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Tuesday, 26 March 2024

(10.00 am)

LADY SMITH: Good morning.

As we mentioned last night, we start today with some read-ins. I think I know which one you're about to do, Ms Forbes, if I have my calculations right --

MS FORBES: Yes.

LADY SMITH: -- but I'll leave it to you to introduce it.

Thank you.

MS FORBES: Good morning, my Lady. The next read-in is from an applicant who is anonymous and is known as 'Kevin'. The reference for his witness statement is WIT-1-000000970.

LADY SMITH: Thank you.

'Kevin' (read)

MS FORBES: 'Kevin' was born in 1972 and talks about his life before care between paragraphs 2 and 8. He was born in Rottenrow in Glasgow and brought up in the Easterhouse area. He lived with his parents and his four siblings. 'Kevin' describes himself as a happy lad and got into the usual trouble. However, his dad died and his mother met a man who was just out of prison and he became his stepfather. He was six years old at that point.

'Kevin' says he was abused physically by his

1 stepfather and on one occasion he broke his leg. He
2 would have black eyes, and when he was very young he
3 tried to drown him in the bath.

4 He began wetting the bed because of the fear of this
5 man, and social work became involved from about the age
6 of about four.

7 He had the same social worker who was female until
8 he was 21. He was placed into care for some respite
9 after his father died, and he was four or five the first
10 time he went there and he went along with some of his
11 siblings.

12 He talks about that time between paragraphs 9 and
13 23. There was a children's home first of all. **Secondary Institutions - t**

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15
16 He went back home after that with the rest of his
17 siblings, but back home things were not good and he was
18 placed into care and sent to a children's home in
19 Glasgow. **Secondary Institutions - to be published later**

20 **Secondary Institutions - to be published later**

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22
23 He went back home again after that and that resulted
24 in an incident where his stepfather stamped on his leg
25 and broke it and the social work again were involved and

1 he was placed in care, he was sent to another children's
2 home, and he talks about that between paragraphs 40 and
3 98.

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14 he was sent to Larchgrove, and he talks about that in
15 paragraph 99.

16 LADY SMITH: He is sent to Larchgrove some time in 1983 when
17 he is about 11; is that right?

18 MS FORBES: Yes, my Lady.

19 LADY SMITH: Yes. Thank you.

20 MS FORBES: He says that he was sent there for assessment
21 and spent three weeks there. There was not a lot of
22 food at Larchgrove and 'Kevin' says he had to be quick.
23 There would be two or three of them in the bath at one
24 time, and male staff would wash them, even at his age of
25 11, and he says would concentrate on the soft parts of

1 his body.

2 There was some school whilst he was there, and there
3 was classrooms and there was English and Arithmetic, but
4 it didn't follow a curriculum. There was all different
5 ages of boys and they were all at different stages of
6 education, but there was no help for people like him who
7 were struggling with reading and writing.

8 He talks about abuse at Larchgrove from
9 paragraph 108, and if I can go to that paragraph.

10 'Kevin' says:

11 'There was always screaming in Larchgrove with boys
12 being abused during the night. Some of the older boys
13 were climbing into the beds of the younger ones and
14 abusing them, some with full sex. Sometimes when I was
15 taken to the room the older boy he would shut the fire
16 exit door so no one could see what was happening. If he
17 heard someone at the door he would be able to adjust his
18 clothing to hide what he was doing.

19 Sometimes when the older boys were coming to the
20 room I would climb into my roommate's bed. I thought by
21 doing this it would make it so difficult for them to
22 abuse both of us they might leave us alone.

23 There was an older boy who would come to me when
24 I was lying in my bed. He would pull back the bed
25 covers and start to touch my privates and I was made to

1 masturbate him.'

2 Then he says what he thinks his name was.

3 He then left Larchgrove in [REDACTED] 1983, when he was
4 still 11 years old, and he says he went to Quarriers.
5 He was at Quarriers between [REDACTED] 1983 and [REDACTED] 1986, so
6 three years. Whilst there, 'Kevin' says there were some
7 issues with restraint. There was physical abuse and
8 sexual abuse from staff. There was sexual abuse from
9 another boy and he saw bullying of a vulnerable boy, and
10 then he was placed into foster care.

