

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

GXC

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is GXC. I have always been known by that name. My date of birth is 1945. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Background

2. I was born in Glasgow and I'm one of six children. My mum and dad were great parents and we had a very happy childhood. My mum was a stay at home mum and my dad worked for Rolls Royce. My younger brother had learning difficulties. He had an influence on me in the sense of looking out for him and looking after him. It gave me an insight in to what it was like dealing with people who didn't fit into the mainstream.
3. After I left school, I got an apprenticeship with Rolls Royce, which I was very lucky to achieve. At the end of my time in Rolls Royce, I moved to London and got a job as a tool maker.
4. My dad was always a very pious man. He used to go to Barlinnie to visit the prisoners. I always had that at the back of my mind and I started to wonder if I might have a vocation. I made enquiries and went along to a meeting with a representative from one of the holy orders. He said he could recommend me to do some voluntary work with a man called Father Ryan who ran an orphanage type place. I went there and I was given my keep and an allowance. The boys there were from ten up to fifteen years old and I stayed for a year. The nature of the work really appealed to me, so I applied to do various courses.

Qualifications/Training

5. I was accepted onto the Residential Care of Children and Young People course at Selly Oak College, Birmingham. It was a very good course and I did all sorts of placements including, Kidlington Assessment Centre in Oxford, an approved school for a month, and a children's home for a period. My final placement was at Loaningdale List D School in Biggar which was run by a guy called John Wilson.
6. I completed the course and was awarded a certificate in August 1970 by the Central Training Council in Child Care. I then went back to Loaningdale to work temporarily until I found a permanent job. Shortly after that, I was offered the job at St Ninian's, Gartmore.

Experiences at St Ninian's, Gartmore

The Institution / Culture

7. St Ninian's was run by the De La Salle Brothers. It was originally known as an approved school, but they dropped that title at some point because they felt it had an unsavoury flavour to it. It became known as a List D School which was really just a school with a specific function. It was for boys who were in trouble. As far as I'm aware, all the boys at St Ninian's were referred by the Children's Panel system and were between the ages of eight and fourteen or fifteen years old.
8. I thought the culture at St Ninian's was great and the attitude of the staff towards the kids was very good. I've been horrified reading the statements disclosed to me and the accounts of what these kids allegedly experienced.

My role and recruitment at St Ninian's

9. When I applied for the job at St Ninian's, I received a letter from Brother **GSU** advising me that there were no forms to fill in. The letter requested two recent testimonials and the details of two referees. The letter is dated 7th May 1970 and I have that in my possession. Following receipt of that letter, I attended an interview and accepted a post as Housemaster of St Patrick's Unit.
10. St Patrick's Unit didn't have a housemaster, so I was more or less just thrown straight in to a unit with approximately twenty boys. There was no great induction and no probationary period. You just learned on the job. My brief was to be the go to guy as far as my boys were concerned.
11. As well as looking after the boys on a day to day basis, the main other influence of staff in the units was during the activity time from six o'clock to seven-thirty. It was the duty of the care staff to take on this responsibility. However, other staff, such as groundsman and handyman, were paid an extra allowance called 'extraneous duty' to take on this role. The role required staff to do two nights a week and a weekend, on a rota basis, where they had to provide an activity for the kids. For example, Brother **MJO** looked after the horses. If he was on, the boys went to the horses. Brother **MBZ** looked after the gardens, some sheep, goats and a donkey. If he was on, the boys got involved in that. My passion is aircraft so my activity was model making. There was also football, as we had two football pitches and a sports hall. We were very well equipped in those days. Certain activity groups attracted great popularity, like Jimmy McKinstry's. There was always a big crowd wanting to go with him.
12. I worked at St Ninian's from 1970 until the school closed in 1982. I was the Housemaster of St Patrick's throughout that time. However, in 1976, I was promoted **SNR**. It was an ancillary role I carried out alongside my role as housemaster. It was basically a sergeant major role. I was responsible for gathering the kids and getting them to where they were supposed to be, such as assembly or activities.

