

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

HRD [REDACTED]

Support person present: No

1. My name is HRD [REDACTED]. My date of birth is the [REDACTED] 1957. I am 60 years old. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.
2. The two institutions I was in that I wish to tell you about today are: (1) Cardross Park Assessment Centre where I was for three months in 1968 and (2) St Ninian's School, Gartmore, Stirlingshire where I was between [REDACTED] 1968 and [REDACTED] 1969. I cannot be exact about the times and dates.

Background

3. I am the youngest child in a family of six children. My father, [REDACTED], was absent and my elder brother always acted as the head of the household. My two elder brothers and sister moved away and my mother, [REDACTED], was unable to cope. We were always hungry, and money was tight. We were in dire straits as we could not afford heating or clothing.
4. My mother passed away in 1978 and my father died in 1998.

Life before care

5. I come from a large family of six children, and I am the youngest. I do not want to name the rest of my family apart from my brother **HSJ** who was two years older than me. He went through the care system with me.
6. I started playing truant at school most of the time because I was hungry or had no clothes to wear to school. My brother started to get into trouble with the company he was keeping by breaking into places, and eventually the authorities caught up with us. We were basically living as street kids at that time. I think we were brought before the court by the education board of the day.
7. I attended Our Holy Redeemers School in Clydebank. There were a lot of very poor people at the school. I didn't like the school so I didn't go. Religion was forced on you. I recall that my teacher was called Mrs Herring, and if you didn't attend church on a Sunday she would give you the belt. The other children attending church would let her know who had and hadn't been at church.
8. I appeared at Dumbarton Sheriff Court. My crime was truancy. My brother also appeared on some minor criminal charges. At the end of the hearing we were told that I was being sent to Cardross Park Assessment Centre for a period of time. I thought that the place was called Cardross Park Remand Home. **HSJ** was sent to Bellfield which was a different children's home. It was a judicial decision made by Judge Bryson. We were sent to these institutions for assessment and background reports.

Care at Cardross Park Assessment Centre

9. I was in Cardross on two occasions. The first time was for about two weeks. I was then sent back to my mother. I was out of care for a short period of time before I again appeared before the sheriff, and was given a sentence of one to three years. I was not attending school. The second occasion at Cardross was for about three months. I think I was at Cardross on the first occasion for assessment, and then on

the second occasion I was there prior to a place being available at St Ninian's School.

10. I recall that the first occasion I was at Cardross would be in [REDACTED] 1968 and I was there for two weeks for court reports.
11. I am not sure of the dates that I was in Cardross, and it is something that I am trying to clarify. I know that there was a period of time when I was at home between the two spells at Cardross but as to the times and dates I am not sure.
12. Cardross still stands to this day but is now private apartments. It was like a mansion house. It had a recreation room as you went in. Then there was a dining room on the same ground floor. The dormitories and showers were on the first floor. The staff quarters where Mr ^{KCZ} [REDACTED] stayed were on the third floor. There was a large wall that enclosed part of the grounds. There were old stable buildings.
13. The first time I was at Cardross there were about eight children. The second time at Cardross there were about fifteen children. I recall that on my second stint in Cardross there were two girls there. The age range was about nine to thirteen. The staff were the same on both occasions. There were two dormitories with 8 – 10 beds and one with 6 – 8 beds. All of the dormitories were connected by a door. During the second spell I was at Cardross I was joined by my brother ^{HSJ} [REDACTED].

First day

14. I think that I would be about ten years old. I can remember my first day at Cardross. ^{HSJ} [REDACTED] and I were taken in a blue police van to our respective children's homes. ^{HSJ} [REDACTED] was dropped off first at Bellfield and I was taken to Cardross which was about fifteen minutes away.

15. I was met by Mr **HGR** who was a member of staff at Cardross. He lived in a house within the grounds. I was taken to the office first and then on to the clothing store. I was issued with shorts and a shirt and then taken for a shower.
16. I recall the names of the other members of staff. There was Mr **HGQ** and Mr Davidson who also lived on the grounds. Mr **KCZ** was the **SNR** of the unit.

