

**Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

MBH

Support person present: No

1. My name is MBH. My date of birth is 1958. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

**Life before going into care**

2. I was born in Possilpark which is in the north of Glasgow. I am one of four kids. I have two sisters and a brother. I am the youngest. I called one of my sisters 'Auntie' all of my life. I didn't know she was actually my sister. She had been taken off my mother by my grandparents when my mother was young. I was brought up in a house with my other sister and my brother. I was the only one who was any bother to my mother and father.
3. I had a great upbringing with my parents. There was never any hassle or abuse from them. I didn't get any ill treatment from them. I got a belt round the ear if the truant officer came to the door but that was about it.
4. The primary school I went to was called St Teresa's Primary. I wouldn't go. I just didn't like going to school. My mother would put me in one door and I would walk out another door. I remember a teacher called Mr who used to batter me with his walking stick. I just took it as part and parcel of going to school. It was the way things were back then. It was a daily thing.
5. I was a boy who had a head on him which was far older than his years. I used to skip school and jump on trains on my own to Aberdeen and Perth. I would jump on a

ferry and go to Dunoon. I did that instead of playing on the streets. I did that right up until the age of eleven. I ended up in the City Chambers for skipping school. My father got a fine.

6. I went to St Augustine's secondary school when I got older. By that time I was doing things like stealing milk off milk floats, papers from the outside shops and sweeties from inside the shops. It was trivial things that I was doing. It was theft but I wasn't going out and robbing people's houses or anything like that.
7. I ended up in a police station after stealing a milk float. I took a shot of it and crashed it. I ended up in front of the Chief Inspector in Springburn police station. I was given a verbal and a warning. I think it was because of this that I ended up being given a social worker. Her name was Miss Montgomery. She used to come and visit the house.
8. I ended up at the Sheriff Court. That was for truancy. The next thing was that they were trying to arrange a children's panel. I can remember my mother saying to my social worker "if he's going away I'm not taking him to the panel".
9. There were four or five people around the table at the hearing of the children's panel. My social worker was there. My mother and father were also there. We all sat down and had a chat. They all had a discussion in front of me about my school attendance. I was then taken out of the room so that they could have a discussion on their own. Later on, they brought me back in. I was taken by the wrist and told there and then that I was going away. There was no time period discussed. They didn't tell me where I was going. I was just told that I would be going away. Going away didn't bother me. I didn't cry or anything. I didn't break down when the panel was putting me away.
10. After the panel hearing they put me in this room. I saw my mother and father and said goodbye. I was then taken away in a minibus. En route we went down Argyll Street. I saw my mother and father walking down the road. I said to the minibus driver that they were my mum and dad. The guy stopped the van. I got to speak to

my mum and dad. My mother went into Woolworths and came out with a pick and mix. After that the driver carried on driving me to Larchgrove.

11. In later years I questioned in my head whether my mother and father had put me into care or whether that had been the panel's decision. When you look up the history of these places, children were placed in them for their care and protection. I had no danger from my mother and father. I had no fear of my mother and father. I was just the only one of the three kids in the household who caused any issues. The only reason I ended up being sent away was because I didn't attend school. It was as simple as that.

### **Larchgrove Remand Home, Glasgow**

12. I was 13 when I went to Larchgrove. It was a remand centre. I think that the place was run by Glasgow Council. I know that it was Glasgow Council that dealt with me and put me away. They were the ones who ran the panel.
13. It was all boys in Larchgrove. There were about 40 boys there. I'd say the age range of the boys was twelve to fifteen. When you became sixteen you went to Longriggend. If, whilst you were in Larchgrove, you got a criminal conviction you got sent down to St Mary's. St Mary's was a Criminal Young Persons institution. St Mary's was a lockdown unit.
14. Larchgrove was a place for people who were too young to go to a young offenders institution or to prison. It was a stop gap place for people who were waiting to go to other homes. Boys also used to do sentences in Larchgrove. They would stay there for sentences of 28 days or 60 days. Boys were pulled off the street and stuck in there on these sentences.
15. I'd known about Larchgrove before I went there. I had pals who were picked up and ended up in there. I remember going up to see the boys before I ended up there. You knew the regime and that the boys would be outside at a certain time. You

could hear the boys playing on the other side of the wall on Edinburgh Road. You would shout over the wall to your pals. You'd lob sweeties over the wall to them.

16. I wasn't in Larchgrove for a long time. It was weeks rather than months. It could have been only three weeks. I was waiting there for a vacancy for somewhere else. It didn't bother me being in Larchgrove. I never broke down whilst I was there. I treated Larchgrove like it was a joke.

17. There were boys in there that I knew from the scheme. I wasn't on my own. There were so many people coming and going that you were bound to know someone. A lot of the boys who were in there were rebellious. Some of the boys would be asked to do things by the staff and they would just say "fuck you." That would get around. Sometimes there were ten boys saying that they weren't going to do something. There wasn't any way the staff could make them do what they wanted.

#### *Staff*

18. The staff at Larchgrove were alright. There was the usual shouting and bawling. It was an institution and it was what you expected. The guys were only there to do a job. You didn't have any respect for them. You knew you were there for being wrong but you also knew you were going to be going somewhere else down the line.

19. The housemaster was called Mr MKI. He had red hair. All the other boys used to say that you should stay clear of him. I don't remember the name of any of the other members of staff.

## **Routine at Larchgrove Remand Home**

### *First day*

20. There wasn't an induction. I got inspected when I went in. I got checked for nits. They cupped my testicles and told me to cough. They looked at my teeth. They then gave me my clothes.

### *Daily routine*

21. They got you up at seven in the morning and you had to make up your bed. You weren't allowed to lie about in your bed. You did your chores during the day and in the evening you had your recreation. We didn't go to school during the day. After that you went to bed.