11 In relation to foster care, he says he stayed with
12 that family for 18 months until he was about 15. They
13 had a son who would bully him, physically assault him,
14 and he was getting into trouble.

15 He overheard them one time having a vote whether to
16 keep him, and so he moved to stay with a family in
17 Kirkcaldy, and whilst there he says he was physically
18 assaulted by his foster father and their son.

19 He went to a children's home again [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be pu
20 [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published but when he left he got into
21 trouble with the police and ended up being sent to
22 prison.

23 He was in Longriggend and Polmont, and talks about
24 that at paragraphs 190 to 192. He spent six months in
25 prison, two and a half months on remand, and then he was

1 sent to Polmont. It was a strict regime there, but
2 'Kevin' says he had no issues that he considered to be
3 abuse.

4 He talks about life after care from paragraph 193
5 onwards. When he left prison he went back to
6 Easterhouse. He moved in with his aunt but then got
7 a flat. However, he used drugs as a way of forgetting
8 his time in care, and then was put on a drug treatment
9 programme.

10 He says he has two daughters and two grandchildren
11 and he sees them quite often.

12 In relation to impact, he talks about that between
13 paragraphs 202 and 205. 'Kevin' says it felt strange
14 being released from prison. He had been used to always
15 having someone looking after him. His last prison
16 sentence was in 2003 and he got out in 2006. He thinks
17 he was institutionalised from a very young age and
18 comments that he was never taught how to look after
19 himself, and he has had issues with reading and writing
20 throughout his adult life.

21 In relation to lessons to be learned, he talks about
22 that between paragraphs 209 and 212. 'Kevin' says there
23 should always be someone independent for children to
24 talk to. There are people who are like his social
25 worker who are not just there for a wage, they are in it

1 because they care, but he was never taught anything to
2 show him what life would be like out of the care system.

3 He provides some other information and says that he
4 is hoping to get additional counselling through Future
5 Pathways and he is hoping that by coming to the Inquiry
6 people can learn from his experiences and the abuse that
7 happened.

8 Sadly, 'Kevin' died before he was able to sign his
9 statement, but confirmation in the usual way from those
10 who took the statement has been obtained to show that
11 these are his words.

12 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

13 MS FORBES: My Lady, my senior, Mr Peoples, is now going to
14 have some read-ins.

15 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

16 Mr Peoples, when you're ready.

17 MR PEOPLES: Yes, my Lady. Could I start with a read-in
18 from a person who is anonymous and will be referred to
19 as 'Graeme', G-R-A-E-M-E.

20 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

21 'Graeme' (read)

22 MR PEOPLES: The reference for 'Graeme's' signed statement
23 is WIT.001.001.6235.

24 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

25 MR PEOPLES: 'Graeme' was born in 1961 in Glasgow. He

1 describes his life before care between paragraphs 2 and
2 5, and, just taking it short, he tells us at paragraph 2
3 that he had a happy childhood with his parents, brother
4 and three sisters. However, he got into the wrong
5 crowd, as he puts it, in secondary school. He started
6 skipping school and started shoplifting around the age
7 of about 14 in about 1975.

8 He went to panels, Children's Panels, and the upshot
9 was he was sent to Kerelaw Residential School, and he
10 tells us about Kerelaw between paragraphs 6 and 58.
11 I'll just pick out some aspects. Obviously we can read
12 the whole thing, but first of all at paragraph 6 he
13 tells us he was not told what to expect or what Kerelaw
14 would be like.

15 In paragraph 7 he said he liked it at first.

16 In paragraph 8 he tells us he was in a dorm with
17 about, he reckoned, 16 boys.

18 From paragraph 12 through to 27 he tells us about
19 the routine at Kerelaw. It's, I think, familiar with
20 what we maybe already know. At paragraph 12 he talks
21 about having classes in the morning and afternoon. So
22 far as classes are concerned, he tells us at
23 paragraph 17 that he was reasonably good at doing sums,
24 but there were boys in the class who couldn't even
25 count.

1 Then he refers to a teacher, Matt George, at
2 paragraph 18, as the 'art teacher', and also he
3 describes him as a 'gym teacher' who took sports, and
4 says there that he was rough with boys during football
5 but was nice in art class.