Routine at Cardross

Mornings and bedtime

17. We were woken up in the morning. We got washed and dressed and ready for breakfast. We were always supervised when we got up in the morning. We would often waken with the noise of the early morning delivery men.
18. We were then sent out to work in the grounds. I can remember doing heavy manual work like digging out tree roots and lifting two by two slabs off the back of a lorry. I was a young boy, and I found the manual work very hard particularly as we did not have the correct equipment to wear. We were vulnerable to injury from the tasks we were being asked to do. There was no school to attend during the day.
19. After working all day we were allowed to use the recreation room, but there were no real facilities for children aged ten. There were some games and jigsaws, and I also remember a set of carpet bowls. There was a television which was sometimes put on.
20. At night you would have to shower and then get into pyjamas. You were always supervised by staff who were present when you were doing this. It was lights out at eight o'clock, and most nights we were ready for bed because of the work we had had to do. The dormitory was locked at night but the windows were left open.

21. It was a harsh routine and you had to do as you were told. If you stepped out of line you would be hit around the head. It was no different from being at school.

Food

22. I have no complaint about the food which was very good. It was cooked by staff who came into the home to prepare the meals.

School

23. I was not provided with any formal schooling while I was at Cardross. There was no religion taught at Cardross, and you didn't have to attend church.

Clothing

24. The dress code was the same for everyone apart from the [REDACTED] children who came from Helensburgh. They had a local [REDACTED] business. There were two boys and their mother came to visit every day. We had to wear khaki shorts and a tee shirt with a pair of gym shoes. We also had pyjamas, a towel and a pair of wellington boots. The [REDACTED] boys were the only children given underwear.

Running away from Cardross

25. There were many occasions when boys escaped from Cardross. It was very easy to run away. I remember some of the boys going down the drainpipe from the first floor. They broke the window into the store where their own clothes were kept and changed. They made their way to the local train station where the police caught up with them and brought them back.
26. I can still remember some of the names of the boys that ran away on that occasion. They were the [REDACTED] brothers, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

Visits/Inspections

27. Whilst I was at Cardross I did receive two visits from my mother.
28. I didn't have any visits from my social worker, but there was a probation officer involved with me called Miss McDonald. She was based at Clydebank and had been appointed because of the school truancy.

Medical care

29. There was a visiting doctor. On one occasion he was brought in to see me to treat a sore throat. There were no trained medical people on the staff at Cardross. I did not need to attend the dentists' practice. We were never given a toothbrush when we were there.

Abuse at Cardross

30. You were forced to work every day at Cardross. There was a lot of heavy manual work and you were ill equipped to perform the tasks. You were working in some quite dangerous conditions and you had no choice in the matter.
31. When some of the boys ran away from Cardross they were brought back by the police. They were stripped naked and made to stand on the stairs. In the presence of the police, Mr KCZ SNR, set about them with a tawse. I can still hear their screams to this day. They were made to shower and then kept in their dormitories for a day. They passed us going to the showers, and I remember seeing the injuries on them.
32. I am now very angry about how we were forced to work. I remember having to unload huge slabs from an articulated lorry, and then wheel barrow the slabs up a long path to the home. We did not have gloves, and no water was provided. It was back breaking work for a young boy. I remember that Mr HGR, who was a member of staff and stayed in [REDACTED], was also present when this was being done.

There were hundreds of two by two slabs to be moved, and it took us all day. All the children were involved in this task.

33. Basically all the staff were guilty of cuffing you or hitting you about your head or body. They seemed to think that this was normal practice, and to some extent it was normal practice in the 1960s in a school set-up.

Leaving Cardross

34. One day I was told to get ready and change into my own clothes. I was locked into the recreation room and sat and waited. My probation officer, Miss MacDonald, appeared with another man. I was then taken in a dark grey Austin Cambridge to St Ninian's School in Gartmore, Stirlingshire. I don't know who the other man was. I recall that the journey took about an hour.