### *Sleeping arrangements*

22. There were dormitories. I can't remember how many were in my dorm.

### *Clothing and food*

23. I got issued with my clothing. The uniform was khaki shorts and a khaki shirt. You wore sandshoes. They were called your 'house shoes'. They had rubber soles. You wore those shoes to prevent there being any marks on the wooden floors. You had gym shoes for the gymnasium when you were in there. Those were your daily clothes. The grub was alright. It was like school food.

### *Chores*

24. You were broken up into certain groups and had certain things to do during the day. Some of the boys were what they called 'trustees'. They got to go out and do things like gardening. I spent my days polishing floors, washing windows and dusting.

*Leisure time*

25. We were taken out to do our exercises in a yard that had an eighteen to twenty foot wall around it. We just used to play football. During recreation you could watch television or listen to the radio. You could sit around playing dominoes, cards or darts. You didn't get to go home at Larchgrove. When you were in there you were in there.

*Visits / Inspections*

26. I don't remember my mother or father visiting me whilst I was in Larchgrove.
27. My social worker, Miss Montgomery, did come to see me after I first arrived. She told me the situation. She told me that I was waiting there for a transfer. She also visited me towards the end of my stay there.

*Healthcare*

28. The only medical I got whilst I was there was the medical when I went in. That was all just to check you were alright before you went in. If you had nits they would shave your head.

*Boys running away*

29. Boys escaping was a daily occurrence. I remember lining up after football to go back inside. When we lined up boys would give each other leg ups over the wall.
30. I remember one time using a bumper to polish the floors. One of the boys came up to me and asked to have a shot on the bumper. He then grabbed it off me, used it as a battering ram and ran straight out through the doors. He escaped out of the fire exit. Alarms went off and teachers appeared. That was the boy off into the neighbouring scheme. I just laughed and joked about the boy going off.



*Bed-wetting*

31. I was a bed-wetter. None of the people I knew were aware that I did that before I went into Larchgrove. When I went into Larchgrove people discovered that I wet the bed. If you wet your bed through the night you would have to take your wet clothes off, throw your mattress over then throw your wet sheets to the side of your bed. When you got up in the morning you had to take your sheets and things to the laundry. You then changed your bed and that was it done. If it was good weather you might stand your mattress outside to let it dry during the day.
32. I would get abuse off of the other boys for the bed-wetting. It was just one of those things. I don't know where the bed-wetting came from. It continued to be a factor in my life until I was fourteen or fifteen.

**Abuse at Larchgrove Remand Home**

33. MKI the housemaster, would flick you or batter you with a towel in the shower. That was like a daily thing. He would fondle you in the shower. He would say "you've not washed yourself here with a bit of soap." He did that to everybody. Sometimes the boys would rebel and he would just back off. Back then you just thought of it all as banter. It wasn't anything too violent. To us, at the time, it was more like a 'carry on'. I just put up with it at the time. I put it to the back of my head. Looking back at it now it wasn't just a bit of "craic". It was other things.
34. After the bed-wetting you tended to go to the shower on your own or with the other bed-wetters. If you were on your own MKI would pick on you. He would slap you or spit on you or whatever. I dare say that things happened to other boys all the way throughout with him when they were on their own.

### Leaving Larchgrove Remand Home

35. When the transfer came through I was informed that I would be going away. Miss Montgomery then came to pick me up. She drove me to St Ninian's. It was all banter and joking in the car. Then we got to St Ninian's itself.

### St Ninian's, Falkland, Fife

36. St Ninian's was run by the Christian Brothers. In those days the school leaving age was fifteen so that was the age you left. That changed to sixteen later on. There were between forty and forty-eight boys in there. It was all boys. There were a few boys from Possilpark in there. We kind of knitted together.
37. St Ninian's was a big old fashioned place. It was all dark oak panelled. The paintings on the wall were twelve foot by eight foot. It was a creepy place.
38. There were two wings. There were two areas for the juniors and the seniors. The junior and the senior side were different houses and I think they had different names. I can't remember what those names were. You were held in the juniors until you became a certain age. You then were moved over to the seniors. As the boys moved up from the juniors to the seniors, gaps were created and new boys would come in.
39. I was thirteen when I went to St Ninian's. I started in the juniors but went on to the seniors. I came out when I was fifteen. A lot of the children in there had come from Nazareth House. There were boys in there who had turned eleven and then been transferred across from there.

### *Staff - brothers*

40. Brother <sup>BHD</sup> [REDACTED] was <sup>SNR</sup> [REDACTED]. You only had things to do with him during the day. He was a [REDACTED] teacher. He was a wee guy. He was bald and had



glasses. He looked like Penfold out of Dangermouse. He always wore the robes. He would run everywhere. He would run to catch you. He would duck and dive out of bushes.

41. Brother Gerry Ryan ran the juniors. He wore civilian clothes. He was the one who put you to bed and got you out of your bed. He was the one who got you squared up before you went down for your breakfast and things like that.
42. Brother <sup>MCY</sup> ran the seniors. He took . He was a brilliant guy. He was generally in a tracksuit. You got no hassle off him. When you went up to his wing you became eligible for cocoa at night. He gave you that before you went to bed. I never had any bother from Brother <sup>MCY</sup>
43. Brother Nugent was an old man. We looked upon him as if he was the senior brother. In those days I thought he was in his eighties. I later learnt, when I went to his grave, that he wasn't that old. He dressed like a minister with a collar. He ran the tuck shop. He'd give you your sweeties. We mostly saw him at mealtimes. He used to give your meals out and give grace. Looking back, he had retired and was living his days out. I now know he died at St Ninian's.
44. Brother <sup>LMZ</sup> was a  teacher. He was a great guy. He was a big heavy Geordie boy. He would get you to clean his room. He was a smoker. You used to take the stubs of his cigarettes. The problem was that he smoked Silk Cut. You couldn't get a draw off them with a pair of bellows.
45. Brother Jack had left St Ninian's. He didn't live or work actually in St Ninian's. I don't know what home he worked in. He used to come in, handpick ten or twelve boys and take them out in the minibus to the football.
46. The only two bad ones in St Ninian's were Brother <sup>BHD</sup> and Brother Ryan.