6 He says he knows he didn't live in the school but
7 thought he did take the night shift on some occasions.

8 Then at paragraph 20, he says that the only two
9 members of staff he was scared of were SNR
10 and Matt George. And he says the rest of the staff, so
11 far as he was concerned, were fine.

12 He develops this at paragraph 22, where he says that
13 Matt George was a bit of a bully. He says:

14 'We would play five-a-side football at night time
15 after we had our tea, and he would play with us. He
16 always had to win and he would bang into me and try to
17 trip me up.'

18 Then, moving on, he has a section headed 'Abuse at
19 Kerelaw' between paragraphs 28 to 40, and again I'll
20 just pick out some of that.

21 He does say at 28 that he remembered how the abuse
22 from Matt George started, and he was being dead nice to
23 me in art class, he says, and he says looking back he
24 sees that that was a form of grooming, but he didn't
25 know words like that at that stage, and he liked art

1 class even though he wasn't very good at it.

2 He says at paragraph 30 that when he was in the art
3 class on one occasion when Matt George was drawing
4 an Egyptian lady's head for him, he started touching
5 'Graeme's' genitals in the class during that time. He
6 says there were other boys in the class at the time and
7 he did so discreetly.

8 He then says that he won first prize for the drawing
9 of the Egyptian head, and he says.

10 'Looking back he made sure I won first prize. The
11 first time I was kept back in his class was to put a
12 frame on that picture.'

13 He then says at paragraph 32:

14 'There was nobody else in the classroom when we were
15 framing my picture. He unzipped his trousers and put my
16 hand on his penis. He forced me to give him oral sex.
17 I was under the table and he was standing up.
18 I honestly didn't know anything about what was
19 happening. It was different in those days. I started
20 to dread going to his classroom.'

21 Then at paragraph 33 he continues:

22 'The same thing happened again after that. He made
23 me give him oral sex. This happened a further couple of
24 times in the classroom. He would say that he was going
25 to put in a good word to get me out of the school

1 quickly so I could go back home. He made sure that
2 I stayed back after class and at night time.'

3 Then moving to page 6, paragraph 34, he continues:

4 'It also happened at five-a-side football. He made
5 me give him oral sex and masturbate him. I don't know
6 how it happened there, but it did.'

7 Then, paragraph 35, he continues:

8 'The dormitories were on one or two levels and there
9 was a shower room at the bottom. The same thing
10 happened in the shower room. I was having a shower and
11 it was during the weekend. He must have stayed at the
12 school over the weekend. He started touching me in the
13 shower room.'

14 Then at 36 he says:

15 'He took me out the school once. I don't know how
16 he managed that but he did. I think we went in the
17 school's minibus.'

18 He said he took him to see his artwork, and he
19 remembers being in his house in Ayrshire.

20 Then he says at 37:

21 'The same thing happened in his house. He forced me
22 to give him oral sex but it was rougher this time. He
23 was also playing with me. I felt like I must have been
24 enjoying it because I had an erection. I feel like it
25 must have been my fault or something like that. He

1 tried to force me to bugger him. He took me to his
2 house twice and the same thing happened both times.'

3 Then he goes on:

4 'He was a hairy man. I can remember the smell of
5 him. I can't describe it. He was always saying that he
6 would get me out early.'

7 Then at 39:

8 'The abuse happened right through my time at the
9 school right up until I left. It happened about once
10 a week, but maybe more on some weeks. I remember he
11 would give me threats and warn me not to tell anybody.'

12 He said at 40:

13 'The first time it happened was when I was kept back
14 to put the frame on that picture. The framed picture
15 was put on the wall in the corridor. I won first prize
16 but I paid a high price for it.'

17 Then he has a section headed 'Running away', and he
18 talks about running away and says there was one occasion
19 when he was at Waterloo Street in Glasgow, waiting to be
20 picked up to be taken back to Kerelaw, and on that
21 occasion Matt George came to pick him up and another boy
22 who was there. When he saw him coming, he decided he
23 wasn't going back, so he ran away and he got the other
24 boy to go with him.