St Ninian's School, Gartmore, Stirlingshire

35. St Ninian's School consisted of a big old house with a more modern annexe. The house was run by the Catholic organisation the De La Salle brothers. It was built in the 1800's for the Cunningham-Graham family. I think that it had been a hospital during the second world war. It had changed hands and functions over the years.
36. You entered the school through a porch. There was a dining area in the basement along with boot lockers and a stores area. There were showers and washing facilities down there. The first and second floors was where the dormitories were. The night staff also had a room there. The dormitories were all named after the mountains in Scotland and prefixed by the word "Ben", like "Ben Lomond". I can't recall all of the

names. Some of the brothers also had rooms on the first floor. There was a spiral staircase that accessed all floors. There were also offices in the main building.

37. The top floor of the house was where the older boys slept. The younger boys were all in dormitories on the first floor. The annexe to the house was a newer building, and it had all the classrooms and also the gymnasium.
38. St Ninian's held about 90 boys and they were split between four houses. The houses were De La Salle, St Andrew's, St George's and St Patrick's. I was allocated the number [REDACTED] in St George's House which was my unique number while I was at St Ninian's. I was to remain there for about eighteen months.

First day

39. When I first arrived with my probation officer and the other man we went to the big house. There was no one about. A short time later Mr IAV [REDACTED] from the staff met us and dealt with the paperwork. My brother HSJ [REDACTED] did not come with me to St Ninian's. He had been taken to St Joseph's School in Tranent in the prior to Easter of that year.
40. This place was a total shock to me. There were about 90 boys, and all the staff were wearing cassocks and dog collars. I did not know who was who. Mr IAV [REDACTED] asked me how long I had been on remand at Cardross. He also asked me if I had been home in that time.
41. Mr IAV [REDACTED] took me downstairs to the basement of the building where I met Mrs [REDACTED] and her daughter. They provided me with clothing for wearing in St Ninian's. I was given underwear, a shirt, shorts, pyjamas, a towel, shoes and a pair of boots.
42. I was shown my locker, and I was asked if I had eaten. I wasn't given any food at this stage. It was late afternoon. I was then taken to the classrooms and introduced to SNR [REDACTED], Brother GSU [REDACTED]. There were five classrooms in the annexe.

43. I was taken into Mr MCK's classroom, and he assessed my ability to read and write. As a result of that assessment I was placed into class ■ which was run by Brother MBZ. There were about twenty other children in the class.

Routine at St Ninian's School

Mornings and bed times

44. If you wanted to go the chapel you would be woken at quarter to seven in the morning. In order to let the brothers know you would hang your towel over the end of the bed, and they would wake you for mass. All the brothers were at mass.
45. On the first or second day I was called into Brother Benedict's office. He was known as "Bootsy" and looked after the stores. Brother Benedict started to question me about myself. He called everyone "Chappie". He explained to me that he was my housemaster and that if I behaved and helped out with chores I would be able to earn good marks towards pocket money for the tuck shop or for bus fares for a weekend at home.
46. I had not been able to eat the first few days I was at the home, and I think this was the reason that they brought my brother HSJ and his mate ■ from St Joseph's in Tranent to be with me. I think that I was becoming ill through not eating, and that was the reason they brought my brother HSJ to the home. I started to eat after HSJ arrived.
47. I picked up paper and kept the yard clean. I was taught the ropes by the other boys who kept you right. If you didn't earn money you couldn't go home at the weekends. You had to meet the points total in order to get home. It was an incentive scheme as you could also lose points for bad behaviour.