*Staff - sisters*

47. I remember nuns coming into St Ninian's. I can't remember whether they were just brought in for staff coverage or whether they came in from Nazareth House with some of the boys who came in. I remember the nuns taking classes. We would rip the piss out of them because they were women. We would call them "penguins" and things like that. I didn't really have much to do with them.

*Staff - civilians*

48. Mr BHB took [REDACTED]. We all called him 'Mr BHB'. We used to do the basket weaving with him. You always liked doing that with him because you would cut bits off the baskets and use them to smoke. He could shout and bawl but that was all he did. It was nothing but raised voices.
49. There was a [REDACTED] member of staff who was called MCS. I think he was a [REDACTED] [REDACTED] or something. He taught us [REDACTED]. I remember him taking photographs of everybody. That was his hobby. It wasn't funny photos or anything like that. It was just boys playing football or rugby. It was like the school photos. I know that one of the former boys got in contact with MCS. The former boy got in contact with him because he knew MCS had witnessed a severe assault in the home. I heard that, in the beginning, MCS denied that he saw anything and refused to be a witness. Eventually he provided a statement confirming what had happened.
50. The cook was a woman called Lizzie. She was like a mother figure. She'd let you help her out. She'd give you the keys to the store. When she gave you the keys she was really giving you them because she knew you would grab an apple or something. That was how she gave you things. Her daughters used to come up from the village to help out with the dishes.
51. There was a matron. She was an old dragon. She left and a new matron took her place. I believe the second matron was [REDACTED]. She was younger. She would have been in her forties.

## **Routine at St Ninian's**

### *First day*

52. I remember standing at the front doors, they were big massive wooden things. The building was like something out of The Adams Family. I looked up at the building and it was at that point that I got a tear in my eye. When I went in the door I was greeted by Brother <sup>BHD</sup> [REDACTED]. I was then taken into the staff room. It was just like a big lounge. The room was all wood panelling. I sat down with my social worker and spoke to the brothers. I was introduced to them all. I then spoke to the matron and was introduced to her. I then walked to the TV room, there were other boys there. I was left to my own devices. I was told to just ask the boys what I needed to do. Later on the bell went for dinnertime. I went down for my dinner with the other boys.

### *Daily routine*

53. They got you up at seven o'clock in the morning. You got breakfast at about eight o'clock. During the day it was your classes. You got a play break and you got your tea in those hours. You had a dinner break. You were left to your own devices unless there was schooling or there was something on.

### *Sleeping arrangements*

54. I think it was either six or eight boys in each dormitory. It used to be all old hospital beds in the dorms. We were all given new divan beds when St Ninian's went through a refurbishment. I remember boys called David Sharp, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and a boy called [REDACTED] being in my dorm. There were single rooms on each side of the dorms. A couple of boys were in those single rooms.

*Washing and bathing*

55. You brushed your teeth in the mornings and at night. You could have a shower any time you wanted. You had a shower pretty much every day because you were made to play sports every day. You were washed every night. To get to the toilet you had to go past Brother Ryan's bedroom. You felt you were on needles creeping past his door.

*Clothing*

56. I wore my own clothes when we went out from St Ninian's. St Ninian's did give the boys clothes. I was fortunate though. My mum and dad would send in clothes that they had bought for me. I had a Harrington jacket, levis jeans and my own trainers.

*Food*

57. The food was all home cooked by Lizzie. You got a loaf of bread put down in the middle of the table. You could eat as much bread as you wanted. If you finished the loaf you could go and ask for another one. You did get extras if you wanted them. The food was all spot on in that way. The soups were all poor. I can taste the tomato soup to this day.
58. You didn't need to clear your plate. You didn't have to eat everything. Your meals weren't laid out as such. You went up and got your meal. You could say to Lizzie that you didn't want something if you didn't like it. Sometimes there were choices and you could pick things instead of other things. You could, for example, pick chips over boiled potatoes.
59. The brothers ate in the dining hall at the same time as us. I remember Brother Nugent sitting in the corner.

*School*

60. The school was in the house. The classrooms were up the stairs. It was the brothers and civilians that taught you. I didn't have much of an education at St Ninian's. There was an education programme but it was nothing. It was basic schooling. It wasn't what you would get outside. You were basically in a classroom to put the hours in. You weren't made to study like the way you did outside of St Ninian's.
61. We didn't do any exams or anything like that. You didn't have any schooling on life skills like cooking or budgeting. Going to school in St Ninian's basically meant that I had no secondary education. One of the things they encouraged you to do were 'mailing classes'. You had these catalogues that you had to do all the exams in. You would then send them back. You got graded from one book to the next. It was all religious type things. You got marks in it. It was a load of shite. Boys were only taking part in it because they wanted to be in the good books to try and get home leave.

*Religious instruction*

62. You got up for chapel in the morning. You would attend mass at Falkland Palace. I was an altar boy there. I didn't do that because I wanted to. I did it because I was told to. It wasn't a bad thing because you used to be able to steal the holy wine when you were there.