Layout and Structure

13. St Ninian's was built on a slope. There was a basement level where there were lockers, a boot room, toilet block, dining room, kitchen and an assembly hall. The basement was the hub and the main space that the boys used. On the ground floor there was a chapel and the brother's community room which only the brothers went in to. The four units were also on the ground floor. That is where the boys spent their time, mainly in the evening after activities and before they went to bed. The dormitories were on the first and second floor and could be accessed via a spiral staircase from the basement level.
14. St Patrick's unit was on the left side of the building, if you look at it from the back. When I arrived, the communal space was one big room with a television at one end and a table at the other. I thought that was no use. Because of my background in engineering, I set about partitioning the room. There was a woodwork room which I had access to and the woodwork teacher helped me out a bit. I made the one large room into a TV room, an area for hobbies, a main room with a snooker table and a small room which I soundproofed and put a jukebox in which I had inherited. The kids loved that.
15. The three other units were St Andrews, St Georges and De La Salle. The units were very important. For me, the most important thing was St Patrick's because the culture of my unit was defined by my influence on the boys. For a while I was just a novice trying to find my feet, but ultimately, I think I ran a very good unit.

Staff structure

16. SNR [REDACTED] of the school was brother MJP [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED], when I started, was Brother HFT [REDACTED] but he left after a while and Brother HJS [REDACTED], who was one of the teachers, became SNR [REDACTED]. Brother HJS [REDACTED] was essentially my line manager, but to be honest, I spent a lot of time with Brother MJP [REDACTED]. He was someone who was very happy to chat to you and talk through things. People felt he was a big softy and there was never any fear in sending someone to SNR [REDACTED]

17. The Brothers pretty much kept to themselves. They were all great golfers and whenever they were off duty, they were all away golfing. There was an area in the school block where there was a door and a phone. If there was anything going on and you needed to speak to a specific Brother, you went and phoned through to the brothers lounge and they would come out.
18. For the most part, the Brothers were teachers. There were only a few who weren't. Brother **MJO** was one of the Housemasters and Brother **MBZ** was the bursar, he was a lovely guy. There were also a few retired Brothers there.
19. I believe **IAV** was **SNR** of the residential care side of things, not the education side. He was an ex-policeman from **██████████**. Other members of care staff included, **HIG** who worked in St Andrews Unit. There was also **GQM** whose mum and dad also worked at St Ninian's. His dad was a groundsman and his mum, **██████████**, ran the laundry. You have to remember this was in a wee village. Just about everyone who worked there was either on the campus or from the village.

Recruitment of staff

20. I was not involved in the recruitment of staff and as far as I'm aware, there was no formal policy regarding recruitment. There were very few people working at St Ninian's who had a qualification like I had. People were just brought in off the street and they still did that even in my time.
21. I believe there was a lot of 'who knows who' kind of stuff going on. Guys would turn up to work there because they had been referred by some parish priest. That was really the only thing they made a big song and dance about, getting a letter from your local parish priest to say you were a good Catholic. When I started, I think they were delighted to get someone who had actually completed a course in residential child care.

Supervision / appraisal / evaluation

22. I had a supervisory role over the people who worked with me in my unit. It wasn't formal supervision as you would have now. We just chatted and talked about what was going on, that was really it. I didn't carry out any appraisals or provide any formal training to staff, it was more leading by example. There was no formal training for any of the staff. As far as ongoing training is concerned, you would like to think that over the course of the twelve years I worked there, there was some, but I don't remember that happening.

Policy

23. I was not involved in the making of policy at St Ninian's and I don't recall ever seeing any written policies during the time I worked there.

Strategic Planning

24. I was not involved in strategic planning during my time at St Ninian's.

Children / Routine at St Ninian's

25. As I said, the children at St Ninian's came through the Children's Panel. I felt that most were there for around two years. I think that was the average. There were up to twenty boys in my unit at any one time, certainly never less than fifteen. I imagine the numbers in the other units were similar.

Mealtimes / Food

26. All the boys at St Ninian's ate in the dining room together. Each unit sat at the same table. Mealtimes were always supervised by whichever two staff members were there. Sometimes it was me, sometimes it was other staff members. The staff didn't eat with the kids. We had a separate staff dining room, but I believe we all ate the same food.

