

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

IHZ

Support person present: No


1. My name is IHZ. My name at birth was IHZ which I used until I got married. My date of birth is 1969. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in Irvine and lived with my mum and dad in the village of Kilmaurs which is near Kilmarnock in East Ayrshire. My mum and dad are and . They were married but split up when I was about seven and have since divorced. My mum subsequently used the name . My mum and dad have both passed away. I am one of eight children. There was , me, and and have all passed away. spent almost all her life in the hospital. was fostered at six months. There is about 22 years between and .
3. I was being sexually assaulted by my dad from a very young age and by a man who lived up the road. My dad would give me an envelope with a note in it and send me to this man's house. He would then sexually abuse me then put money in the envelope to take back to my dad. His name was but he was an old man and will be dead by now. My dad's cousin used to visit the house and I would walk him to the door. He would pay my dad and then I would be made to touch him. I was four or five when this all started and it went on for years.

4. There was a lot of drinking at the house and it always seemed full of drunk people. I was terrified when I was lying in bed that someone would come into my bed. I used to lie curled up with my blankets held tightly round my neck. We were often left with babysitters when my mum and dad were out at the pub. There was never any food in the house and we were always hungry. We never got Christmas or birthday presents. There were no toys or games. We had nothing but I don't remember the social work department being involved trying to help us, just the police.
5. There were long spells when I was very young that my mother wasn't living with us. When she left we were put into Kilmaurs children's home then when she came back we went home again. I am not sure when this started maybe around five but possibly earlier. We were in and out of the home quite a few times because she had another man who lived in the Lake District. My two youngest sisters who had a different dad lived down there and they stayed there when she came up.
6. The first time I remember being taken to Kilmaurs was when I was about four or five. There had been a big fight in our house and the police were called. I was screaming because I wanted my dad. They put us in a van and took us to Kilmaurs children's home.

Kilmaurs children's home, Kilmaurs

7. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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22. Almost every weekday and every weekend I would go home to my dad's. At the weekend I would go on a Friday afternoon and come back on the Sunday. My brothers and sister wouldn't usually go home at the weekend because my dad wasn't interested in them. I know now that he only wanted to take me home to sexually abuse me. When my brothers were all at home my dad took us to the shops and would leave the boys outside. He bought me lots of new stuff and bought them nothing. He physically abused my brothers too.

Time in England with mother

23. Over the years, after my mum had left, she would often appear at my primary school and take me on a train to England with her. One time when I was still at primary school, and would have been seven or eight, she appeared and took me, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] on the train to England. We stayed with her and her new partner in the Lake District for about two years. All the time we were there social services and my dad were trying to get us to go back to Kilmaurs.
24. At the end, having not seen my dad for two years, he appeared out of the blue at my primary school. He went to the headmaster's office and took me and [REDACTED] out of the school and back home with him to Kilmaurs. The headmaster just let my dad take us. [REDACTED] was at nursery and my mum had collected him so he didn't come with us. Nobody asked us what we wanted to do. Because my dad appeared to be such a nice man he got what he wanted.

25. I remember I was wearing a green cotton dress and on the train journey home I soiled myself. I was so frightened about going back to stay with my dad because I knew the abuse by my dad would start again. The day after I got home I was put straight back into Kilmaurs children's home. I still saw my dad every night and he continued to take me home and sexually abuse me as before. I never saw my mum again for a couple of years until she turned up again when I was about ten.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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28. My mum ran away with me several times but the police knew where to look for us. I once walked from Kilmaurs to England with my mum which took us two days. We were stopped at Carlisle one of the times and taken back to Scotland by the police. I couldn't say how many times I ran away from Kilmaurs because I did it so many times. I was always running away and at the end it was almost on a daily basis.
29. When my mum reappeared on the scene I was about ten and I was frequently running away because I wanted to be with her. Sometimes she would come to visit me and

take me back home with her and I just didn't go back into the children's home. She let me do anything I wanted like drink alcohol and sniff glue. The police would often find me and take me back to the home.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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34. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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45. When I left, my brother [REDACTED] was still at Kilmaurs. He eventually went back to live with my dad. [REDACTED] had been fostered by then and [REDACTED] had left as she was five years older than me. I started at Kilmarnock academy when I was at Kilmaurs. I didn't go very often to the school because I started 'wagging it' straight away.

Newfield assessment centre, Johnston

46. I think I was sent to Newfield so they could decide what they were going to do with me. I was there to be assessed. The building sat in its own grounds There were around twenty children living there but I can't remember any of the staff. I think I would have been at Newfield for a six month assessment.