*Leisure time*

63. Really, outwith your school time, you had a free hand. You could leave the building and walk outside. You could go off into the mountains if you wanted to. You could walk in the woods or go down to the burn.
64. There were sports every day. You did that every day seven days a week. You had to do that whether you liked it or not. It would be cross country running, hockey,



football, rugby, golf or training for your triple athletics stars. You could do everything you could think of. You name it we had it.

65. If it was a team game you would be put into your house teams by your house masters and you played sport outside. I remember travelling outside. We went running in Meadowbank Stadium. We also played table tennis tournaments there. We played rugby at the training ground right across from Murrayfield. We went ice skating in Kirkcaldy. We went swimming in Perth every week.
66. Every night at five o'clock you came out and did sports. You wanted to be the man who played in all the teams. Whilst I was there I saw us playing a game of competitive football on the Saturday morning followed by a rugby game in the Saturday evening followed by a hockey game on the Sunday morning. It was intense. You were fit because they were making you fit.
67. You could do badminton, play pool, play football and use the gymnasium in your free time. There was a TV and a music room.

#### *Chores*

68. All the maintenance of the house was done through the boys. You moved around the different types of chores. You got your duties in the morning after breakfast. You got told what you were doing.
69. They had a cellar across from the boot room in the house. It looked like an old police cell. It was full of old equipment. All the cleaning stuff was kept in there. You would go down there and get the equipment. You were then told what chores you had to do. You would maybe put Dubbin on all the rugby balls or whatever.
70. When I was in St Ninian's it went through a refurbishment. We did all the work. I remember putting cleaning stuff on the tiles and polishing them all up.



*Holidays and trips*

71. We went away skiing for two weeks with the army's training corps in Glenshee. Both the juniors and the seniors went away on that. We went camping in St Andrews. I remember the campsite was at the top of a cliff. We went training at St Andrews as well. We used to run on the sand dunes for the rugby. We once went to the opera. I didn't like it but I went. We went to discos in Dundee and Broughty Ferry. We went to the ice hockey. It wasn't all bad times at St Ninian's.

*Birthdays and Christmas*

72. I went home for Christmas Day and the holidays themselves. However, I still always got a Christmas dinner and a Christmas treat at St Ninian's. I remember going to the carol singing in Falkland Palace.
73. At Christmas and birthdays you could get a parcel sent in from home. If you didn't have a parcel sent in from your parents you got a parcel off your social worker. You used to get a visit from your social worker at Christmas. They used to give you a ten bob note for your Christmas. That changed after decimalisation.
74. For birthdays you got a birthday cake at your table. That was all down to Lizzie.

*Pocket money and treats*

75. We got a shilling a week pocket money. We got a sixpence on a Friday and a sixpence on a Wednesday or a Monday. If you wanted an extra sixpence you had to run up the Paps of Fife and back. You had to be first to the top and first at the bottom otherwise you got nothing. There were checkpoints going up to check up on you that you were doing it.
76. My dad worked for Cadburys. When my dad did deliveries in Falkland he would send up parcels. He would send up the new sweeties. He did that with broken sweeties and burst boxes as well. My dad would deliver the sweeties and they

would be divvied out amongst the boys when they went up to the tuck shop with their pocket money. I have a vivid memory of that happening when the chocolate bar Curly Wurlys first came out. We got Curly Wurlys for weeks on end.

#### *Visits / Inspections*

77. My mum came to visit me. She used to get the bus up from Glasgow. I remember walking up the driveway to meet her in the village. I remember the family of a boy called [REDACTED]. That family used to come up from Maryhill in Glasgow. They used to give my mother a lift.
78. My father never visited me whilst I was in St Ninian's. He couldn't hack leaving me at the end of the visit. He told me that he wouldn't be able to handle walking away and leaving me there. He used to write to me but he didn't visit.
79. Miss Montgomery, my social worker came to see me about once or twice a year. I never saw an inspector or inspections in the home

#### *Leave*

80. Certain boys used to get home every week. Other boys used to get home every other week. I tended to get the home leaves. I think I got home every two weeks. Sometimes I went by minibus and other times I went by train. It was Brother Ryan that drove the minibus. I think we got the train if it was the summer holidays. We had to get the train then because everybody was leaving at the same time and the minibus couldn't carry everybody. You wouldn't get your leave if there had been an incident like fighting or causing some bother.
81. If you got physically punished severely they would cancel your home leave. They couldn't send you home when you were covered in bruises. Your parents would just be told "[REDACTED] has been misbehaving" or something. You wouldn't get home for two or three weeks. After that you would go back to your home leave.

82. If I went home from St Ninian's with something like a black eye my parents just said "you must have deserved it." That was the attitude back then. You would just laugh about it and accept it.

83. I remember going home for leave in the minibus and seeing a boy called David Sharp standing there alone as we went away. He had no parents to go home to. When St Ninian's shut down for Summer, Easter or Christmas holidays we returned to our parents. David Sharp had to stay with the brothers. There were other boys in the home who didn't have parents to go home to as well. They got fostered out though. My mum took in some boys who didn't have homes to go to when I went home on leave.

#### *Healthcare*

84. There was a doctor who came in. Sometimes you were taken to the doctor. I went through a load of tests in a hospital for kidney stones. They did those because I was a bed-wetter. I was on all sorts of medication trying to break up the stones and to get my bed-wetting cured. Everything else was treated in house. Any bruises you had were always just put down to playing rugby.

85. You got taken out to the dentist. I can't remember dentists coming in. When you needed treatment you went out. I got some teeth taken out.

#### *Children leaving St Ninian's / work*

86. I remember boys leaving because they were school leaving age and they couldn't keep them in. I remember boys going out of St Ninian's for work experience. They went and worked in the community. [REDACTED] was one of the boys who did that. He eventually left.