27. There was a chef that came in from the village.. I think the food was quite varied and there weren't many complaints about it. The boys didn't get a choice of food, but if they didn't like the food they were served, they didn't have to eat it.

Sleeping Arrangements

28. My unit was divided into four bedrooms. There was enough space to accommodate twenty boys between the four rooms. There was also a staff accommodation facility on site. It was over in the school block. I lived there, for a couple of years, until I married. After that, I had a tied house at [REDACTED].
29. All the Brothers slept in the main building, upstairs. There was a nightwatchman to look after the boys through the night. I would hand over to the nightwatchman at nine o'clock. Then, I went to my own accommodation. The majority of the time I was there, the nightwatchman was an old farmer from the village. I can't recall his name. The groundsman, Jimmy McKinstry, and a man called GJN [REDACTED] also did night duty sometimes. GJN [REDACTED] lived in the village, but he didn't have any other role at St Ninian's. They were the only three people that I recall being on duty at night.

Washing and Bathing

30. The boys all washed in a communal shower room downstairs. There was also a shower room up in the toilet area if the boys wanted a shower when they were up there at night. Each unit went to the shower room on a different night and all the boys showered. It was a communal, open planned shower room. It was always supervised by staff. If I was on duty, I would supervise my unit. The boys would wet themselves under the showers, then the water would be turned off, they'd soap up and the water would be switched on to let them rinse off. That wasn't to save water, it was to make sure they all washed themselves.

Trips / Holidays

31. Staff would take the boys out regularly on trips. We had two minibuses. The larger one, we called the 'blunder bus'. We would go to the swimming baths in Kirkintilloch and we had access to a swimming pool in a local secondary school on a Saturday morning. Sometimes we would take the boys to watch the salmon leap or go to Loch Lomond for them to paddle around. If I was on duty, I would often take the boys in my unit out. I would go with a minibus full of boys on my own.

32. The boys did go on overnight trips and these were very well organised. I went along, but wasn't directly involved in the organisation side of things. That was Brother MJP job. We used to go to Kirkoswald, South Ayrshire once a year. All the kids got a chance to go there and I think we went in three batches. There were a lot of forestry workers there so the big forestry truck came in and all the mattresses were loaded on by the gardeners and groundsmen. We took the buses down with the boys and stayed in a wee town hall. There was one main room where all the mattresses were laid out on the floor for the boys to sleep on. There were two side rooms, one was the kitchen and the other was the staff sleeping quarters. Every day we went down to Maidens Beach or Culzean Castle. The kids really loved that and it was very successful.

Healthcare

33. There was a matron at St Ninian's called Miss Hurley. She wasn't around much. There was another woman, a nurse called Jean McKechnie. She was one of these amazing women that you always find in these schools. She was salt of the earth, practical, and would deal with any ailments that came up. She had her own medical room. One of the big things I remember, when the kids came back from leave, was checking for nits. That was always a major problem.

34. If it was something more serious, I suppose we could have called out an emergency doctor. If it wasn't an emergency, the main doctor was in Aberfoyle. The school was registered with him and the nurse would make a decision as to whether or not the

Visitors

39. Sometimes families would come to visit the boys, but it was difficult because of the location of St Ninian's and because of the circumstances of some of the families. It was very remote so some families couldn't visit unless they were brought to the school by social work.
40. There were sometimes visitors who weren't families of the boys. There was a monthly board meeting at the school, which I wasn't involved in. Board members would come to the school for that. I think Archbishop Winning was probably the chair of the board. Tommy Graham, an MP from Paisley, was co-opted into the board at one time. Mrs Heaton Armstrong, who had a shop in Aberfoyle, was a board member. I don't know how people were elected on to the board, but I suspect they were approached by Archbishop Winning. They were always looking for people who had some kind of influence, or political slant on things, to be involved. There must have been more board members, but I don't know who they were. The board members didn't have any contact with the children when they were there.
41. I noticed in one the of the statements I was provided with, the boy talks about a magician coming in at Christmas time. That was actually a friend of Brother MJP who was there visiting Brother MJP and happened to do a few tricks for the boys. He was part of a group of magicians known as 'The Magic Circle'. I don't believe people like that, who were visiting the Brothers, were vetted in any way.