Routine at Newfield

47. There wasn't a lot of love or care shown by staff but there was no abuse. I was on a downward spiral by then and it was when I was at Newfield that I started self-harming. There is nothing significant either good or bad about Newfield that I feel I want to tell the Inquiry. In fact I have very few memories from my time there.
48. I was about ten when I moved to Newfield and I remember this because I got my first tattoo when I was at Newfield. It was a small homemade tattoo of a small letter and it was done by one of the boys. There was a school within Newfield but I don't remember much about it.

Visits

49. I don't remember seeing my social worker Annabelle when I was at Newfield. When I was self-harming the staff just patched me up but again no one asked me why I was doing it or if there was anything wrong. They must just have thought I was badly behaved and annoying. They said that if I didn't change I would end up being nothing in life.
50. My mum and dad came separately every week to visit me. I didn't get to go home because it was too far away. My dad took me out for the day then took me back. He was still sexually abusing me when he took me out. Sometimes he would turn up with a good drink in him but staff still let him take me out. When my mum came we usually just sat inside the building and chatted. I am not sure why we never went out. Sometimes when my mum came she was paralytic drunk. They still let her see me in a room without any sort of supervision.

Running away

51. I was able to run away from Newfield and managed to get away a couple of times. There was more supervision by the staff so it wasn't quite as easy to get away. When they let me out into the yard to play I ran away. As usual I made my way to my mum's.

Leaving Newfield

52. I don't really know how or if I was assessed in Newfield. The next thing I remember was being taken to Redheugh hostel. I went to a children's panel in Kilmarnock and they decided to send me to Redheugh. My dad was at this panel and he was given the opportunity to speak but he just went along with what they said. He came to every panel with me. I think he came just to make sure I kept quiet and didn't say anything about him. I have no idea why I was sent to Redheugh

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Redheugh children's home, Kilbirnie.

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Leaving Redheugh

63. I could have been in Redheugh around a year. Secondary Institutions - to be published later
Secondary Institutions - to be published later They took me straight back to Newfield. I went there without any belongings. My possessions were brought to me a day or two later. I might have been eleven when I went back to Newfield for the second time.

Newfield assessment centre, Johnston

64. I went back to Newfield for another six months but I was still managing to run away. I was running away all the time. Newfield was just the same as it had been before. I think I was there to be assessed again.
65. At the end Annabelle Sinclair, my social worker, took me to a children's panel and I was sent to Southannan. My dad, as always, was at the panel. Annabelle took me on to Southannan.

Southannan Residential school, Fairlie

66. Southannan residential school was in Fairlie which is near Largs. It was a beautiful place but was even further away from my mum's. It was a big stately house with beautiful grounds and two driveways to the front and back of the property. There were around twenty boys and girls. All of the kids had problems but I have no idea what. **QMW** was **SNR** I can't remember any of the other staff apart from Joe Bruceard. He was kind and was okay. I hardly saw any of the staff because they were never there. I had a key worker, Edwina and she was good. She sometimes took me to her flat.

Routine at Southannan

67. Southannan was a List G school for maladjusted children. It was run by Quarriers. This was the only place where I saw my social worker Annabelle. She came once every week and took me out.

Routine

First Day

68. When I arrived with Annabelle we walked into Southannan and there were kids on either side of us. They were spitting on the floor and there was a horrible atmosphere. I was terrified but I knew not to show it or it would be a sign of weakness.

Mealtimes/ trips/work

69. I cannot remember eating any meals at all in there and I don't know why. It could have been because I was on the run all the time. My lasting memories are sitting in the staff room toilets the whole day, from morning until bedtime. I would do this day after day. I would just sit there and eat toilet roll. I was petrified. There were no day trips or

holidays. They didn't really do much at all with us. We didn't have any chores to do but were expected to keep our bedrooms clean and tidy.

Schooling

70. They had school classes but I don't actually remember getting taught anything or being in classes doing particular lessons. I once wrote a story about myself and Edwina my key worker read it. She changed the end saying that she changed my life. I was so angry because she never did anything for me. She took me out once to buy clothes and we had a really nice day. She was kind but apart from that she didn't really do very much for me. That day when we got back to Southannan I locked myself in her car and refused to get out. I was frightened and didn't want to go back in to get abused. I sat there for hours. No one asked me why.

