

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

KCS

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is <sup>KCS</sup> [REDACTED] My date of birth is the [REDACTED] 1970. I am 51 years old. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. My parent's names were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I had a brother called [REDACTED] and a sister called [REDACTED]. I am the middle child and [REDACTED] is the oldest.
3. I was born in Haddington but moved to Tranent when I was four years old and that is where I was brought up. Life wasn't very great for me as my father was a control freak and as a child we were not allowed out to play with other children.
4. My father always worked very hard on a farm and then he started his own driving school business. He suffered a heart attack in 1982 or 1983 and passed away. My father did not allow my mother to do anything but would leave her money and cigarettes on the window sill when he went out.
5. I remember my mother would check my father's diary and work out when he was coming home. She would let us go out and play but we had to be back before him and we were not allowed to bring anyone back to the house. My mother passed away in 2018.

6. I attended Tranent Primary School and then Ross High School. I was in the top 10 per cent for academic achievement. My downfall was French and my French teacher. I hated French and my French teacher Miss [REDACTED] hated me. In Ross High School I had three periods of French with a break in between the first and second periods. I was not well behaved in the class and Miss [REDACTED] would throw the chalk duster at me.
7. On one occasion one of the other boys brought in a bottle of cider to school. I drank the whole bottle during the break and got drunk. When I went into the French class Miss [REDACTED] threw the duster at me so I threw it back at her.
8. Miss [REDACTED] flipped and threw me out of the classroom. At that time we were in a double portokabin with a cloakroom between them. Miss [REDACTED] went and got the SNR [REDACTED] Mr [REDACTED]. He also happened to be the boyfriend of Miss [REDACTED].
9. I was in the cloakroom between the classrooms when Mr [REDACTED] arrived. He grabbed me and threw me against the coat pegs. I pushed him back and so Mr [REDACTED] called the police and I was duly arrested and taken to the police cells.
10. Five weeks later I appeared before a Children's Panel and the decision was made to send me into care. On checking my records recently I found that there was no mention of the incident involving Miss [REDACTED] but the records stated that I was put into care because I was playing truant which was not the case.
11. I was home for about four or five weeks. I was expelled from Ross High School. I appeared before the Children's Panel and ended up being sent to St Joseph's List D School. I think that I must have been thirteen or fourteen. I stayed at St Joseph's until I was fifteen and a half years old.

## Care at St Joseph's List D School, Tranent.

12. I think that the social worker took me to St Joseph's. I was scared as I didn't know what to expect. I wasn't used to mixing with other children because my father was so strict. I only really met the children who would be described as the wrong sort. It was hard to form bonds with my class mates in school.

## Routine at St Joseph's Tranent

### *Houses/cottages*

13. When I first arrived there were three different cottages. Ogilvie, Sinclair and Ben Elder. I think that I started off in Ogilvie and then moved to Sinclair which was for older boys. I was introduced to the house mother who was also the cook and she was called Mrs Woods. The social worker was called Bill Grey but he moved to another house and was replaced by Mr Napier. They were all quite decent people.
14. I wasn't in Ogilvie for too long before I moved to Sinclair. It was no more than two or three months. The social worker in charge of Sinclair was <sup>LVH</sup> and he was a friend of my fathers. I think that he organised this because of that friendship. Mr <sup>LVH</sup> had been a driving instructor and my father bought his business from him. I was glad to get away from Ogilvie House because Brother Ben who was one of the monks was physically abusing me and he had easy access to me at Ogilvie House.
15. Brother Ben was the supervisor of Ogilvie and Ben Elder House and I think that <sup>LVH</sup> <sup>LVH</sup> knew what was happening to me and took me into Sinclair House to get away from Brother Ben.

### *Mornings and bedtime*

16. We got up in the morning between 6:30am and 7:30am. You went down for breakfast and it was laid out for you. The breakfast had been cooked by the house mother. You went to a school in the grounds which was very basic.
17. All the boys were aged between eleven and sixteen. We all had a lot of free time and we could play sport and watch television. There was no structure to our day. We could play snooker in the evening and football with some of the other boys. We went to bed at about 9:00 or 9:30.

### *Chores*

18. You had to keep your own bed space tidy by making your bed and general cleaning. There was nothing excessive you just had to muck in and keep the place tidy.

### *Mealtimes / Food*

19. I think that the food must have been alright because I don't recall not being able to eat it. I think that there was plenty of food because I don't recall being hungry very often. I was cast as a greedy boy because I had to eat my food quickly through having a breathing issue. This was really the start of my problems with Brother Ben when I stayed at Ogilvie House.