25 He says the other boy didn't know what was going on.

1 Nobody did.

2 He describes going to Edinburgh and spending the day
3 in Port Seton, and he says that when they were walking
4 in Musselburgh at night, this is at paragraph 44, 'the
5 police chased us'. He was caught by the police, he
6 thinks he was kept in the cells overnight, but he adds:

7 'Nobody asked us why we had run away.'

8 The following day a teacher from school picked the
9 boys up from the police station, and he was taken back
10 to the school. He says that he got the belt on the hand
11 when he went back. He thinks it was the deputy head who
12 gave him the belt on that occasion, and then he was put
13 in a detention cell, which he describes as a room with
14 a light and mattress in it, and you were locked in there
15 as a punishment. And he says he was kept in overnight.
16 He says:

17 'This happened to other people as a punishment as
18 well.'

19 He says at 47 everybody was surprised that he had
20 run away and that he wasn't allowed to go home for four
21 weeks after that as punishment, but again, he says,
22 nobody asked him why he had run away.

23 Then he says at -- he talks about other matters, but
24 he basically says between 49 and 50 that he wanted to
25 tell someone what was happening, but he didn't. He said

1 that there was one person that he trusted in there but
2 he couldn't even say anything to her, at paragraph 49.

3 LADY SMITH: Something that's really interesting in
4 paragraph 49 is that he goes on and says:

5 'I wouldn't have known how to explain it.'

6 It is difficult for children, young people -- okay,
7 he was a teenager, but how do you start to explain what
8 he has related was happening from the start to somebody
9 who has no prior knowledge of what you're about to tell
10 them?

11 MR PEOPLES: Well that particular behaviour as well may have
12 been difficult if someone was unaccustomed to that form
13 of abuse. It could have been very difficult for anyone
14 at that age to describe it in a way that would convey
15 the whole matter.

16 LADY SMITH: Because there he is not saying, 'I decided not
17 to because I'd been threatened or warned not to say
18 anything'. It was just when it came to the bit his
19 feeling was he couldn't find the words to do it.

20 MR PEOPLES: No.

21 He does go on, having said all of that, to say at
22 52, however, of which there's another consideration, he
23 says:

24 'We were playing five-a-side football in the gym
25 hall. I wasn't on his team ...'

1 And he remembers Matt George barging into him and
2 tripping him up:

3 'I think he was silently warning me not to tell
4 anybody what was happening.'

5 So that may have been another consideration as
6 a matter of generality why he ... and he says:

7 'The abuse still happened after I ran away but it
8 didn't happen as much.'

9 'Life after care' begins at page 9, paragraph 59,
10 and I'll not read all of that, but what I will say is at
11 paragraph 74, on page 11, after a somewhat chaotic
12 lifestyle, I think, as he puts it, he seemed to be
13 getting on better. But he said that the TV was on one
14 night and he was watching the news and heard about
15 Matt George 'getting the jail', as he puts it:

16 'I just lost it'. He says:

17 'I was totally shocked. I couldn't believe it had
18 happened to other people. You always think it is just
19 happening to you. I hadn't heard his name for all those
20 years and that was the first time I heard it.'

21 That was, he said, about four years before he gave
22 this statement.

23 Then he talks about getting some further
24 counselling, and then he says at page 12 about reporting
25 to the police, he learned that Matt George had received

1 a lengthy sentence for abuse, and he was advised that he
2 needed to report his abuse to the police, and he says
3 that police officers did come to see him, and they took
4 a statement from him. And his understanding was that
5 Matt George was charged and made no comment and replied
6 to a caution and charge.

7 Then he tells us at 81 that a couple of months later
8 he got a letter from the Procurator Fiscal saying they
9 weren't going to take the matter further. He says he
10 wasn't happy about that, and 'they didn't give me
11 a reason', and he said the police were surprised. So
12 that was the situation there.