87. I never did any work experience. I was never at the age of the boys to be going out into the community. There were some boys who went out and worked in the community until they had a flat. They left after that.

*Running away*

88. I don't know how many times I ran away. I remember bolting away when I was taken to see the football at Parkhead. I also did that when I was taken to a cup final at Hampden. It was Brother Jack who took us to the football. I ran away home. I used to run away from the football games back to my mother's. My mother would put me on a bus back to St Ninian's a couple of days later.
89. After running away from the football a few times Brother Jack knew what was going on. He would drop me off at my mother's before the game and pick me up again after it. In the end they put a stop on me being taken to the football because I was running away. There's no mention in the records to show I ran away. As far as I am concerned, if I was away there should have been a record of that.
90. I never ever ran away from the home itself because it was in the middle of nowhere. A lot of the boys did do that though. I wouldn't think to do that myself. What was the point of running away from the home if you were going on your home leave anyway? Why run away to your home from St Ninian's when you could get given a lift when you went on your leave? When boys did run away, and were caught, the brothers just took away a treat that the boys would be getting. It was things like going ice skating or something.
91. There was a family of boys who were called [REDACTED]. I remember them all running away and going AWOL. The [REDACTED] were amongst thirteen boys who ran away. They all ran away in their pyjamas.
92. On the occasions when I ran away my punishment was standing about in the hall. That was worse than a skelp because a skelp would be over and done with. If you were standing in the hall you could be there for hours.

*Bed-wetting*

93. Every night in the juniors Brother Ryan felt the boys in bed to see whether they had wet the bed. That happened to all the bed-wetters. If Brother Ryan felt your bed and it was wet you were taken down to the showers. The showers were down underground. To get there you had to walk down a spiral staircase, down past the kitchen and past the kitchen stores. You never got a change of clothes after you wet the bed. The sheets would come off and you would turn the mattress over. You would just lie on the mattress.

**Positive experiences at St Ninian's**

94. We used to mingle with the lassies from the village. Two of the girls were Lizzie the cook's daughters. There was an old army hanger where they used to keep the grass cutting equipment. We used to take the girls there for a wee kiss and a cuddle.
95. A burn ran down the side of St Ninian's and down into the village. Boys used to sneak out at night, follow the burn and go into the village. There was a store in the village that had a common close on the side of it. They stored all their pop in that close. We would sneak in, take a crate of ginger and plank it in the wood. That became our stash.
96. I remember that we used to break into the brothers' motors at night and take all the stubs of cigarettes out. I think that the brothers knew what was going on. They must have done because they would have found their car ash trays getting emptied out without them knowing.
97. We would wait until Brother Ryan was asleep and then sneak out of the dormitories. There was all sorts of carry on. I remember a fire extinguisher being set off in someone's bed. I remember boys sneaking into the chapel and playing the organ in the middle of the night. I remember us telling stories to one another about the 'white lady' who was supposed to be the ghost in the house.

98. Some of the boys were big. There was a boy called [REDACTED]. He was six feet with a big ginger beard. He was like a big highlander. He was only twelve. I remember playing rugby against other teams with [REDACTED]. The boys in the other side would be looking at [REDACTED] with a look of "what the fuck's that?" across their face.
99. It wasn't all bad. We laughed and joked. There were a lot of good times.

### **Abuse at St Ninian's**

100. In St Ninian's you were left to your own devices. If you stepped out of line then you were put back in your line. The way I look back on things now is that I think about the physical abuse and laugh. I talk about it with my children. You accepted it because you had usually done something wrong. We took it as part of daily life. You had nowhere to go. You got your punishment and went away for a greet. You got on with it.

### *General discipline*

101. We all had different shoes at St Ninian's. You had house shoes, outdoor shoes, steel toe capped shoes, rugby boots and football boots. If you were acting up you got thrown in the boot room to clean all the shoes. You would treat it as a joke. You would clean them then throw all the shoes into the middle of the floor. You would leave them all in a pile. You would leave them there for the others to try and find their own shoes. People would have to sift through three hundred shoes to find their own.
102. There was wooden marquetry on the walls and big wooden columns. There were diamonds in the marquetry. As a punishment you were sometimes made to stand with your nose to the wall staring at those diamonds for hours on end. Your nose would be on the diamond with your eyes focussing on it. Sometimes you had to stand with your back to the wall with your hands behind your head. Any brother could give you that punishment if you did something wrong.



103. The Brothers had a wee stiff belt which they used to punish you with in school. Brother <sup>BHD</sup> [REDACTED] and Brother Ryan used to give you the belt if you did things wrong. I received that many times off of them. They were the only Brothers that ever dished out that sort of punishment in school. They were the only ones who raised their voice or anything. The other ones, like Brother <sup>MCY</sup> [REDACTED] who taught [REDACTED], would make you run laps round the park.
104. One time there was a carry on in the dormitory. We were all taken out in our pyjamas. We were made to run from St Ninian's to the Kilgower gates in the snow. They were the gates to a farm that was near St Ninian's. A brother followed us behind in a motor. We were forced to run up that road and back. We were then put into a cold shower.
- Brother* <sup>BHD</sup> [REDACTED]
105. Brother <sup>BHD</sup> [REDACTED] used to walk around with a golf club. He used to just lash out at you with that. He did that with a set square that was in his classroom. He would hit you with that around the head. His favourite instrument was the ruler. He would make you hold out your hand and he would hit you with the edge of the ruler on your fingertips.
106. One time Brother <sup>BHD</sup> [REDACTED] held me up by my throat and poured TCP down it because I had been caught smoking. I also got it for swearing. When I look back on it now I laugh about it.
107. The punishment could be daily. It was whenever you got on his nerves. If it wasn't you it would just be someone else. Someone would get it every day.
108. I was always a boy into the hunting scene. I was always looking out of the window. I would be going away catching rabbits or doing the pheasant beating for the local gamekeeper. Brother <sup>BHD</sup> [REDACTED] used to fish the hill lochs up at Lomond. I used to get taken up to row the boat. I remember laughing at him because he had lost a

fish. He hit me with the oar and hit me with the landing net. I took it. If I hadn't have laughed then it wouldn't have happened.