Leisure time

71. There was a TV room where we could sit and hang about. There were no games to be played. None of the kids were the sort that would sit and play games. I spent most of my time locked in the staff toilets.

Washing and bathing

72. I was too frightened to have a bath when I was at Southannan. I waited until I was at my mum's so I never used the baths or the showers there. I was even too scared to go to the toilet. I just didn't feel safe because some of the boys were likely to kick the door in and come in.

Visits/running away

73. I was still getting visited separately by my mum and dad. My dad was visiting me less and less by then. He had told me that I was a disappointment because of my behaviour and because my mum was back in my life.

74. I was seeing a lot of my mum because I was regularly running away. She was taking me to the pub where she was getting drunk. She was offering me for sex to other men in the pub but that never happened. I was only twelve and I am not sure if she actually meant it or not.
75. One time I walked through three feet of snow wearing just a nightie and bare feet to get home. Other times I walked some of the way or hitched lifts from lorry drivers.
76. I have been told by Edwina my key worker that although I was there for eighteen months I actually only spent three nights there. This is not my recollection. I know I wasn't there very often but I must have stayed there for more than three nights.
77. At Southannan there was no stability and there was no care. Staff had no control over the children. If you were poorly they didn't care or try to help. They never asked me what was wrong. I couldn't see a way out of there and their only answer to my behaviour was to restrain me. They held me down until my temper had died down. I broke down often because I couldn't see any way out.

Abuse in Southannan

78. Southannan was the worst place I was in. The abuse I suffered was relentless. This was the home of nightmares and I was constantly terrified. I shared a room with one girl, [REDACTED] who constantly bullied me. It all started as soon as I moved in. She frequently spat or slapped me on the face for no reason. She took my stuff and sometimes made me move all my stuff from my bedspace because she wanted to sleep there. Day and night boys used to come into my room wearing balaclavas and would jump on me and smother me. One of them was a boy called [REDACTED] They never did anything to [REDACTED] I think she was in cahoots with [REDACTED] This was a very traumatic time for me. After about a year I couldn't take it anymore. I turned on her and hammered her. She left me alone after that.

79. [REDACTED] sexually abused me. He was fifteen and sort of made me his girlfriend. At every opportunity he would do something to me. Sometimes it would happen in the TV room and he would have his hands on my breasts or down my pants. If he was passing me in a corridor he would grab me and put his hands down my pants and put fingers inside me or he would touch my breasts. It was constant. At other times he would slap me full force across my face. He was a bully and it was a nightmare for me. The abuse I got from him was terrible. I was too scared of him to say 'No'. If I did he would punch me full force in the face. He ruled the unit so never got into any trouble. I am not aware of him sexually abusing anyone else.
80. Sometimes [REDACTED] and others would go into town and phone the home and ask for me. [REDACTED] would change his voice. The staff would pass me the phone and he would say they were coming to kill me, or gang rape me. I was terrified. He was a sadist and enjoyed inflicting pain on me.
81. I saw [REDACTED] and some other older boys hold down a young girl and they tried to put a glass bottle inside her. She was really upset and was screaming. I was shouting at them to stop. [REDACTED] was there and would have seen it too.
82. QMW [REDACTED] was SNR [REDACTED] at Southannan. He was SNR [REDACTED]. He sometimes spat in my face. When I ran away and was caught by the police he would collect me from the police station. When we got back to Southannan he would give me a hammering. He picked me up and held me against the wall by my neck then hit me. He often restrained and hit me. When I ran away I was treated as an inconvenience because he had to pick me up.
83. There was another member of staff, IIR [REDACTED] who was very violent. He regularly restrained me. He would put me to the floor, hold me by the neck nearly choking me, bend my arms up my back and hold them for ages. He would punch me to the stomach, sit on top of my legs for hours or bend my legs up my back. I saw him doing this to other children. One time I saw him punch a boy [REDACTED] on the face. Several times I saw him punch kids.

Reporting of Abuse whilst at Southannan

84. I never told Edwina my key worker what was going on with [REDACTED] because I was too frightened to tell anyone. There is no way she didn't know what was going on but obviously did nothing about it. The staff would have been aware of a lot of the stuff that was going on but they never did anything about it.
85. I told the staff about the incident where the girl was held down by boys and tried to put a bottle inside her. I don't think they did anything with what I told them. Nothing changed.