### *Washing / bathing*

20. I don't recall any issues with bathing or the showers. You could shower whenever you wanted. You were often in need of a shower after playing sports. In the morning and evening you washed and brushed your teeth.

### *Schooling*

21. There was a school of sorts in the grounds where you were taught very basic subjects. There was no curriculum and you didn't sit exams or anything like that. There was basic maths and English along with some woodwork. There was a gymnasium which you could also attend for sport.
22. I recall that the English teacher who was a real teacher but at the end of his career. He would sit in his classroom reading a book and drinking whisky. He didn't seem at all interested.
23. The maths teacher was called Mr <sup>MHC</sup> [REDACTED] and you didn't learn much in his class. We spent more time in the summer term helping him look after his garden than doing any lessons.
24. There was a teacher called <sup>GFJ</sup> [REDACTED] who was a great man. He would do all the outdoor sports. He used to take you camping and hill walking and other outdoor sports. He was always very pleasant to the boys. We would do the outdoor activities once or twice a week.

### *Religion*

25. Religion was not forced on you and I don't recall ever having to attend at church despite the fact it was a Catholic run home.

### *Trips / Holidays*

26. I do recall in the summertime going on a trip to Dunoon for five days. I think it was near to where the submarine base was. I think that it was <sup>GFJ</sup> [REDACTED] that took us. I recall that there was another man from Tranent and the pair of them spent a lot of time in the pub while we did things like fishing and canoeing.

*Birthdays and Christmas*

27. I don't recall celebrating my birthday when I was at St Joseph's and I don't recall any Christmas celebrations. I don't remember receiving birthday presents from my family.

*Visits / Inspections/ Review of Detention*

28. You could have as many visitors as you wanted. My mother never came and visited. My mother did not want me to go home at the weekends as after maybe two weekends at home it was made clear to me that I was not welcome so I didn't bother going back. I did try to phone my mother but she didn't want to know. I didn't get on with my siblings. I think that there was the odd visit from a social worker but they were few and far between.
29. I was told initially that I was being sent there for three months and then my care would be reviewed. When I returned to the Children's Panel I was told that my mother was not prepared to take me back and that I would have to stay at St Joseph's and in the care system. It had a massive effect on me.
30. I know that my "gran" wanted to take me but she was living in a one bedroom sheltered house in Musselburgh and there was no room for me and it just wasn't practical. I felt deserted by everyone.
31. I think that all in all I attended three Children's panels. The first was when I was put into care. The second was the three month review and the third one just before they kicked me out of St Joseph's. I think that my mother only attended the first Children's Panel.

*Running away*

32. I ran away a lot. In the first two months I must have run away five or six times. It was either or both <sup>LVI</sup> [REDACTED] and or <sup>HKN</sup> [REDACTED] that came to pick you up. You would be taken back to St Josephs and they would batter you relentlessly in the boiler

room. I was often picked up by the police and I did tell them about what was happening. They just said that they had heard it all before and that they were still going to return me to St Joseph's. It was because of the abuse that I was running away in the first place.

#### **Abuse at St Joseph's List D School Tranent.**

33. The abuse by Brother Ben started about two or three weeks after I arrived at St Joseph's. He had a shed and on a Wednesday night he would invite the boys to his shed. The shed was full of electrical equipment and he used to give all the boys electric shocks and make our hair stand up.
34. The first time it happened to me he called me a "greedy wee bastard" and told me that this was my punishment. He told me that I ate too quickly and that was why he called me greedy. He said that he would knock it out of me. My problem was that I had difficulty breathing through my nose so when I was eating I had to hold my breath and hence the reason I ate quickly.
35. He would send the other boys back to their houses and he would tell me to stay back. He had a screen in the shed and he took me behind the screen and gave me the electric shocks as a punishment for being greedy. He did this for three weeks on at least seven occasions but he had to drag me there as I was trying my best to get away from him. It was very painful and unpleasant.
36. I told Brother <sup>MBU</sup> and <sup>LVH</sup> about what was happening and they told me that Brother Ben was just showing us experiments and that there was no harm in it. I knew that it was a punishment. Brother <sup>MBU</sup> would give me cigarettes to keep me quiet. Fortunately Mr <sup>LVH</sup> arranged for me to be moved to Sinclair House and it meant that I wouldn't run into Brother Ben again.