Review of Care/placement

42. Social workers would attend St Ninian's for case reviews, I supposed whenever it was getting close to the time of a Children's Panel. The staff at St Ninian's would have review meetings without social work and we were responsible for writing reports on the young people we were responsible for. I would have an input in that. I can't remember if the social workers spoke to the children one on one, but there was nothing to stop that happening. After any review, the social worker would make a recommendation to the Children's Panel, taking into account the parent's views. If the

parents couldn't come to the meeting, a social worker would visit and speak to them before making their recommendations.

43. If the Children's Panel decided to discharge a child, the social worker would make arrangements and come to collect the child. There were no special preparations for a child to leave St Ninian's because that's what we were trying to do the whole time they were there. Kids were always pretty keen to get home. I don't recall any boys staying at St Ninian's beyond the age of fourteen or fifteen. If they couldn't go home at that point, for any reason, they would have to be moved somewhere else. That would be a Children's Panel decision and they would make any necessary arrangements.

Discipline and Punishment

44. Across the school, there was a points system. You could earn points for good behaviour and being kind. Points were taken away for abusive behaviour, fighting or absconding. Points were related to weekend leave, tuck shop sweets and rewards such as outings so, if you had points taken away for bad behaviour, you may not get home leave. Some boys obviously couldn't go home for various reasons, so if they lost points, they may not get to visit the tuck shop or go on an outing. I don't know if there was any written discipline policy within the school. It was just explained to me when I started working there. It was explained to the boys when they arrived and the points system seemed to be something they could understand and had a certain amount of control over.
45. The only person that I had ever heard of using physical punishment at St Ninian's was a staff member called MCK. He left shortly after I started working there and the belt left with him. After that, there was no one getting the belt in my time at the school. I never saw or heard of it. I myself never physically disciplined a child, but as time went on, the kids coming to the school were getting more and more disturbed. I dare say there were times when kids got a clip on the ear or had to be physically removed from a situation. Brother MJP was a great man for having an amnesty. If things were getting a bit difficult, he would line the whole school up and say 'right, we're going to have an amnesty', meaning all is forgiven.

46. I remember an occasion when I was off duty and I was out jogging up the driveway. Brother **GZQ** had a group of boys going for a walk and I could see the group standing ahead of me with a boy on the ground. When I reached them, Brother **GZQ** told me the wee guy wouldn't get up. There was nothing wrong with him, he just wouldn't get up. I tried to encourage him, but he wouldn't move. I ended up having to put him over my shoulder to take him back to the building. That particular wee fella was a bit of a menace. Another time, I spent ages talking him in from a window. I thought he was hanging outside the widow by his fingertips, little did I know that was he was actually standing on a ledge outside the window. It took me ages to persuade him to get in.
47. I had a regime of having meetings with and talking to the boys in my unit. I tried to encourage them to take responsibility for themselves and each other and take pride in their unit. In my unit, if kids were capable of dealing with a wee bit of responsibility, I'd give them more responsibility.
48. The staff at St Ninian's didn't actually get any training on how to deal with situations like outbursts from kids. If there was a serious incident, I would hand over to one of the Brothers. I remember one instance where there was a fight in the dining hall and one boy, **[REDACTED]**, kicked another boy in the face which is quite a violent thing. I took him out and took him to Brother **MJP**. If a boy was disciplined, I believe it was recorded by Brother **MJP** as he would have had to write a report for future meetings.

Restraint

49. Restraint was very seldom used and if it was, it was only in a situation where it was necessary for the kids own safety or someone else's safety. Again, I don't believe there was any formal policy in place regarding the use of restraint. It was such a new concept and in my time at St Ninian's, there was no training such as Therapeutic Crisis Intervention, which was introduced much later.
50. I never had cause to restrain anybody and I never heard or witnessed it being used excessively. If someone was restrained, I would have expected it to be recorded in the

boy's file. Every boy had a personal file in the social work office within St Ninian's and anything of significance was recorded in it.