109. There was a big physical boy that Brother <sup>BHD</sup> [REDACTED] nearly killed with a golf club. The boy's name was [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was a local boy from my area. He was in the home at the same time as me. I heard about it happening at the time. The boy was walking about with a face that looked like he had been hit by a bus. [REDACTED] is the boy who later on reported his incident to the police. I've only recently found out that he spoke to the police. He was the one who tried to get <sup>MCS</sup> [REDACTED] to give a statement. I don't know what happened with the police investigation or who they were looking into. I presume it was Brother <sup>BHD</sup> [REDACTED] that they were trying to investigate.
110. The brothers had a queer way of breaking news to you. There was a wee boy whose nickname was [REDACTED]. He was from Maryhill. He was also called [REDACTED]. I think that was short for [REDACTED]. I don't remember his surname. The way Brother <sup>BHD</sup> [REDACTED] decided to tell him that his mother had died was that he just came in in front of everyone and shouted it out. He said "your Ma's dead." That was it.
111. I look back on the things Brother <sup>BHD</sup> [REDACTED] did and I think "you know what, if someone was winding me up in those days the way we were then I might have done that." You only got it if you misbehaved off him. He didn't just hit you for nothing. You could go about your duties, be left alone and be alright. He wouldn't just pull you out for the sake of giving you a beating.

*Brother Ryan*

112. Brother Ryan used to batter you with a branch with your shorts around your ankles. We called it 'the birch'. You would be standing in the middle of the rugby or cricket pitch. Brother Ryan did that to humiliate you. You would have a tear in your eye and everybody would be laughing. You had to laugh yourself. You pulled your shorts up and got on with it. Other times he would whack you on your arse with the cord that was attached to the whistle round his neck.

113. Brother Ryan was our housemaster in the juniors. He was the one that checked on us at night. He also put you to your bed. Before you went to bed you could do what he called a 'communal' in his bedroom. Not all the boys would go to that. Any boy who was in the wing would be welcome. Some of the boys would choose to lie in the dormitory instead and read or whatever it might be. Basically you would go to the communal because you didn't want to go to bed. It got you an extra half hour instead of going to bed. If you went to Brother Ryan's communal you would sit and listen to the radio. Someone might read a book. You'd all tell stories and laugh.
114. Some of the boys would sit on his knee. It would be you one night and it would be another boy another night. You would be sitting there feeling Brother Ryan's fingers creeping down your pyjamas. He would push his hand down past your waistband. All the other boys were sitting there when he did it. You would notice him getting an erection. That was when you realised that it was time to move. You would get up and go.
115. I remember there were boys who used to aim to sit on Brother Ryan's knee. I ask myself why those boys kept on putting themselves in that position. People aren't themselves when these things happen to them.
116. During the times that I was in the shower after being found to have wet the bed, Brother Ryan masturbated in front of me on many occasions. He did that through his trousers. He never once 'had his self out'. He would lean in and tell you to get washed. After that you would get dried off and go up to change your bed. After that it was just another day. Initially I didn't look upon this as sexual abuse.
117. One night I woke up and I discovered that Brother Ryan was masturbating me. I had my first ejaculation at the hands of that man. I woke up to an orgasm. He had no reason to put his hands inside my pyjamas. If your pyjamas are dry then your bed is dry. Later on it got to the stage where I would just fling my legs out of the bed and tell him that I was not wet. You learnt wee things to stop things happening to you.

118. When I moved across to the senior house all the sexual stuff stopped. All that stuff happened when I was in the junior side.

*The boys in the single rooms*

119. Looking back at the boys who were in the single rooms I remember they were the boys who were very feminine. I think there was every chance that they were the ones who were going to go 'down that road' and become gay in adult life. Big [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was one of them. He was about six foot but was thin. He was a great rugby player. He was like Julian Clary. The only thing that was missing was a handbag. Another one was called [REDACTED]. He was a wee boy that looked like Billy Bunter. He was also very feminine.
120. I don't know whether those boys were put in those rooms for their own protection to avoid sexual predators. At the time, we all surmised they were put in those rooms for ease of access. That's what we thought. We could not prove that though.
- [REDACTED]
121. There was a boy called [REDACTED] He was a few beds away from me. He was a wee short boy with dark hair. He was a brilliant goalkeeper. I know he was abused because he was in the same dorm as me. He was picked out. He went home one time and didn't come back. I can remember them telling us in St Ninian's that [REDACTED] [REDACTED] had died. They didn't say how he died. I went to his funeral at St Teresa's with David Sharp. We both came from the same area where [REDACTED] came from. I don't know the timeframes for all that happening.
122. In later life, I met a man who was a friend of my wife. I'd have been talking to him when I was about 35. It turned out that he was [REDACTED] father. The guy's name was [REDACTED] He was a guy from the scheme. I had never realised that he had had a connection. He told me that [REDACTED] had hung himself [REDACTED]



MOD

123. The old village creep used to come up to the house. His name was MOD . Looking back he was what you would class as the local village idiot. He was obviously just a misfit. He looked like a Glasgow down and out. He would come up and creep around the home. He would peek in the window when you were on the toilet. The boys used to chase MOD away into the woods. To me at the time it was all banter.