13 But I can say that despite that situation described
14 there, as we know, since he gave this statement, there
15 was a trial of Matt George in 2022, and charges relating
16 to 'Graeme' were found proved at that trial -- or,
17 sorry, a charge, I should say, was found proved, which
18 was a charge of indecent assault on various occasions
19 between [REDACTED] 1976 and [REDACTED] 1977 at Kerelaw
20 School, and an address in Largs, or elsewhere to the
21 prosecutor unknown, and Matt George was convicted of
22 handling 'Graeme's' penis over his clothing, seizing his
23 hand, or placing it on George's penis over his clothing,
24 George exposing his penis to him, compelling 'Graeme' to
25 masturbate him, pushing 'Graeme' under a table and

1 forcing George's penis into his mouth, and placing

2 'Graeme's' penis into his mouth.

3 So the matters he has told us about in the statement

4 did ultimately lead to a trial --

5 LADY SMITH: Yes.

6 MR PEOPLES: -- and a conviction, as I've indicated.

7 Then he has a section on impact, and perhaps not

8 unnaturally he says at 82:

9 'The abuse in Kerelaw completely changed me.'

10 And it has impacted his whole life and he describes,

11 I think, quite a familiar adulthood in these

12 circumstances of drinking, self-harming.

13 At paragraph 83, flashbacks in relation to the abuse

14 at Kerelaw, and blaming himself for what happened

15 because of having an erection when that happened, he

16 blamed himself as if he had some responsibility.

17 He describes having a good marriage but he was

18 taking overdoses throughout the 25 years he was married,

19 and was drinking and self-harming. He and his wife

20 divorced.

21 He says there were periods when he has been homeless

22 and in rehab for drinking and overdosing. He says:

23 'My life has been hard, when I think about it.'

24 He believes, at 89, that things are different now,

25 and suggests that it might help if kids had a designated

1 person that they could speak to:

2 'In my day, there was nobody you could speak to.'

3 Also he makes the point:

4 'People working with children need to be able to
5 pick up on warning signs.

6 He clearly welcomes the existence of a 'Childline'
7 that is available for children to speak to someone
8 anonymously, although he makes the point there at least
9 that there's no 'Adultline' to speak to.

10 LADY SMITH: That's interesting.

11 MR PEOPLES: Now, I don't know whether -- he gave this
12 statement some time ago.

13 LADY SMITH: 2017.

14 MR PEOPLES: So I think perhaps one would put a note of
15 caution that there are organisations now that exist, and
16 we may have heard of some of them in some of the
17 evidence yesterday, who you can contact and seek help
18 and support.

19 He made a point there that, at least at that time,
20 he felt there wasn't an equivalent to the 'Childline'.

21 He says, finally, that he has no objection to his
22 witness statement being published, the usual declaration
23 at paragraph 92, and he signed his statement on
24 11 October 2017.

25 LADY SMITH: Yes, and it was interesting that even then,

1 when he was in the homeless unit, there were two
2 caseworkers allocated to him, that was the place called
3 Link-Up, I think --

4 MR PEOPLES: Yes.

5 LADY SMITH: -- and one of them, the male of the two, he
6 really trusted, and it was he who encouraged him to go
7 to the police and he did go to the police because of
8 that man.

9 MR PEOPLES: He did, that's right. So he did find someone
10 at a certain point who counseled him and he listened to
11 that and did what was suggested, but it didn't initially
12 have a particularly good outcome for him and it looked
13 at that stage that he did seem rather despairing that
14 anything would come of it. But clearly something did
15 come of it, as we now know.

16 LADY SMITH: I suppose the likelihood is that in 2017 there
17 was no other evidence available to corroborate that
18 witness could have been ...

19 MR PEOPLES: Certainly a lot of new complainers came forward
20 for the second trial and it went back to quite an early
21 stage, as I think we know from what was said last week
22 about the charges and the period covered by them. There
23 was a large number of what I would probably describe as
24 new complainers, albeit they had been there over
25 a lengthy period of time.

1 LADY SMITH: It's adults coming forward and speaking up.

2 MR PEOPLES: Yes. But, of course, he didn't necessarily
3 know for much of the period that there were others that
4 would be in the same position and that he would have --
5 they would be available, and he probably didn't know
6 anything about the law of corroboration --

7 LADY SMITH: Yes.

8 MR PEOPLES: -- so there were a lot of factors that would
9 have been unknown to him, and that could have perhaps
10 explained some of the things he says.