Concerns about the institution

51. I was not aware of any concerns about St Ninian's when I was there and I myself didn't have any concerns.

Reporting of complaints/concerns

52. There was no formal complaints procedure or guidance at St Ninian's. That said, if I had a concern, or a boy made a complaint to me, I would have certainly acted on it. I was only aware of one occasion when a boy made a complaint about a staff member and that was investigated by Brother ^{MJP} [REDACTED].
53. If there was a concern about a child, I'm sure the parents would have been notified. It would also be recorded and discussed at a review.

Trusted adult/confidante

54. I would hope, for the boys in my unit, they would have seen me as a trusted adult. A few of the staff weren't receptive to that sort of thing, but most were receptive to the kids. When a boy came into my unit, I had a chat with him about how he was, where he was from, his interests and told him the ground rules. I made it clear to the boys they could tell me if there was anything bugging them. No one ever raised any serious concerns to me other than the likes of 'so and so is getting on to me'.

Allegations of Abuse

55. St Ninian's didn't have a definition of abuse that staff were made aware of. I never saw anything that I considered to be abuse and no child ever reported abuse to me. I can't be confident that if abuse was taking place, it would have come to light. I say that

because of what I've read in the statements which have been disclosed to me. You had to hope that each unit had someone that the kids felt they could trust and would do something about it if a concern or complaint was reported.

Child protection arrangements

56. St Ninian's didn't provide any guidance on child protection. There was no training and staff were expected to deal with situations using common sense. If I had any concerns, I would have passed it to someone with authority to deal with it, like one of the Brothers.
57. I can only speak for my unit and we had a very close knit community of staff, who mostly lived on the campus. I didn't specifically have any conversations about child protection with the staff in my unit. I wouldn't have, unless something came up, which it didn't.

External monitoring

58. I'm sure there was external monitoring of St Ninian's. I presume any inspectors would have been employed by the Scottish Office. If there were inspections, I don't know who the inspectors spoke to, but they didn't speak to me or the kids. They probably dealt with Brother MJP.
59. I think if an outside inspection had identified a problem, it would have been acted on. The order were obviously very precious about their work. Anything that threatened the work of the order, they would want to nip it in the bud. If there was a problem with a staff member, it was dealt with by moving staff away to some other place.

Record-keeping

60. As I said, a file was kept on each of the boys and anything of significance was recorded in it. The boy's files would contain background reports, Children's Panels decisions

and any information that was added by St Ninian's staff, such as reports for reviews or review decisions. Any outbursts or discipline would also be recorded in the boy's files. For example, the incident when the boy, [REDACTED], kicked another boy in the face, was recorded in his file. There must have also been records from the managers meetings, but I can't be sure what other records were kept.

Investigations into abuse – personal involvement

61. I have not had any personal involvement in investigations into abuse

Reports of abuse and civil claims

62. I have not have any involvement in reports of abuse and civil claims.

Police investigations/ criminal proceedings

63. I was called to give evidence in the criminal case against Jimmy McKinstry, Charlie McKenna and Brother Benedict. The three of them were on trial at the same time. I believe I was called as a defence witness for Charlie McKenna. I basically gave evidence about the routine of the school. They were all convicted of abuse. I don't know of any other convicted abusers from my time at St Ninian's.

Specific alleged abusers

Brother Benedict

64. Brother Benedict worked at St Ninian's for around a year when I was there. I think he was a teacher and he used to take an activity. He was an electronics man and he used to repair televisions. I thought his subject was quite good and the kids were interested to an extent. However, he got into a fracas with some kid and the kid's arm was broken.

I don't know anything more about it. After that, he was shipped off to Tranent where the boys were older. I learned, after my time at St Ninian's, that boys had said they were being electrocuted by Brother Benedict. I didn't witness anything like that.