48. You were required to attend mass and on a Sunday. That was mandatory. Mass was said by a priest that came from Buchlyvie Teaching College . Everyone took confession on a Thursday. There were other requirements to attend religious celebrations as it was a catholic run school.
49. After chapel you would go for breakfast. After breakfast you worked a rota along with the other boys doing washing, dusting, polishing, cleaning and any other chore that was required. You could earn marks towards your pocket money.
50. After the chores were completed you played in the playground until you were called for assembly for school. You would then be sent to your classroom till lunchtime.
51. After lunch it was back to the classroom. I spent a lot of time in Brother MBZ's classroom just walking about at the back of the class. I didn't get involved with the rest of the class in learning.
52. After school was over we had activities and played most sports. We had tea, and then were able to join in other activities like playing with the other boys. We would then have supper, which usually consisted of a sandwich and a bottle of milk or a cup of hot chocolate.
53. It was compulsory to shower before bed. The shower was communal and it was supervised by the staff of the school. They also operated the valve to control the temperature. You had to shower every night.
54. On my second day at the school I had my first full day with Brother MBZ I came from a family where we were not physical with each other. I found it very uncomfortable that Brother MBZ wanted to cuddle you and hold you. I found this very difficult to cope with.
55. In 1968 or thereabout I remember that I was working in the garden. We would harvest the potatoes and fruit and take the excess to a house in Port of Menteith. I later learned that the house belonged to Mr McInstry who would be a staff member

at St Ninian's during the time I was there. We would also take him logs and books. Mr McInstry always smelled of alcohol when he was working on his night shift.

Activities

56. There were all sorts of activities at night before you went to bed. You could play football, go hill walking, swim in the nearby river or just play. There were also house rooms which had televisions and a snooker table. There were books and games provided. There was lots to do as far as activities were concerned.

Holidays and home leave

57. If you had saved enough money from the points you earned and were able to pay for your bus fare home you could go home every second weekend. You would be taken by bus to Glasgow early on a Friday, and you had to be back at the school by three in the afternoon on the Sunday. I used to go home every second weekend until my mother moved to England. All the defaulters would have to stay at the school.
58. I also recall the whole school going to Kirkoswald in Ayrshire to a village hall and school where we spent two weeks during the summer holidays. I think that half the school went home and the other half went to Kirkoswald.
59. We slept in the village hall, and although it was cold it was fine. We would go for our meals to the school. Brother MBZ would sleep in the village hall with us. I didn't like the physical contact so I kept away from him.

Birthdays and Christmas

60. At Christmas time I went to my sister's house in Stevenage in England. My mother was living there and I spent two weeks with them over the Christmas period. There were decorations put up in the home. St Ninian's closed over Christmas.

61. I did get the odd parcel from my mother, and I did receive a birthday card from her. If you sent or received mail it would always be checked by the brothers to ensure that it was suitable to be read by the recipient. If they didn't like the content they would rip up the letters I wrote in front of you stating they were unacceptable. Your birthday was not celebrated by the staff in St Ninian's.

Staff at St Ninian's

62. I can remember the following staff being at St Ninian's while I was there. It may not be a complete list as I can't recall all the names:

Mr Irvine and Mr IAU were members of the office staff and worked in the main building.

Mr IAV and Mr McKenna were civilian staff at the school and not attached to the De La Salle Order. Mr IAV was a housemaster and worked in the administration offices. Mr IAV also dealt with the playground.

Mr zGQM was the gardener and was Yugoslavian. He was a prisoner of war. I think that he took the name of his wife Mrs who also worked at the school along with their daughter.

Mr McPherson taught physics and maths and also took physical training.

Mr GQZ was a gardener..

Mr MCK was a teacher but not part of the De La Salle Order.

Mr Buckham was at the school and was in training to join the De La Salle Order. He had been in the army.

Mr McKenna was the technical teacher for woodwork and metalwork. He had the nickname "ruby leg".

Mr Molesdale was part of the staff and lived in the home. He sometimes acted as the night staff. His daughter also worked in the home.

Mr McInstry was another member of staff.

Brother GSU was SNR

Brother HFT was SNR

Brother GYP performed a variety of tasks but did not teach.