Leaving Southannan

86. I was regularly running away, making myself sick and was self-harming. They couldn't do anything for me, although they never tried. I went back to a children's panel where they decided that I should go to Kerelaw secure unit for my own safety. They said at the panel that there was nothing else they could do for me. When I heard that I went berserk in the room and kicked off. My mum and dad weren't at the panel but Edwina my key worker and Annabelle my social worker were. I had no idea how long I was going to be at Kerelaw.
87. Edwina and Annabelle took me to Kerelaw and when we walked through the big metal gates they shut behind us. I was only twelve and I was terrified.

Kerelaw secure unit, Stevenston

88. Kerelaw had only been opened a year by then and was made up of three units. Only two of the units were getting used. In my bedroom the bed and the furniture was secured to the floor. There were no posters or anything allowed on the walls. It was a plain blank room and I didn't have any personal possessions. It was a proper secure

unit and I was locked in my bedroom at night. I was in the same unit as the other boys but I had my own bedroom.

89. Initially I was the only girl at Kerelaw. After a year or so they brought another girl in. It was horrendous being the only girl with fifteen boys. I didn't get abused by any of the boys who were resident there but I was scared a lot of the time. Some of the boys actually looked after and helped me. The boys were there for lots of different reasons. One boy was there for hitting a girl on the head with a paving slab. The only members of staff I remember were [redacted] and a teacher called Lesley. She was quite kind.

Routine at Kerelaw

Morning routine/Mealtimes / bathing

90. We were woken up about 7am and would go for a shower. We had three meals every day at set times in the dining room. There were no issues with the food. I had to get showered in the unit that wasn't being used.

Schooling/Leisure time/trips

91. The whole place was secure and the only time I got out the building was when I got some time in the exercise yard. There was a school inside Kerelaw so I went to some of the classes which were during the week. I quite liked school when I went. The rest of the time we just sat about and chatted or watched TV or played pool or table tennis. There were no trips or holidays.

Healthcare/self-harming

92. I had real issues with my periods but the staff never took me to try and get any help. One time they took me to the hospital after I had punched the wall and damaged my hand. I still have a scar on my hand. I was still self-harming almost on a daily basis. If the staff saw I was self-harming they restrained me and put bandages on me. I was

never taken to hospital because of my self-harming and no one asked me why I was doing it.

Visits/leisure time

93. My mum came to visit me every week. My dad visited me too but I think he only came to make sure I kept my mouth shut. When I wasn't in classes and at the weekends we just sat about in the unit.

Running away

94. I managed to run away twice from Kerelaw. If you were well behaved you would earn points and if you had enough points you were allowed out for a while to go into Stevenston. One time myself and another boy had earned enough points so Lesley, the member of staff, took us out for an hour. When we were out we ran away. We got involved in some crime, got some glue and ended up in a stolen car. I woke up on a tenement floor in Glasgow. I had wet myself. We were away for two days and when I got back to Kerelaw I started at the bottom of the points ladder again and had to build them up before I was allowed out again.
95. The second time I ran away was when they let me go home to my mum's for the day and I never went back when I was supposed to.

Personal possessions/clothes

96. I never had any personal possessions throughout my time in care. Kerelaw, just like most of the other homes I went to, I was given clothes when I arrived or when I needed them because I went in with very little.

Self-harming/ bed wetting

97. I was still self-harming and still making myself sick. This was all because of the abuse which was still in my head. I was still occasionally wetting my bed. The staff just stripped my bed and told me I was a dirty bastard. Nothing else happened.

Abuse at Kerelaw

98. I know that there was someone watching me in the showers and when I was getting changed. When I was in the shower I heard the doors opening and closing. At my bedroom door there was a thin bit of glass someone from outside could look into my bedroom. I am sure someone was often watching me get undressed. I don't know who it was but suspected it was ^{IIQ} [REDACTED]. He was a horrible, evil little man.
99. ^{IIQ} [REDACTED] was always very physical with me. When he was restraining me he would twist my wrist right back or if he got me to the ground he would have his knee on my neck. He did this for silly things like refusing to go to my bed. Sometimes he would bend my arm up my back and march me to my bedroom. There was no need to be so violent. None of the other staff ever bothered me. I saw him doing similar things to the boys but it didn't seem so bad on them. I was still tiny and weak compared to him.
100. They let me go to my mum's one day and I got drunk. The staff came and picked me up and I was fighting with them. When we got to Kerelaw, ^{IIQ} [REDACTED] and three other staff, dragged me from the front gates all the way up the stairs. Next morning all down one side of my face and body was carpet burns. I know I was showing off but their restraining went a bit far. I didn't deserve that. I can't remember the other staff. You could see in his eyes that ^{IIQ} [REDACTED] hated children.
101. Often they would turn the lights off in your bedroom so you had to get ready in the dark and go to bed really early. They could also switch my radio off from outside. Some of the staff did these things and they thought it was really funny.