Jimmy McKinstry

65. Jimmy McKinstry was the groundsman and lived on campus when I worked at St Ninian's. I did have some concerns about him, but I could never put my finger on why. He was quite popular with the kids and seemed to be giving them sweets and wee treats. I got the impression he went around talking about the staff to the kids. The reason I say that is one of the kids, prior to me being married, knew I was living in one of the flats on the other side of the building. He wouldn't have known that unless someone told him and I believe it was Jimmy McKinstry. I think some of the other staff had concerns about him too. As I couldn't quite put my finger on why I was concerned, I never raised it with anyone.
66. There was only one occasion of a child making a complaint while I worked at St Ninian's. One evening in the week there was a service in the chapel, whether it was benediction or something, I don't know. At the end of the service, Brother ^{MJP} excused all the staff. We were all sent out. Nobody knew what was happening. The kids all stayed in and there was a big confab that went on for ages. Brother ^{MJP} never actually said what it was all about, but it became apparent that some kid had made a complaint against a member of staff and Brother ^{MJP} was investigating this. I can't say for certain and I don't know the nature of the complaint, but the talk amongst staff was that the complaint was against Jimmy McKinstry. The feeling I was left with, at the end of it all, was that they boy who made the complaint was given a hard time because the view of most of the boys was that Jimmy McKinstry was a wonderful guy.
67. Long after the school closed, I found out that a boy who had attended St Ninian's, and had since moved to America, hired private investigators to track down the man who had raped him during his time at the school. During the course of that investigation, Jimmy McKinstry was living up by Lake of Menteith. He had formed a friendship with

his neighbour and confided in her that he had actually done this and she went to the police. That is all information which is in the public forum and he was prosecuted. I believe that this is connected to the complaint that Brother ^{MJP} was dealing with at the school, but that's speculation on my part.

Charlie McKenna

68. Charlie worked at St Ninian's for the duration of my time there. He was a woodwork instructor and deputy to Brother ^{MJO} the Housemaster of St George's Unit. He would have been in his mid-sixties. I knew him pretty well. Charlie's sister was married to Eddie Molesdale who was initially a groundsman, but became the Housemaster of De La Salle Unit. He didn't have any qualifications, but that was how people got promoted at St Ninian's.
69. Charlie McKenna was very strict in his classroom and in St George's Unit. When he was off duty, he would sometimes hang around other units, including St Patrick's, and boys would go to him and sit on his knee. The boys seemed to like him and think of him as a kind uncle. I never saw him discipline or abuse a child. I was very surprised when the allegations were made against him as, during the time I worked with him, I had no concerns about him.

Brother ^{MJO}

70. Brother ^{MJO} was the Housemaster of St George's Unit. He was in his sixties and was there for the duration of my time at St Ninian's. I didn't know him well at all. I don't think I ever actually had a conversation with him. I think he was brought up on a farm and he kind of grunted, rather than spoke. If you've ever watched Father Ted, he was a bit like the old guy on that. I got the impression that the kids were a bit afraid of him, but I never saw him discipline or abuse anyone.

Brother **MJP**

71. Brother **MJP** was **SNR**. He took over from Brother **GSU** during my first year. I felt I knew him quite well. He was at my wedding. He was a kind, soft, very compassionate man with regards to the kids. I never saw or heard of him disciplining or abusing a child.

Brother **MBZ**

72. Brother **MBZ** was the bursar at St Ninian's. I think he was in his fifties. He was a very clever guy and dealt with all the salaries and accounts. The only time he was actually involved with the kids was on his two ancillary nights a week. He took the kids down to the gardens to look after the goats and sheep. I saw him with the children during dispersal, when the kids were setting off on their activities. He was very direct, but very good with the children. I never saw or heard of him disciplining or abusing a child.

Brother **MCN**

73. I have never heard of Brother **MCN**.

Brother **HJS**

74. Brother **HJS** was a teacher and then he **SNR** after Brother **HFT** left. He was fairly young compared to some of the other Brothers. I didn't see him with the kids as a group, but probably individually. He always seemed like an easy going, light-hearted, friendly guy. I never saw or heard of him disciplining or abusing a child.

Brother **GZQ**

75. Brother **GZQ** was the head of education. I think he was in his late forties, early fifties. He was there for the duration of my time. I thought he was great with the kids. I always remember, when we were at Kirkoswald, he was great at organising the games. He

seemed to be a good, hard worker in the school. I think he ran a tight class, but I never heard of him disciplining or abusing a child.