37. I was in Sinclair House for about two or three weeks when I ran into Brother Ben again. I was asked by a member of staff who didn't know the history between Brother Ben and me to go to the shack where Brother Ben had his workshop and to help him repair a gramophone that was broken. When I got there he shut and locked the door. He just set about me punching and kicking me and gave me a real doing.
38. I assumed it was because I had reported it and had been moved to Sinclair House. I think he chose the moment when [LVH] was not there and it was a member of staff that was covering for him. I think it was quite deliberate so that he could kick the hell out of me.
39. There was one night when Brother Ben drove a bus at me and tried to knock me down. There was a bus kept at St Joseph's and it was driven by the staff to collect boys from different places. One night Brother Ben was going to go and pick up some boys. I was in the grounds at St Joseph's and he tried to knock me down. I went on to the grass to avoid him and he followed me onto the grass. He drove on to the grass after me but I managed to get away. He was trying to run me down. There was no point telling anyone as they wouldn't believe me and no action would be taken.
40. Brother Ben was just a bully especially to the younger boys. I was aware that other boys had been bullied by Brother Ben. He was always shouting at you or pushing you out of the way if he passed you in the corridor. I learned in later life that Brother Ben's real name was Michael Murphy I think that I read this in a newspaper. I would describe Brother Ben when I had dealings with him as being in his 40's or 50's.
41. Whilst I was at St Joseph's I was also bullied and abused by two other staff members. They were [LVI] and [HKN]. [LVI] was the son of my social worker [LVH]. [LVI] and [HKN] were sort of janitors and worked in the boiler room. At the weekends they would also cover for the care staff when they were short of qualified staff to work in the cottages.
42. If you ran away it would be [LVI] and [HKN] who came to collect you from wherever you had been caught. Both of them would drag you into the boiler



room and batter you. I have a theory that <sup>LVI</sup> was jealous of the time his father spent with me and the way he looked after me. I think that this enraged him and that was a factor in the beatings that he gave me.

43. <sup>HKN</sup> was a small guy with an attitude. Both he and <sup>LVI</sup> would be in their late 20's or early 30's. <sup>LVI</sup> lived a few houses away from my parent's house in <sup>LVI</sup> Tranent. He was also married to <sup>LVI</sup>. There was no reason for him to beat me up. I think that <sup>HKN</sup> just followed his lead. I think that they thought they were the "he men" of St Joseph's.
44. If you passed <sup>HKN</sup> or <sup>LVI</sup> they would give you a dig in the ribs. I don't know how they were allowed to abuse the boys the way they did. They would swagger about the campus in shorts and tee shirts as if they owned the place. I would describe them as a "couple of tickets" who should never have been allowed to behave in the way that they did.

#### **Reporting of abuse at St Joseph's**

45. The <sup>SNR</sup> monks at St Joseph's were Brother <sup>MJG</sup> and Brother <sup>MBU</sup>. I did try to report the abuse to them. They would listen to what I had to say and then make out that I was mistaken. They would offer me packs of cigarettes which I always accepted. I realise now that this was an offering in exchange for me keeping my mouth shut and not speaking about the abuse to anyone else.

#### **Leaving St Joseph's List D School, Tranent**

46. The more that I was running away the more kicking's I was getting from <sup>LVI</sup> <sup>LVI</sup> and <sup>HKN</sup>. My mother didn't want me and I had nowhere to go and I didn't want to stay at St Joseph's.

47. It was **LVH** who met me one day when I was returned after having run away. I could see that he was upset and that he had my bags which had been packed with my stuff. He was apologising but told me that I could no longer stay at St Joseph's. I asked to phone my mother and tell her what was happening but didn't get a reply on the phone.
48. I was fifteen and a half years old and I took my bags and went to my mother's house. She answered the door to me but told me to "fuck off" as she was not going to let me in. I had nowhere to go.
49. This is another mistake in my records. I read them recently and they state that I left St Joseph's when I turned sixteen but that is not the case. I was only fifteen and a half when I was shown the door at St Joseph's and told not to come back.

#### **Life after being in care at St Joseph's List D School.**

50. I could not go home and I had nowhere that I could stay. I went into Edinburgh and lived on the streets. I was dossing anywhere I could and begging for money. I met a guy who offered me accommodation if I was to sell drugs for him. I couldn't get a job so it was the best option until I could find my own way.
51. I was sixteen when I first appeared in court and was sentenced to a three month prison sentence at Glenochil Young Offenders. In that year I was sentenced to two three month spells at Glenochil.