11 LADY SMITH: Yes. Of course.

12 MR PEOPLES: Can I move on now to another read-in, this time
13 by a person who will be referred to as 'Peter'.

14 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

15 'Peter' (read)

16 MR PEOPLES: Now, 'Peter's' signed statement is
17 WIT.001.001.5189.

18 'Peter' was born in 1964, and can I just say,
19 perhaps, at this stage, because I'll come to this in due
20 course, but 'Peter', part of his evidence was read in on
21 12 December 2023 on Day 397, during the Scottish Prison
22 Service chapter, relating essentially to his time in SPS
23 establishments. There would have been some introduction
24 but I will just perhaps pick out some things from his
25 statement today as well to give some context.

1 'Peter', his parents separated when he was four
2 years old and he had a somewhat complicated life after
3 that. That for a time his father, 'Peter', and two
4 older sisters stayed with paternal grandparents. But
5 then a person he describes as his stepmother came on the
6 scene and his father had three children with her, and
7 I think eventually 'Peter' was living in family with
8 them until it looks like around about the age of eight.
9 I think that would be from paragraph 4. He says that he
10 was taken to the Social Work Department by his
11 stepmother, and I think that would be around 1972, if my
12 arithmetic is correct. The upshot of that was that he
13 was taken to a children's home in Glasgow.

14 What he says at paragraph 6, I think says that he
15 spent really the rest of his childhood and adolescence
16 in a succession of homes and institutions, including
17 Kerelaw Residential School, and another residential
18 school during, he thinks, the period between about 1973
19 and 1980.

20 He says at paragraph 8 that so far as Kerelaw is
21 concerned, between 1976 and 1980 he says he was in
22 Kerelaw on two occasions, each for lengthy periods of
23 time.

24 Can I just pick up what he says at paragraph 10. He
25 says:

1 'It was not in every place I went to that I got
2 abuse but in every place violence seemed to be the
3 answer. My experience is that when you go into
4 a children's home you cannot get out of the system. You
5 are a prisoner. It ruined my whole life. I simply
6 became part of a system where we thought we were bad
7 boys.'

8 Now, that's another familiar theme.

9 LADY SMITH: Oh, we keep hearing that, don't we? Yes.

10 MR PEOPLES: So it's, again, something that we've heard
11 a number of people say.

12 Then between paragraphs 14 and 59 he tells us about
13 the residential school in South Lanarkshire, which he
14 was placed in, and I'm not going to deal with the detail
15 of that, but I'll just maybe mention a few things
16 because this, I think, was where he went before he went
17 to Kerelaw. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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He then goes on to tell us about Kerelaw School between paragraphs 60 to 121 of his signed statement. Again, I'll just pick out parts of that if I may, and we can all read the whole thing.

At paragraph 62 he says:

'Kerelaw was all about bullying and because I was in that institution I knew I was always going to spend most of my life in such places. Kerelaw was just a rotten place, full of violence and full of violent juvenile delinquents who all picked on each other.'

1 He was there at a time when there were no girls,
2 that would suggest he was --

3 LADY SMITH: ██████████ 1970s, 1976.

4 MR PEOPLES: I was going to say that girls were in the
5 secure unit but it didn't open up until the 1980s and
6 then I think girls were placed in the open school from
7 the late 1980s, so that gives us a point of reference,
8 perhaps, for some of these remarks.

9 LADY SMITH: He would have been about 12 years old during
10 his first stint at Kerelaw.

11 MR PEOPLES: Yes, and then going on, he tells us about the
12 routine, and I'll not read that out at this stage.

13 What he does say at 76, though, if I could pass to
14 that on page 13, he says:

15 'I don't recall specific visiting days. My
16 recollection was that your parents could come and see
17 you at any time they wanted. My dad came twice. Once
18 was when he confronted Matt George, the art teacher who
19 abused me.'

20 I'll come to this in due course, but he mentions it
21 at this stage.

22 'The second time was when he and my stepmother came
23 to see me in a play. That was also a time that he spoke
24 to Mr ██████████ MTT ██████████, ██████████ SNR ██████████, about the abuse I had
25 suffered, but that might have been the same time as the

1 play.'

2 So he is describing a situation where his father
3 spoke, or went to see or confront Matt George and also
4 went to see SNR in connection with abuse.

