast the following day Mr MJL told me that I was wanted over in the cottage by Miss MCR.

65. When I went over to the cottage Miss MCR spoke with me and tried to persuade me to return to the cottage. I just told her that I couldn't handle the pressure and hassle I was getting from the other boys. I was only in the cottage for between thirty and forty minutes before I got back to the main building. That was the end of things after that. I ended up staying in the main house until I left St Joseph's for good.

Reporting of abuse whilst at St Joseph's

66. I didn't report what was happening to the police on the occasions they brought me back after running away. They didn't ask me why I had run away. I didn't tell anybody at all about what was happening. I didn't feel that anyone was wanting to listen or would understand what was going on. There was nobody I felt I could have reported what was going on to. I don't think there was any way that I could have reported what I experienced during my time at St Joseph's.
67. Looking back, I can't think of what they could have put in place to have allowed me to comfortably report what was happening. Whatever would have been put in place would have resulted in everybody watching everybody else constantly. There was nobody available to tell what was happening. There was no way I could have spoken to a member of staff about what was happening. Even if there was someone independent available to speak to, I don't think I would have spoken to them. It wasn't even as if there was an anonymous box where I could have reported the abuse I was suffering. The problem was that whoever I reported what was happening to, or however I would have reported what was happening, I still had to stay in the institution. I think that stopped me from saying anything.

Leaving St Joseph's

68. I wasn't really told when I would be leaving St Joseph's. I was aware that there was a court date and that might result in me being moved out of St Joseph's, but I didn't know when. I don't think they told me when it was because I may have absconded

before that if I'd known. I'm not too sure how my time ultimately came to an end at St Joseph's. I think I might have failed to return after a home leave and was arrested by the police. That would have been just before I turned fifteen in 1971. After that there was a court hearing at Glasgow Sheriff Court.

69. The decision at that hearing was that I would be moved to a senior approved school. I don't know whether I was maybe held at Longriggend for a short period for reports before ultimately being moved on to St John's or whether I was moved directly to St John's after the court hearing. My memories aren't clear around that or the ordering of the places I went to from that time onwards. All I know is that there was no gap between St Joseph's and where I went next. I just got moved from one place to another.

St John's Boys School, Edinburgh Road, Glasgow

70. St John's was a senior approved school. I don't know who ran it. It could have been the council. It was located right next to Larchgrove on Edinburgh Road in Glasgow. I think St John's consisted of one big house. I went to St John's when I was about fifteen years old and was there on and off for a period of about a year. I would have been at St John's between about 1971 and 1972. I wasn't continuously at St John's during my time there. There were times when I ran away, was caught and would be in Longriggend before being returned again.
71. I can't remember much schooling in St John's. I was in a work party there in the mechanics section. All I really learnt was how to wash cars. I wouldn't say I learnt any skills for the outside.

Abuse at St John's

72. I had no issues during my time at St John's. Everything was ok. It wasn't as strict as St Joseph's. Everybody was older, all the boys were over sixteen, so the staff treated you a bit more like you were an adult.

Unnamed female staff member

73. There was a female staff member who worked in St John's. I don't know why she was there, but I remember she was just out of college. I can't remember what her role was or what her name was. I think she was about twenty-five years old. I remember her saying that she had a lot of brothers. Looking back, I wonder whether that was some sort of way of her trying to stop boys perhaps making jokes about her.
74. There was a boy who was in the mechanics section alongside me. I don't remember his name. He was about fifteen but could have been sixteen. I remember he couldn't read or write. Because of that he needed help to read letters he received or to write letters himself. I was told by him that the female staff member was one of the people who would help him out with that.
75. There was a small room which was off, I think, a recreation room there. The boy told me it had a bed in it. He told me that he was taken into that room by the female staff member. He told me that on one occasion the female staff member had sex with him. He told me that one dinner time. It was probably about two hours after the incident occurred. It was as if the boy just had to tell someone. I could tell from his body language that what he was saying had happened. I could see that he had changed after the incident.

Leaving St John's

76. My main issue was the same as the one I had at St Joseph's. Nobody told me when I was going to leave, and it was all open ended. That resulted in me failing to return

from home leaves or running away. That, in turn, resulted in me committing offences on the outside. I was committing the offences because I needed the money for food and things like that. I would get caught by the police and then that would lead to short periods when I was in Longriggend before being returned to St John's. It was all one big cycle.

77. I never got released from St John's and was moved to borstal when I just turned sixteen in 1972. I think I was remanded to Longriggend for reports for a period of time before I was moved to Barlinnie for a few days awaiting a transfer to Polmont. The transfers would happen on Fridays and I think I was placed there waiting for that to happen.

Longriggend Detention Centre, Airdrie, North Lanarkshire

78. I was in Longriggend on multiple occasions between the ages of fifteen and seventeen. That means I was there for periods between 1971 and 1973. That was both on remand and during times when I was awaiting being returned to St John's. Longriggend was a nasty place. I think most of the prison staff were ex-army. The staff there wouldn't hesitate to beat someone up if they wanted to. I was ok though because I think my experience of the places I had been before taught me how to keep a low profile and to keep out of the way of trouble.