### Leaving St Ninian's

124. I never got taken back to the panel for a review hearing during the time I was in St Ninian's. However, I've learnt that I did get taken to one just before I was released. I can't remember anything about it. I only know about it because that's what it says in the records I recovered. The records say that the panel happened on 1973. It basically says in those records that I was taken to the panel by Brother BHD and my mother and I praised St Ninian's to the eyeballs. I don't remember any of that. I do know that I would say anything they wanted to hear if it meant that I was going to get let out. I think that, if that happened, I would have likely travelled to the panel on my own with Brother BHD and I would have been told what to say.

### Life after being in care

125. I went back home after I left St Ninian's. I didn't have much of a school life after St Ninian's. After what I had been through I would just tell the teachers to "go fuck themselves" and not go to school. I remember only being in secondary school for a matter of months. The last year of my secondary school really didn't exist. I went in for a laugh throughout. I did no exams whatsoever. I don't know whether I stopped going there because of exclusion or whether I just stopped going.
126. I ended up stealing motors and what have you. I went into young offenders when I was sixteen. When I was seventeen I ended up in borstal. I came out when I was eighteen and got married to my first wife. I was separated by the time I was twenty.

I ended up doing a twenty month sentence in prison. That was the longest sentence I ever did. I later on got another six months for stealing a van full of whisky. That was the last time I ended up in prison. It was all self-inflicted. It was me wanting to be one of the boys on the scheme.

127. I then met my second wife, [REDACTED]. That was me with a family. It was at that point that I decided I needed to put it all behind me. There was more than myself to think about. I decided it was time to grow up. Not everybody was to blame for what I went through. A lot of it was down to me. I had to say to myself "right, stop what you're doing and get on with life." I've had a couple of wee slips. I was fighting and doing stupid things when I was twenty five and twenty six but, other than that, I've got on with life since then. I never went back to prison from the age of twenty four years old onwards.

### **Reporting of abuse**

#### *Whilst in care*

128. We didn't really speak amongst ourselves about what was happening. The boys didn't talk to one another. You would see the physical stuff happening in front of you. However, the sexual stuff was done when you were on your own. The brothers should never have been allowed near us at night time.
129. You might come up from the showers and tell the boys something happened but you would only say "that dirty old bastard." You wouldn't go into the detail. We joked amongst ourselves about it. We didn't at any time stop and say "hold on a wee minute now, that wasn't right." We all just took it with a pinch of salt. I do look back and wonder whether, if I had spoken out, David Sharp or wee [REDACTED] might have turned round to me and told me what was going on. David Sharp never once told me what was going on.
130. There were a few boys from Possilpark in there. I've no doubt that if it had got out all the boys and people from Possilpark would have banded together and done



something about it all. They couldn't have brushed it under the carpet if we all had come out with the same stories.

131. I did tell my social worker, Miss Montgomery, about what Brother Ryan was doing when she visited me at the home. I told her what was happening the visit after it started happening. It would have been in about 1971. I told Miss Montgomery that Brother Ryan was touching me all the time. She said "he's just feeling you to see whether you're wet." I told her that Brother Ryan was feeling around inside my pyjamas. She said "he's just checking." She knew what had gone down with me because I told her. It went no further.

*After leaving St Ninian's*

132. About 25 years ago I found out that one of my daughter's friends was getting abused. The person that was doing it was the babysitter. The guy got caught because he passed on a sexual disease to the girl. The girl's GP diagnosed it. The police got involved and the guy ended up hanging himself. When that came out I started speaking to my wife about what had happened to me. I said "it's that easily done because that happened to me." That's when I started talking about it all.
133. I've never ever really talked about the bad things that happened to me at St Ninian's after leaving there with my daughter. I've chatted about things like the playing of rugby with my stepson.
134. In 1999 or 2000 a story appeared in the News of the World. I got in contact with them. I phoned up and said that I had been in St Ninian's. A reporter came to my flat in Springburn. About two years ago the story appeared in the Record. I emailed the reporter there and gave him a shortened version of what had happened to me. I did that anonymously. An article was written. They called me [REDACTED] in it.
135. I phoned the police after I got in contact with the Inquiry. [REDACTED] persuaded me to do that. He was a former resident of St Ninian's and is also involved with INCAS. I had previously thought about doing that but this time I did. I initially

corresponded with [REDACTED] through some emails. I then phoned the police up. I eventually got through to somebody. They said they would send some people round to speak to me. It was a wee while before someone appeared at my door. It was two beat police. I gave them an outline of what happened. The guys sat in my house for about fifteen or twenty minutes. I was then told that someone would be in contact with me from another division. I was told that what I was reporting fell across two divisions. Nobody has ever contacted me since. I've never heard a thing.

### **Impact**

136. The bed-wetting carried on even after I left St Ninian's. It happened once or twice in later life. I think that was down to too much drink though.
137. I can't let my grandson sit on someone else's knee. I couldn't allow my daughter to go and sit on someone else's knee. I remember my daughter going to try and sit on an old pal's knee. I just said "get off of there and give him peace." I ended up pulling her away from him. I stop children sitting on peoples' knees because when I was made to sit on someone's knee it was for a sexual favour. I've had rifts in my family from stopping my daughter or grandchildren sitting on people's knees. My experience at St Ninian's has continued to control me in that way. I shouldn't be that way but it's been like that all my life. You try to let go but I just can't have a wean having that contact. It's affected their lives as well. I can't stop doing it.
138. I couldn't let my children and grandchildren go and stay round other people's houses. There's something going on in my head stopping me from letting them go. All my trust has gone. It's something I need to sort out.
139. I used to drive away and do two hundred miles, get to a car park and drive right back. People would ask me why I'd done that. It was mental. I was struggling to keep anger issues in when I did that.
140. I don't sleep. I'm lucky if I get two or three hours sleep a night. I've got sleep apnoea so I can't get sleeping tablets. I've tried everything to stop it. I've gone for

long walks, done the lavender oil, I've done everything. It's now starting to affect my work. I'm falling asleep when operating machinery. My head is just going around in circles.