5 Then he says at 78, just to pick this one up,
6 that -- he's talking in the context of discipline, and
7 he says Mr MTT, SNR, was the only one
8 member of staff who gave the belt, and he says he would
9 give anything between two and six strokes, depending on
10 what you had done. Now, that would be in line with the
11 regulations, in terms of numbers. But then he goes on
12 to say:

13 'I don't know how much force he used, enough
14 I suppose and it was certainly sore. It was over the
15 bare backside.'

16 That certainly wasn't allowed by the regulations,
17 and this was SNR.

18 Then if I could just move on, he does make the point
19 at paragraph 81, which I think others have done and no
20 doubt will do in some of the evidence we'll hear:

21 'I did have some good times in Kerelaw ...'

22 He mentions a particular, I think, instructor or
23 teacher, who he particularly liked and felt was kind to
24 him, and at least taught him some practical skills. He
25 was a sort of painter, handyman. But also would -- he

1 and his wife would give boys tea and sandwiches, or
2 juice.

3 So he says that. But then he moves on to a section
4 that's headed 'Abuse' on page 15, it starts at
5 paragraph 82, and I'll just deal with some of that. He
6 says:

7 'It was a man called Matt George who sexually abused
8 me there. He was an art teacher. He made me do oral
9 sex. There was a whole lot of other abuse other than
10 that one bit of sexual abuse. He turned me into
11 a criminal. While I was in homes their whole attitude
12 was violence. Matt George victimised me and made me
13 a bully because I victimised someone and made them
14 a bully.'

15 He goes on at 83:

16 'The Matt George thing came about when me and
17 a couple of my mates ... were sitting in the dorm one
18 day.'

19 He says there they were talking about bullying and
20 how it was that if you bullied somebody you could get
21 them to do whatever you wanted. We decided that
22 I should bully a wee guy, and he says he was from the
23 Borders, and he says:

24 'We were just going to hit him with our pillows but
25 then we said, "No, you need to make them do something

1 for you to be a bully". I was not sure how I would go
2 about bullying and one of the others boys suggest
3 I should get him to kiss my arse, so that is what I
4 did.'

5 And he went and found the boy and got him to do so.

6 He goes on at 84:

7 'The next day, Matt George must have heard about
8 this.'

9 Then he goes on at 85 to describe what happened on
10 that occasion:

11 'I was coming down the stairs ... when Matt George
12 grabbed me ... as I got to the bottom of the stairs,
13 Matt George came from my right and punched me on the
14 face. He then grabbed me by the hair and dragged me
15 into the staff toilet that was to the left of the
16 stairs.'

17 Moving over to page 16, he continues about what
18 happened. He says:

19 'Matt George was just battering into me and
20 battering me off the walls. He also banged my head off
21 the wash hand basin. I had a big lump on my head
22 because of it. He was rag dolling me, battering me all
23 over the place. At one point my head was jammed between
24 the toilet sink and the wall. As he was punching and
25 hitting me he said, "Bullying? I'll show you

1 bullying".'

2 Then at 86:

3 'As he was saying this he was pulling his trousers
4 and pants down. He said, "I'll fucking show you what
5 bullies do. Now get on your knees and suck that".

6 I was saying, "No, no" but he grabbed my face and pushed
7 me into his groin. He forced his cock into my mouth.

8 I was choking and greeting and trying to fight back but

9 I was still very small for my age at that time. All
10 I could do was cry. He forced his cock into my mouth
11 three times. He did not have an erection and I think
12 this lasted about 30 seconds.'

13 He continues:

14 'I think he stopped because of the noise I was
15 making and he was maybe worried that others would hear
16 what was happening. When he stopped he said "That's
17 what happens to bullies". He also told me I was not to
18 tell anybody about it.'

19 Then he continues, this is at 88:

20 'After he assaulted me I went up to the dorm and
21 just lay on my bed and cried. Nobody spoke to me and
22 I stayed there until about 7 pm ... and it was time for
23 tea.

24 I went into the dining hall and sat next to my pal
25 ... who asked me what had happened to me and I just told

1 him that Matt George had knocked fuck out of me in the
2 wee toilet. I did not tell them he had sexually abused
3 me.