HMP Barlinnie, Glasgow

79. I was in Barlinnie for a short period of time before I was sent to Polmont. I was awaiting a transfer during my time there. I will always remember my first time there. I was placed in the top flat with inmates who were alcoholics. It was all men who were serving small sentences. I wasn't put in amongst hardened criminals but the men I was amongst were older men rather than children or adolescents. I know there was abuse in Barlinnie, but I never witnessed any during my time there. I am aware there

were fights between the prison officers and the inmates. Things like that happen all the time in those sorts of places.

Polmont Borstal, Polmont, Brightons, Falkirk

80. I went to Polmont just after I turned sixteen in 1972. I was there for about eleven months. I think by that time everything was finished when it came to my time in approved schools and borstals. That really was the start of my experience of the prison system into adulthood. Everything was more secure from then onwards. Polmont was a bit rough at first, but it was ok. I was released from Polmont just before I turned seventeen in 1973.

Life after leaving care

81. I continued to commit offences after leaving Polmont. Up until the age of twenty-one I spent a total of two years in various institutions. It was mainly Barlinnie and Saughton. I then served a longer prison sentence between Barlinnie and Perth. On that occasion my sentence was for four years. After being released I was out for eighteen months before ending up back in prison again for about three years between Barlinnie and Peterhead. That whole cycle of being in and out of prison stopped for a while when I was about twenty-six years old. I was outside for about ten years before I received a further two-year sentence. In the end I ended up serving a year of that sentence. There was then another ten-year gap before I served another sentence for about eighteen months. I have stayed out of the prison system for the last fifteen years.
82. I have worked during the times I was outside of prison. I worked [REDACTED] as a cleaner. I have also worked in food banks, charities and places like that. I've had three different long-term relationships. The first one failed because I was in and out of prison. There was too much alcohol involved on both our parts in my second relationship. The third relationship broke down due to problems on my partner's part.

She had problems following losing two of her children. I have four children from my first two partners. I now have ten grandchildren who take up a lot of my time now. I see them a lot and enjoy helping my son and daughter.

Impact

83. My time in the approved schools and borstals left me institutionalised. I never actually left anywhere from the age of thirteen onwards. I just went from one place to the next. I would see the same people in all the places all the way through. The prison system was a continuation and upgrade on my time in approved schools and borstals. During the time when I was most in and out of prison, I was happy to be sent away. The way I was treated in the approved schools and borstals prepared me for that. I'd definitely say that there is a connection between my continued time in prison from my time in care.
84. The only positive thing that came out of St Joseph's was the schooling they provided me. That affected my attitude towards further education. It left me wanting to be involved in further education later in life during my time at certain prisons. Whenever further education was available I would do it. I have learnt things like computing and so on. St Joseph's put my mind towards being able to continue with all of that.

Treatment and support

85. I've never received any psychological support or help connected with my time in care. I've never sought to get any help in connection with what I suffered in care.

Reporting of abuse after leaving care

86. I've not told anyone about what happened when I was in St Joseph's. The first time I told anyone was when I provided this statement. I decided to speak to the Inquiry

because I had seen reports on the news surrounding abuse. It was always men who were being discussed as the abusers. I felt that it was important to show that it wasn't always men who were the abusers. I wanted, in some way through speaking about my experiences, to provide a bit of balance surrounding what is being investigated and reported.

Records

87. I have never applied for or obtained any records connected to my time in care. That would be something that I would be interested in doing. I'd be interested to read them. I am particularly curious to learn why I was sent from one approved school to the next and why particular institutions were recommended for me.


Lessons to be Learned / Hopes for the Inquiry

88. A lot of the places I was in during my childhood were just holding places. You were tossed in and given your meals, education and recreation. Looking back, there was never any help provided to get me out of the system. There was no training to prepare me for adult life. There was nothing available at all during my time in approved schools. That continued throughout my time in borstal and the prison system. There wasn't enough education to make you understand that you needed to get out of the institutions you were in. There was nothing available to help you break the cycle of ending up in the system. I know that prisoners who are serving life sentences are put on Training For Freedom (TFF) courses to teach them skills to understand how to live on the outside. I think that sort of training should be widened a bit to other prisoners and those in care. It shouldn't feel as if you are landing on the moon when you leave an institution.
89. Nobody explained things to me when I was in the approved schools. What was happening should have been explained to me when I went to Larchgrove. I was given no explanation as to why I was there or what was happening next. That continued

during my time in St Joseph's and St John's. I didn't really know what was going on. The open-ended nature of it all was part of the issue. Nobody sat me down and said, "you'll be leaving here on such a date" or "after you leave here this is what you will be doing." Nobody told me what I needed to do to make sure that those things would happen. That led to me just surviving on a day-to-day existence.

If I had been given some sort of an idea about a release date during my time in the approved schools, it would have helped. That would have meant that I didn't have to arrange 'release' myself through absconding or running away. I definitely would have run away less if I was given an end date at the approved schools I was in. I know that because there were times when I was in borstal where I was trusted delivering things outside of the institution and I never ran away. That was because I knew there was an end date to me leaving. That's the same when I have been on outside work parties when I have been serving sentences in prison. Running away just didn't even enter my mind. I hope that children entering the care system now have things explained to them when they enter the care system. I hope that children are given a date when they are going to be released or sent back home.

90. 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..... *30/1/2023*