Leaving Kerelaw

102. I went to a children's panel towards the end of my time at Kerelaw. I think the reason I was put out of Kerelaw was to find somewhere where they could integrate me into life outside care. Bellsford house was identified. I think they were going to start giving me cooking lessons. One of the members of staff from Kerelaw took me.

Bellsford House, Kilmarnock

103. I was fifteen when I went to Bellsford house in Kilmarnock. **Secondary Institutions - to be published later** I was only there for one or two weeks. I ran away and moved in with one of my friends and her family in Airdrie.

Life in Airdrie

104. I got a job working in a community centre café in Airdrie and I was quite happy. I knew I had been reported missing and the police were looking for me but they didn't know I was in Airdrie.
105. After a year, when I was sixteen, I contacted Annabelle Sinclair my social worker and told her that I had a job and was happily staying with a friend. I was invited to go to a children's panel where I was told I was no longer under the care of the social work department. After that date I never heard from Annabelle Sinclair again. There was no follow up by her to ask how I was.

Life after being in care

106. I went back to live with my mum for a while. At some point I told my mum what my dad had done to me over the years. She just passed comment that I was older, as if to say it was all behind me and I should forget about it and move on. I subsequently moved

back to Airdrie with an other girl I had become friends with. I met a guy and we got a flat together. My friend moved in with us. I was still only sixteen so we did what we wanted, smoking weed and getting drunk.

107. I subsequently came down to Sheffield for a couple of weeks with the girl I was living with to see her dad. In Sheffield I met my husband and have lived here ever since. We have two daughters and three grandchildren. My husband died suddenly very recently.

Impact

108. Secondary Institutions - to be published later
Secondary Institutions - to be published later Looking back at my time in care it almost feels like it was happening to someone else and not me, almost like an out of body experience. I think that is why I am able to talk about it all now. As a child being abused in care and because of the pain I think I just switched off and it felt like it wasn't me that was being abused and I was watching it happen to someone else.
109. I lost out a lot on my education. Basically I never had an education. I have however managed to muddle through and get by. I can read and write but most was self-taught by reading when I was on my own. I don't think it has stopped me getting jobs because I am able to talk freely.
110. I believe that because of the sexual abuse I still suffer from persistent urine and bladder infections. I was always sore between my legs. I was regularly wetting my bed but no one ever looked into why it was like this. No one ever asked me anything. Doctors have great difficulty finding antibiotics that work for me now because I have had so many over the years.
111. In the first ten years that we were together I suffered from domestic abuse from my husband. I thought that I deserved it because I wasn't worth anything. I didn't want my children to witness it and I wanted more than anything to keep them safe. The physical abuse eventually stopped but he has always controlled my life. He lacked confidence

and always thought I was going to cheat on him. I know he loved me so I stayed with him throughout because I just wanted to be loved. I did run away a lot because that was all I knew. I stood by him and put a different face on for anyone looking in.

112. Because of all the abuse I experienced I know that my mental health has suffered. That is why I try to spend as much time as I can with my daughters and grandchildren because they keep me grounded and give me a reason to look forward and be happy. When I am on my own for too long the loneliness kicks in and it crushes me. I took my children on holiday every year and they got everything that they wanted. I never had anything like that. I always just want to forget my childhood but can't.
113. I have never had any pleasure from sex. I have hated it all my life and to me it has always felt dirty. I had sex with my husband just because we were married and I thought it was the right thing to do. I had to get a full hysterectomy at the age of 29 because of all the trouble I had down there. I have never enjoyed sex because all these men who abused me ruined it for me.
114. I have no relationship with my brothers or sisters because we spent so long living apart as children. We were all separated and they did not let us stay in touch with each other. After ██████ got fostered I never saw him again until I was eighteen then I never saw him since. I have occasional contact with ██████ and he comes to see me. He eventually went to live with my mum. I didn't see ██████ for a very long time. I sometimes feel very much that I am on my own.
115. My relationship with my mum and dad was terrible. I feel let down by them because they never fought for me and they used me. I wasn't a bad child. I never hurt or stole from anyone. I kept my own children away from my dad for fifteen years because of what he did to me. My mum behind my back took my kids to visit my dad once and even though they were teenagers I was annoyed with her and we never spoke afterwards for over five years.
116. I never really had any personal possessions when I was a child. Nobody ever bought me anything. Because of that I now look after the smallest things which I have been

given. I still find it hard to receive things or to accept it when people give me any compliments. I always think that if people are nice to me or give me things that they have an ulterior motive.