Brother **MBZ** was a teacher of primary school subjects. He came from Kent in England. He will be in his mid-70s at this time.

Brother Benedict was not a teacher but was a member of the staff. He had the nickname "Bootsy" amongst the boys. He was my housemaster.

Brother **GZQ** was on the staff as a teacher.

Brother **GYP** was on the staff but was semi-retired.

Brother **GYV** came to the school at some stage and he taught music.

There was another brother who was a teacher, but I only know his civilian name which was Peter May. He was also from England.

63. All the brothers wore cassocks and dog collars. There was a night man who was on duty through the night, but I can't remember his name. The night duty staff varied and sometimes Mr **GQZ** worked night shift.

Food

64. The food was not very appetising. Compared to the food at Cardross it was nowhere near as good. The brothers ate different food to us. We had three meals a day at breakfast, lunch and tea. We also had supper before we went to bed.

Schooling

65. All schooling was done at St Ninian's, and you would be allocated a teacher and classroom to attend every day. Apart from the time I spent in Brother **MBZ** class I found the schooling to be very good and the education was second to none.
66. I was only in Brother **GZQ** class for a short time before I was moved up to Mr Buckham's class. I was also in Mr McKenna's class. Although I learned that he was later jailed for a abuse I found him to be very helpful.

Healthcare

67. There was a nurse on site at St Ninian's every morning and there was access to doctors. On my second visit home my mother noted that I had contracted head lice. She went to see Miss McDonald the probation officer to complain. I can recall at assembly the staff shouting out for "the [REDACTED] brother who has nits". It was very demeaning.
68. Whilst I was at St Ninian's I contracted Hong Kong flu, and was one of the first victims of it at the school. I was kept in bed and was put into an isolation room away from the other boys. I was also given a radio to listen to by the daughter of Mr Molesfield.. Brother MBZ came to see me. He warned me that if I was "at it" I was going to "get it". I couldn't even get out of bed, and the nurse realised very quickly what was wrong with me.

Visits and Inspections

69. I did not receive a visit from Miss McDonald the whole time that I was resident at St Ninian's.
70. I do know that when I had my arm broken by Brother Benedict no one took the time to inform my mother about what had happened. I was unable to tell her in a letter as all the mail was censored by the staff at St Ninian's before it was posted out.
71. I don't recall any inspections.

Religion

72. There were confessional boxes built outside the house room for St Patrick's house.. The night to make a confession was always a Thursday. The priest from Buchlyvie teaching college would come to the school and hear confession.
73. The brothers always made a point of standing outside the confessional box so they could hear what was being said.

Abuse at St Ninian's School

Brother **MBZ**

74. When we were on a two week holiday at Kirkoswald Brother **MBZ** continued to have physical contact with a lot of the boys. He was always cuddling them or picking them up and throwing them into the sea when we were swimming at the seaside. The more I have thought about this the more inappropriate it seems. Some of the older boys had a confrontation with Brother **MBZ**. I don't know what happened.
75. There was an outside toilet at Kirkoswald which was open to the elements. It was basically a concrete trough. I went to use this facility at the same time as my brother and some of the older boys came out. I was using the toilet when Brother **MBZ** came up behind me and cracked me on the head. He accused me of smoking in the toilet.
76. I denied this and he then accused me of providing cigarettes for the other boys. It was obviously a spot used by the local boys of Kirkoswald to smoke, and there is little doubt that my brother and his mates also used it for this purpose too.
77. Brother **MBZ** then manhandled me back to the where the other boys were. He was hitting and punching me and accusing me of being a liar. He then threw me into a small shed where he continued to assault me. He was very angry. He was pushing me against a wall and constantly hitting me. The other boys had been lined up for dinner and taken into the school.
78. I think that I wet myself. I couldn't believe what was happening. I thought that I was going to die. I contemplated throwing myself under a lorry. I was crying for help but no-one came. I could hear my brother **HSJ** screaming. Brother **MBZ** continued to hit me while all the other boys were having their dinner. He was still hitting me when they had finished their dinner.