Mr ^{GZI} [REDACTED]

76. ^{GZI} [REDACTED] was there a good three or four years when I was. I'd say he was around the same age as me. He was there when I arrived, but I don't know how long he had worked there before me. He was a care worker, but not in the same unit as me. I would say I knew him quite well because I would see him and chat to him in the office. If I was coming down to Glasgow, to see my parents, he would drive me down. I think his parents lived in Bearsden. I saw him with the children a lot. He did concerts with the kids and took them up to the village to perform. I think he was very popular with the kids. I never saw or heard of him disciplining or abusing a child.

^{HJT} [REDACTED]

77. I don't know of anyone that worked at St Ninian's with the surname ^{HJT} [REDACTED].

Brother ^{GYV} [REDACTED]

78. I don't know anyone by the name of Brother ^{GYV} [REDACTED].

Brother ^{HFT} [REDACTED]

79. Brother ^{HFT} [REDACTED] was ^{SNR} [REDACTED] for three years, until he retired. I remember he played the mandolin and looked after the tuck shop. I took over the tuck shop after he left. I saw him with larger groups of children at St Ninian's, never one on one. I thought he was good with them. He had one of these big booming voices that dominates. I'm sure he gave many a kid a telling off, but never inappropriately. I never saw or heard of him abusing a child.

Mr ^{GZM} [REDACTED]

80. ^{GZM} [REDACTED] was the PE teacher until ^{GYL} [REDACTED] took over. I think he was there for around four or five years during my time at the school. ^{GZM} [REDACTED] didn't live on campus. I remember him being a strict kind of guy, maybe in his mid-forties. He wasn't around much other than during the school day. As far as I know, he was pretty good with the children. I never saw or heard of him disciplining or abusing a child.

Brother ^{LUE} [REDACTED]

81. I don't know anyone by the name of Brother ^{LUE} [REDACTED].

Brother ^{HMW} [REDACTED]

82. I don't know anyone by the name of Brother ^{HMW} [REDACTED].

Gregor Dougal

83. Greg Dougal was a teacher at St Ninian's until around 1976 when he was made head of education. He and I took the kids camping. He was a good guy, strict and well organised. He was great at organising the kids into activities. I only ever saw him verbally discipline the kids.
84. I never saw or heard of him physically disciplining or abusing any child while I was at St Ninian's. However, I know there are allegations that suggest otherwise as he was involved in a court case recently. I was called as a witness for the defence. The majority of allegations related to Ballikinrain School, which is where he moved onto after he left St Ninian's. There were however some allegations which related to his time at St Ninian's. One was something to do with apprehending an absconder. Apparently three boys had absconded. The allegation was that, while the three boys were still in the school driveway, Greg came flying down in his car, put his arm out the window and whacked one of the boys, knocking him unconscious. If a kid was knocked

out by Greg Dougal, while I was working there, I think I would have heard about it and I didn't. The court believed that allegation.

Mr McKinnay

85. I don't think I ever knew a Mr McKinnay at St Ninian's.

Mr GJN

86. GJN lived in the village. His brother was with Stirling Council. I think I probably knew of him, more because of his brother. He did some shifts as the night supervisor. He didn't have any other role at the school. I don't know when he started. I would have only seen him at handover, if he was on duty at night. He was a kind of funny guy, but he was fine. I didn't see or hear of him disciplining or abusing any of the children.

Allegations that have been made to the Inquiry about me

GXB

87. GXB has given a statement to the Inquiry. At paragraph 45 of his statement, he has said *"There was only one time that I ran away and I would have been about eight years old, I had taken enough of the sexual abuse and wanted away from the home. I went through the fields and got as far as the main road. Mr GXC and McKenna came looking for me and caught me. The main punishment for me running away was my privilege of getting home at weekends were stopped for six weeks."*

88. GXB goes on to say the following at paragraph 56 of his statement. *"The day I ran away from the home and was brought back, I was sent to the dining room to sit with the other kids. Mr GXC, one of the teachers, came in and hit me over the face with a hot kettle in front of the other kids and kitchen ladies. He told me that I was*

never going to do that again while he was on shift. That was the only time he ever hit me. I had redness to my face but did not need to see anyone for medical assistance."