117. There isn't a day goes by where I don't think about my time in care. Sometimes I can't get out of my bed. During the night I sometimes wake up sweating because I was having a nightmare thinking I was back in care and being abused. Certain smells, like cabbage and other things cooking, brings memories from my time in care back into my head.

Treatment/support

118. As a result of my almost constant bladder infections I get catheterised every two weeks and get something injected into my bladder. That has gone on for the last fifteen years. It was weekly to start off with which was a real nightmare.
119. The only counselling I have ever received was following the very sudden death of my husband. My counsellor has recently started asking me about my childhood and I have been telling her about the abuse. We are currently working with that. I see this counsellor once a month and it is helping me.
120. The only medication I am on at the moment is antidepressants which I have been taking since my husband died.

Reporting of Abuse

121. When I was in care I never felt able to tell anyone about the abuse I had experienced. There was nobody I could trust.
122. Police contacted me by letter about three years ago and asked me about my time at Southannan which was run by Quarriers homes. I gave a statement about [REDACTED]

■■■■■ abusing me and about the incident where he and others tried to put the glass bottle inside the girl. After I gave a statement to the police they never contacted me again. It was only when I got a letter from the CPS did I learn that the case was being dropped. ■■■■■ was interviewed by the police but the CPS have said they are not pursuing anything against him. They said it wasn't because they didn't believe me but it wasn't in public interest to take it any further. I was really angry because I had bared my soul and told them about everything that ■■■■■ did to me.

123. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Records

124. I got some of my records about fifteen years ago. I applied to the social services in Kilmarnock. One of the documents I obtained states my father was taken to court for sexually abusing my eldest sister ■■■■■. ■■■■■ is about five years older than me. He apparently pled guilty and was fined. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

125. I have not received any records from Southannan or Redheugh. Most relates to Kilmaurs children's home. There is not very much in these records and there is very little information. The only document of interest was the court document stating my dad had been convicted for sexually abusing my sister ■■■■■. I was sexually abused after this date and my brother ■■■■■ lived with him. My dad was physically abusing him. Every time ■■■■■ ran away he was just taken back and left with dad. It didn't make sense.

Lessons to be learned

126. If social services had worked harder with my family rather than separating us all then our lives could have been so much different for the better. I have a lot of anger against them because they didn't do their job. I blame a lot on them. They could have helped us and tried to keep us together.
127. Even though I was supposed to be in 'care' I have great difficulty with that word. In all the time that I was under the social work department no one cared for me. If someone had sat down with me and asked me how I was getting on or if there was anything wrong then there was a chance I would have opened up and things could have been completely different for me.
128. Secondary Institutions - to be published later I was having tantrums because of the abuse. Wherever I was placed I was just seen as a problem. No one took the time or cared enough to question my behaviour. It went on for years and no one asked 'why?'. No one in any of the homes asked me if there was anything wrong or if I was unhappy about anything.
129. I know I was cheeky and often quite hard to handle but I didn't deserve the level of violence that was used against me. I was just like that because of the abuse I had gone through but nobody ever tried to find that out. I was in pain down below but no one ever tried to help me.

Hopes for the Inquiry

130. I hope that things change so that the people who work in any care establishment are the right people for the job. When I was in care it was obvious that a lot of the staff didn't want to be there. I may have got food but it was so wrong that there was no love or affection and I was sexually abused nearly every night.

131. There has to be risk assessments done on a regular basis. Children should be asked if they are okay and if they have any issues. If behavioural issues are identified then there may be a reason behind that. Children should be given a voice and listened to.
132. Staff should be trained to identify the signs of abuse. Someone should have seen what was happening to me and asked me why I was self-harming, why I was making myself sick and why was I behaving like I was. From my experiences the staff just didn't want to know and didn't care about the children. Most of the children had problems but there was nothing done to help any of us.
133. I hope that the abuse I suffered in care isn't still going on today. I just wanted a bit of love and that is how these abusers got in. The people that abused me and the social services have ruined my life. I would love to take social services to court for what they have done to me and my family.

Other information

134. 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..... IHZ 

Dated..... 25-5-23