#### **Detention at Glenochil Young Offenders Institution, Tullibody.**

52. Nothing really happened at Glenochil. It was a prison and I was serving a prison sentence. It was a very strict regime. I recall that you weren't allowed to lie on your bed and it felt like military training.

53. I don't have any complaints about Glenochil but the thing was if I was still at St Joseph's I probably would never have ended up at Glenochil as I would not have been committing crimes. I had been abandoned by the care system and was paying the price for trying to survive out of the care system which I had not been prepared for.

*Memories of Glenochil.*

54. It was not a good place but you knew where you stood. You would get up in the morning and have a wash. You had to make up a "bed block" before you had breakfast. You would then go out to the yard and spend about two hours marching up and down.
55. If you were lucky you would be selected for a work party. This could involve stripping wire or getting a job in the kitchen or laundry. The rest of the time you were just hanging around your cell. You had to be aware that you and your cell could be inspected at any time and you were not allowed to lie on your bed. The cell had to be immaculate and if they discovered dust you would be punished by losing privileges although not physically.
56. That's all I remember about Glenochil it was a prison and you were serving a sentence imposed on you by the court. It wasn't a nice place and it was very strict but I can't say that I had any issues with it.

**Life after Glenochil Young Offenders Institution.**

57. When I left Glenochil I went back on to the street and was involved in petty crime. I was doing what I had to do to survive. I didn't have any experience or qualifications so I struggled to find work. I continued on that path until I met my wife.
58. I was twenty one when I met my wife [REDACTED] and my life changed completely. I started to be part of a family again and I had a son and daughter with [REDACTED]. I was no longer committing crime and involved with the wrong people.

## **Impact**

59. I feel that with my own children I love them unconditionally. I am not strict with them I would consider myself to be a good father. I am probably the opposite of what my parents were to me. I was always able to find some work to support my family.
60. In 1996 I was working and was lifting some slabs. I heard a snap in my back and I couldn't move. I had snapped a disc on my back and I needed to have emergency surgery as it was prolapsed against my bladder. I was never able to work after that.
61. As a result of the operation I was left in severe pain and a numbness in my left leg. I had the operation repeated on two occasions but it never improved. I am now requiring a further operation on my neck because of the unnatural wear and tear to my neck that is happening as a result of the ongoing trauma to my spine. The odds are not good on the operation being successful and there is a risk of paralysis.
62. I have had counselling for the pain that I am constantly in. I have never had counselling for the abuse I suffered in care. The only person I have discussed it with is my wife [REDACTED]
63. What happened to me in care never leaves me. My memories are triggered by unrelated events and I tend to dwell on what happened to me. I could be watching television and it all comes back to me what happened at St Joseph's. My wife has told me about times that I have been sobbing in my sleep.
64. I have severe migraine headaches and am being treated for the pain with tablets but have been told that there is no cure for the pain and that the tablets will only reduce the number of migraines that I suffer from.

## **Reporting of Abuse**

65. I have never reported the matter to the police but I was contacted recently by them. I can't be sure of the date. They told me that they had spoken to someone who informed

them that Mr <sup>MHC</sup> had severely beaten me on one occasion. I couldn't help them with their enquiries because I have no memory of that incident.

66. When the police contacted me recently it was then that I decided to contact the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry and tell them about what had happened to me at St Joseph's List D School.

### **Records**

67. I applied to the social work department to see my records. I wanted to know why after three months in care at St Joseph's I was made to remain in the care system and couldn't go home.
68. It took about a year and a half. At first they said they had no records. I pressed them again and they told me that they had partial records. I then got help from Future Pathways and I managed to get all my records that they held on me.
69. It was when I was reading these records that I found out that my mother didn't want me and that was why I remained in the care system. I also found out that the reason I went before the Children's Panel in the first case was because I was supposed to be playing truant from school which was not true. It was because of the incident with the teacher when I was in school drunk.

### **Lessons to be learned**

70. Nobody in care deserves to be treated the way I was. It doesn't matter whether it is one slap or a full on assault children in care should not be subjected to physical abuse by adults who are meant to be caring for them. No person in authority should mistreat children in their care.

**Hopes for the Inquiry**

- 71. I hope that the abuse suffered by children in care stops. There should be better checks done on people working in the care of children. If abuse is happening children need to be listened to.
  
- 72. 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..... 6/01/2022 .....