79. All the boys were then returned to their dormitories. Brother **MBZ** went to see my brother, and he pulled him to the local church and started to beat him. He also took the other boys that had been with him in the outside toilet and tried to get them to admit that I had been trafficking in cigarettes. They were two or three years older than me. It just wasn't true.
80. At this stage Mr **IAV** came on the scene, and I think he was shocked with what he saw. He told us all to go back to our dormitories. I was only eleven years old, and I was contemplating suicide. Brother **MBZ** wanted to keep cuddling me but I couldn't get far enough away from him.
81. There was a police station next door to where we were staying, and I wanted to report the matter to the police. Brother **MBZ** told that me I was not to leave the village hall or I would get it.
82. Shortly after that Brother **GSU** and other staff from Gartmore arrived at Kirkoswald. Brother **GSU** spent a good deal of time talking to me but nothing was done.
83. I think that my brother was also assaulted by Brother **MBZ** with a cricket bat or cricket stumps.
84. After the holiday in Kirkoswald I went home to my other brother's house in Clydebank where I stayed for the remaining two weeks of the summer. I returned to St Ninian's for the start of the next term and was still in Brother **MBZ** class.
85. Brother **MBZ** was teaching us geography when he called me out from the back of the class. He had a pencil in his hand and again accused me of trafficking cigarettes which I denied. He stabbed me with a pencil he had in his hand. He then sent me back to my seat.
86. A few days later I was again called to the front of the class and this time he had a screwdriver in his hand. He again accused me of trafficking cigarettes, and when I denied this he stabbed me with a screwdriver. I started shouting and a short time

later Brother ^{GSU} came into the class and took me out. He placed me in the class of Brother ^{GZQ}

87. As a result of these two assaults on me I did suffer injuries. The pencil assault broke the skin and it did bleed. The screwdriver assault left a scar on me which I still have. It was treated at the time with a bit of cotton wool and a sticking plaster.
88. Every time I met Brother ^{MBZ} he would accuse me of trafficking cigarettes. I just kept out of his way. He had another run in with another boy called [REDACTED] whose number at the school was [REDACTED].
89. [REDACTED] was fed up being battered by Brother ^{MBZ}. He also didn't like the fact that Brother ^{MBZ} was constantly putting his face into yours and grabbing you and getting you to sit on his knee. [REDACTED] called him a "poof" and threatened to get his family of brothers to sort Brother ^{MBZ} out. Brother ^{GSU} removed [REDACTED] from the classroom and into another class.
90. Brother ^{MBZ} was also partial to chasing the young daughter of the [REDACTED] family and trying to grab hold of her. It was not the correct way for a De La Salle brother to behave.

Mr McKenna

91. The boys at the school nicknamed Mr McKenna "ruby leg" but I don't know why. I recall that one of the older boys at the school had a run in with him. He was like Brother ^{MBZ} and used to cuddle the boys and sit them on his knee. I think that the name of the two boys that Mr McKenna was cuddling in the playground were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. They were nine year olds and didn't know much better.
92. A boy called [REDACTED] stood up to Mr McKenna and challenged him. He told him that he was good with young boys but he was not going to tolerate it. [REDACTED] left the school after he stood up to Mr McKenna, and I don't know where he went. That was the usual thing when you stood up to the staff.

93. I also remember Mr ^{IAV} [REDACTED] had a run in with Mr McKenna which nearly ended in "fisty cuffs". In front of the boys Mr ^{IAV} [REDACTED] challenged Mr McKenna about his behaviour and the constant physical contact. It was well known amongst the boys that Mr McKenna was a member of staff to avoid.