141. When I do get to sleep I'm going through three pillows a night. They're just soaking with sweat. Call it night tremors or whatever. My partner says that I have nightmares. I don't know what they are about. I've got to the stage where I have to sleep on the sofa so everybody else can get a sleep.
142. My mind goes into overdrive. It's not always about St Ninian's but sometimes it is. It can be about anything. My head just goes into circles. If I'm busy I'm alright. It all happens when I go into idle mode. It's stuck in my head.
143. The only time it comes into my head during the day is if it comes up in the papers. If one of the boys asks about it I just clam up and shut up. It's not the sort of thing you want to talk about with everyone. A lot of people rip the piss out of it.
144. To this day I take a cold shower in the morning. That's because I was brought up with that in St Ninian's. I've done that since I came out of there.
145. Up until a few years ago I dressed like a Christian Brother. All my shirts and suits were granddad type collars. My coats and jackets all had granddad type collars. I haven't a clue why I dressed that way. It was the style I liked. I never made the connection until I started going out with my partner. She told me that I looked just like a priest. That's when I realised I was dressing up just like them. I'd been thinking I looked quite smart. I ended up saying to myself that I had to 'kick that'. I realised I was basing myself on them. I put all the clothes into a charity shop.
146. I don't know what draws me back but I go back to St Ninian's two or three times a year. I've taken my partner there and I've taken my kids there. I've threatened my kids with going there if they don't behave. Every time I go back all the memories come flooding back. When I drive through I speak to my partner about certain things. There are certain things that are coming out and I confide in her about them.

There are still things that she hasn't heard. She'll hear them when I'm ready to tell her. I know when I come to tell her about the things that happened she's going to be greeting.

147. I'll pull my weans away from the nuns when I see them in the street. I relate my experiences with them. I've heard what went on in Nazareth House. I relate the Order to what happened to me in St Ninian's.
148. I don't think that St Ninian's caused me to get involved in crime after I left there. I think it was all just down to the area I had been brought up in. It was just the thing that everybody else did.

### **Treatment and support**

149. Before speaking to the Inquiry I spoke to my doctor. She offered me counselling in the Vale of Leven hospital. I said no. I don't know whether I need counselling. I know it's there though if I want it. I'm going to speak further with the doctor in the future. I have to do that now because it is starting to affect my job. I'm going to the doctor to get something to 'shut my head down.' Hopefully after speaking to the doctor after speaking to the Inquiry I will have got it all out of myself.
150. I have been in contact with INCAS. I've registered with them. I've had joy through them. They're the ones who have helped me to get my records. Every email I send them is answered straight away. I'm not interested in seeing a lawyer. Money isn't going to do anything for me now.

### **Records**

151. I have recovered some records. Amongst them there is an admissions sheet. That sheet says I was admitted to St Ninian's on [REDACTED] 1971. There is also a record that I left on [REDACTED] 1973. That's sounds about right. I can only agree with that because it's their records. I had always thought though that I had been in St Ninian's for four years.

152. There's nothing in my records about dental care and getting teeth out when I was at St Ninians. There's nothing about going to the hospital. As far as I'm concerned all that should have been noted because I was in their custody.

153. The records say that I only got two visits. One in [REDACTED] and one in [REDACTED] right at the start when I was admitted. I certainly remember my mother coming more than that. I can't understand it. What it says in my records is wrong completely.

### **Lessons to be learned**

154. I spoke to the Inquiry because I want to help and back up what other people are saying.

155. Looking back on it all now, I can't see how the people in charge of St Ninian's weren't aware of what was going on. The physical stuff, like the stuff with Brother BHD [REDACTED] happened in front of whoever was there. He didn't take you away. He just did it when he did it. You got it there and then. It didn't matter if a civilian or anybody else was standing there. With the sexual stuff, like the stuff with Brother Ryan, there was nobody else who had access to you. He didn't have to go through anyone or ask anybody when he wanted to do something. He was separate from the other brothers in the building.

156. I have heard things that have happened that are far more extreme than what I experienced. Maybe I didn't have that because they knew I was the type of boy who would have retaliated in some way.

157. I hear a lot of names of hard men. Boys who have been on the scheme. I read about them in the papers. I recognise them as being with me in St Ninian's. I say to myself "I know you pushed the bed the same as me and went through what I did." They'll never bring it out. They'll still be suffering. I don't think they'll ever let it out.

158. If I hadn't been a bed-wetter then maybe the abuse wouldn't have happened. To me it all happened through the bed-wetting. That was the opportunity for Brother Ryan to do what he did. All the other boys who I've heard in later life saying that they were sexually abused were all bed-wetters.
159. Years later I went onto a Friends Reunited page. I didn't like what I was seeing. It was all guys praising St Ninian's to the eyeballs. I remember seeing the names of a couple of the boys who were brothers and had been at St Ninian's at the same time as me. They were praising St Ninian's. I remember them being treated like shite. I remembered seeing those boys being battered all over the place. I couldn't understand it. I ended up having to distance myself away from the page.
160. I think that people who are on children's panels should have gone through the sort of experiences I have. I might not have the education but there should be people like me on the panels.
161. St Ninian's made me the man I am today. However, it's left me with a lot of scars. We were wrong for the things that we did. I know that I brought it on myself being there. At the end of the day a lot of it was self-inflicted. However, we didn't deserve what we got. I shouldn't have gone through what I went through.
162. 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... *29/1/2018* .....