89. I don't remember GXB and he wasn't in my unit. I don't remember punishing any child in the manner described. I didn't ever go out with Charlie McKenna to pick up a boy who absconded. I think it is a reasonable thing for him to lose points and home leave for a period time for absconding, but what he says happened in the dining room just didn't happen. He seems very convinced, so maybe somebody hit him with a hot kettle, but it wasn't me. Also, I would never say to a kid 'that won't happen on my shift'. That is not the way I operated. I don't think the passage of time has affected my memory. That is a significant thing and I can remember lots of details from my time at St Ninian's. What he has described, is probably abuse, but I can't explain why he has said these things as it just didn't happen.

HCA

90. HCA has given a statement to the Inquiry. At paragraph 46 of his statement, he has said *"We had a man called GXC who was a civilian member of staff, who would usually supervise our group. He was alright at times, but he could be a bit crabbit. He would hit you on the back of your legs if he thought you were misbehaving."*
91. HCA goes on to say the following at paragraph 84 of his statement. *"There was a civilian member of staff called Mr GXC who used to supervise the group I was in, when we did activities after school. He would hit you on the back of the legs with something if he thought you were being bad. We would be wearing shorts so we would always have marks on the back of our legs from it."*
92. I certainly know the name HCA, he was in my unit, but I couldn't put a face to the name. I never abused him. It looks to me like the person who has been asking him the questions for his statement, has gone back to him and asked him to elaborate and then he's said he was hit on the back of the legs with something. I didn't hit him, but I don't necessarily accept that what he has described is abuse. It depends, if he's saying

he was hit to the extent that his legs were all marked, then I'd say that was abuse, but that never happened. However, a slap on the back of the legs for misbehaving, I wouldn't say that was abuse.

HMQ

93. HMQ has given a statement to the Inquiry. At paragraph 46 of his statement, he has said *"There were civilian teachers at St Ninian's. Mr MacDonald the music teacher, and Mr [REDACTED], the art teacher were good guys. There was [REDACTED] Mr GXC who played the drums. He was okay. I stayed away from him because he was a feeler."* I was the only staff member at St Ninian's called Mr GXC and I did not teach art.
94. HMQ goes on to say the following at paragraph 129 of his statement. *"Mr GXC, the feeler, rubbed his hand up your leg and felt your bum. He did that to me, more than once. Brother MJO and Brother HMW did that too."* I don't remember HMQ at all. He was not in my unit. When I read what he has said, I was shocked and thought that it's slanderous. It's the same thing as with HCA HCA. The person asking the questions has gone back to him and asked him to expand on what he's said. I have absolutely never ever done that. It's completely made up.
95. I never inappropriately touched any of those kids. It's frustrating that he can say that and there is no way I can challenge it. If I did challenge it, I know what happens in this organisation. He goes back to his pals and they all vouch for him. That's what happened to Greg Dougal. I've been working with young people for thirty-five to forty years and I've never had an allegation made against me until now. I believe he is only saying this to get compensation. I've been told, in discussions with people I know, you don't have a chance at compensation unless you claim sexual abuse.

Convictions

96. I have no convictions.

Leaving St Ninian's

97. I left my employment at St Ninian's when it closed in 1982.

Helping the Inquiry

98. I don't know why kids at St Ninian's didn't feel they had someone to turn to. Abuse is such a destructive thing, but you would think, there would have been enough personalities around for someone to pick up on it, if it was happening.

99. I think things have moved on dramatically in the last forty years. It's a totally different world now. In those days, there were so many kids and they were screaming out for places. De La Salle was a ready-made teaching order to look after kids who needed special treatment. Even the placement I was on as a student was a De La Salle School. It was a big organisation, with a large number of kids. It was a deprived time, just after the war. Things are different now.

100. After I left my employment at St Ninian's, I went on to be SNR at The Good Shepherd Centre

Other information

101. 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... 15/12/23-