Mr McInstry

94. Whilst I was recovering from Hong Kong flu I remember getting up in the middle of the night and going to use the toilet. I could hear whimpering although I didn't know what was going on. I saw Mr McInstry in the toilets with one of the boys called [REDACTED]. I was half asleep and didn't see what was going on. Mr McInstry stopped me getting into the toilets, and he then dragged [REDACTED] out with him
95. Another night I again got up and went to the toilet. Mr McInstry had all the "bed-wetters" lined up. He told me to go back to bed. The boys were waiting in a queue to go into the cubicle where McInstry was. I remember that [REDACTED] from Glasgow was in the queue and that [REDACTED] was just coming out of the cubicle. Also there were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I didn't see what was happening but found it all a bit bizarre as there was a urinal and a closing water closet.
96. I know that [REDACTED] went on to commit sex offences and was subsequently jailed.

Brother Benedict

97. When we were in the dining room we would be at tables of four. I was discussing with the other boys why Brother Benedict was called "Bootsy". One of the boys [REDACTED] shouted out "Brother, he says that you have one shoe bigger than the other". At this Brother Benedict ran across to our table pulled me out of my seat and spun me round like a rag doll. I was a small, skinny boy and he was a large man. The upshot was that he broke my arm.

98. The next thing matron and Brother ^{GSU} were there. Matron gave me some medication. The dining room was cleared and I was taken to Stirling Royal Infirmary where the break to my left arm was confirmed.
99. I remember that my brother ^{HSJ} came along with another boy. Brother ^{GSU} told them and me to say that I had fallen out of a tree. We were never out of earshot of Brother ^{GSU}. I was about eleven years old. My arm was in a cast for some weeks after.
100. One of Brother Benedict's favourite things to do to boys was to give them an electric shock. In his electronics class he had a mega, which was a device for testing electrical current. He would get one of the boys to hold the terminal while the other four or five boys held hands in a circle. He would then release the current giving everyone a shock. If you broke the circle he would make you all do it again. Brother Benedict would turn the handle to generate the voltage. You had to comply or he would lose his temper and things would be worse.
101. There was a boy called [REDACTED] who was sexually abused by Brother Benedict. It was well known amongst the boys although I didn't witness it.
102. Brother Benedict was the housemaster of St George's of which I was a member. At one of the meetings I attended soon after I had broken my arm he called me a "very bad chappie". He told me to go next door as he didn't want to look at me despite having broken my arm. It was all very sad.

Medical research

103. There was a strange incident when the whole school were brought into the reception area and were lined up. You were given a tablet and some water to help to swallow it. After that a sample of blood was taken from you, and then you were given a chocolate bar. I have no idea what it was all about or who these people were. I have

suspicion that they were doing some sort of research using the boys at St Ninian's as guinea pigs.

104. Prior to this we were assessed a few days before by a local psychologist called Mrs Armstrong. She interviewed every pupil attending St Ninian's but I can't remember the content of that interview. There was another male present at the interview but I don't know who he was.
105. In September 1969 I recall seeing some paperwork at my mother's house which related to my brother [HSJ]. It was just after we had been given the tablet. I can only remember that it had something to do with chromosomes.

Leaving St Ninian's Children's Home

106. In [REDACTED] 1969 I was told that I was being released from the school on licence and could go back to my own home in Clydebank. It was all very sudden. There was no preparation.
107. I was dropped off at the train station and my mother was told the day before. I think that it was the probation officer Miss McDonald who told my mother.

Life after being in care

108. When I got back home to Clydebank I was taken to enrol at the local school which was called St Columba's High School. I remember being interviewed by the headmaster and a teacher who didn't know much about my arriving there.
109. This was at the time of industrial action by the teachers, so we did not attend many classes. The boys had to stay outside in the playground, and the girls remained

inside under cover. We just made sure we were registered in the morning. I spent a lot of time in the public library. I lost interest in school.

110. I was now aged twelve and residing with my mother at [REDACTED] Clydebank. I think that it was a Mr Krennan that prepared us for leaving school. I recall a history teacher from Nigeria trying to tell us that in 1066 they communicated by radio. There was no control at the school, and so I started playing truant. They had to lock the toilets, and there were never sufficient teachers. When I was thirteen years old I started playing truant again. There was a gang culture at the school but I kept myself to myself.
111. I started working unofficially as an apprentice joiner. I was again caught and brought before the courts for truancy. The social worker now dealing with me was called Mr Beattie. I was sent back to school but it was the same story. There was nothing to do. The boys were all bullying each other, and a gang culture was emerging
112. I went up before a children's panel, but it had to be postponed because there was a conflict of interest with a family member serving on the panel. The hearing was postponed till July 1972. I left home and went to the merchant navy. I think that my mother appeared before the children's panel and told them that I had gone to sea and would not be available. That was my final dealing with the children's panel.
113. I have spent all my adult life up until the present time at sea. I married in 1987 but am now divorced. I have three children aged 26, 19 and 14.

Reporting abuse

114. There was no-one to tell about what was happening at Cardross, because the only contact with adults that you had were with the people who were caring for you and at the same time abusing you.

115. It was the same at St Ninian's. No adult was going to believe a young boy in those days.
116. We never saw Miss McDonald my social worker. There was never a time when you could be alone with your social worker to tell him.
117. I did have a few meetings with Mr Beattie, my later social worker, when I was home in Clydebank. Most of the time spent at these meetings was to prepare for the upcoming children's panel. He was an adult, and I couldn't speak to adults about what had happened.
118. Mr IAV [REDACTED] was the only member of staff at St Ninian's who was opposed to what was going on. He played everything by the book. I suspect that he was in a house tied to the job, and were he to speak up he would have lost his house.
119. I eventually reported what had happened to me to a police man called McDougall who was based at Stirling police station. This came about as a result of a reporter called Marion Scott who was appealing in the press through the Sunday Mail newspaper for information about St Ninian's. I think that this would have been in 2001. I had never spoken to anyone else about my experiences.
120. Initially I spoke to Marion Scott anonymously, and she encouraged me to go to the police. I made a statement to the police. I gave evidence about what had happened at St Ninian's involving McInstry, McKenna, [REDACTED] and Brother Benedict. The trial was held at Edinburgh High Court. I liaised with Joe Cahill at the Procurator Fiscal's Office, and he arranged for me to give evidence anonymously.
121. All the accused were given a two year sentence. I know that they all appealed but do not know the result of that appeal. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Impact

122. In 1992 I suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as a result of a near-death experience at work. I was off work for five years and taking a concoction of prescribed drugs. I was being treated by a team of counsellors from Ticehurst, East Sussex. The counsellor was called Gordon Turnbull, and his way of counselling was to take you back to your earliest memories. I couldn't talk about my time in care as I felt ashamed and that I was "low life".
123. I am a very private person and very protective of my children. My children do not know about my time in care. I cannot confide in people. I have flashbacks to the incident in Kirkoswald where my head was being beaten off a wall.
124. I cannot understand how the abusers have slipped through the net and have not been punished for what they did. I still hear the boys screaming at Cardross. I still can't seem to get the picture out of my mind of the boys coming out of the toilets with Mr McInstry . My nightmares are fairly regular.
125. I am not currently receiving any counselling for my experiences in care. I don't think that I need it at this time.

Records

126. I do need to see my records to confirm accurately when I was in care. I have not applied for them at this time.

Lessons to be learned

127. If you are in an all-boys school at least 25% of the staff must be female. Young boys are not able to speak to men as easily as they can with females. I think it is to do with the trust that they have with their mothers and the distrust of male adults.

128. One of the questions I would have to ask is "Why are there people dealing with children hiding in religious orders? Why are religious orders involved in child care and running children's homes? What experience can they have?".

Other information

129. Not all my experiences in care were bad. I would have to praise the education and the sporting facilities that were available. It was the actions of a few of the staff that caused all the problems. I was also aware of the staff arguing amongst each other about the inappropriate behaviour.

130. I am quite prepared to provide oral evidence to the Inquiry about my experiences in care. 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..... 12.9.17