4 I cannot remember whether or not I spoke to
5 Matt George again later that day. I just know I was
6 terrified of him and avoided him all the time. What he
7 did to me in the toilet that day left me feeling
8 petrified. Absolutely petrified and ashamed.'

9 Then moving to page 17 and paragraph 91, he
10 continues:

11 'About two or three months after that happened I was
12 at the pool table maybe being a bit loud and he perhaps
13 thought I was bullying somebody. He said to me, "You
14 remember what happens to bullies". He did not mention
15 the toilet incident but it was obvious that he was
16 referring to it. He never did mention the incident in
17 the toilet but he would make silly remarks and try and
18 bring me down in front of other people.

19 That was the one and only time he sexually abused me
20 and I never saw him sexually abuse anyone else. I saw
21 lots of physical abuse but did not see any sexual abuse
22 other than what happened to me.

23 Matt George would bully you every single day of your
24 life. He did this thing where he would grab your hands
25 and crush the top of your fingers into the palm of your

1 hand, all the time squeezing your fingernails. It was
2 agony and often he would make you sing stupid songs or
3 do silly things as he did so. If you did not do what he
4 wanted he would then give you a slap but still have
5 a hold of your fingers until you did what he told you.
6 I remember the first time he grabbed my fingers ...'

7 He says:

8 'This incident happened within a week of me going
9 into Kerelaw. I was the new boy.'

10 Halfway down paragraph 94 he goes on:

11 'Matt George grabbed my hand and squeezed my
12 fingernails.'

13 Then towards the end of paragraph 94 he says:

14 'The squeezing of my fingers became a regular form
15 of bullying to me by Matt George, he knew he could
16 control me just by touching my fingers.'

17 Then he says:

18 'Another thing he used to do was flick a wet towel
19 at us, this would be when we were in the showers.'

20 Towards the foot of page 17 he continues:

21 'At first I think we all thought it was just
22 a laugh, but you stopped laughing when you saw the big
23 welts it left on you.'

24 Then going over to page 18:

25 'That is when I told him it had to stop, but he just

1 told me to shut up.'

2 He says this happened more than once.

3 Then, going on, at 96 he says:

4 'Matt George lived in ... Largs. He took me to his
5 house ...'.

6 And he describes the house.

7 Then he says:

8 'He used to take three or four us to his house to
9 help him with his garden ... we did not get a choice
10 about going. He would just point and say, "You, you,
11 you and you, get in the car" If you refused he would
12 punch you or grab your fingers and do the fingernail
13 thing until you agreed.'

14 Then he goes on:

15 'I remember the first time we were there he took us
16 to a wee hut in his garden ... gave us spades and things
17 and told us to dig up the weeds and turn the soil in the
18 square in the garden. At this point we saw
19 Matt George's wife standing at the patio door. She was
20 stark naked ... Matt George shouted at us to get on with
21 what we were doing and when we looked back his wife was
22 gone. He then went into the house but came back later
23 to see how we were getting on. He took us into his
24 kitchen and gave us sandwiches and juice but we did not
25 see his wife again until we were leaving when she just

1 thanked us for our work. She had her clothes on at this
2 time.'

3 Then he goes on at paragraph 98:

4 'Matt George never sexually abused me in his house.
5 There were times when he would take one of the others
6 out of the room. A while later whichever boy it was
7 would come back in calling Matt George a bastard, but
8 they never actually said what had happened.'

9 Then at paragraph 99 he continues:

10 'Matt George took us down to the rock pool near
11 Kilwinning one summer, he took us there three or four
12 times, this was before the incident in the toilet.'

13 Moving over to page 19, towards the end of that
14 paragraph he says:

15 'He told us to get our clothes off and we stripped
16 off to our underpants. Matt George then told us to take
17 them off as well because we did not have any spare dry
18 ones with us.

19 The first time we were there, I went into the water
20 and it was so cold I was struggling to breathe,
21 Matt George told me to get back in and when I refused he
22 just threw me in. I was in my teens at this stage, we
23 were all swimming naked, including Matt George.'

24 Then he goes on at 101:

25 'We never thought there was anything wrong with the

1 fact that we were all naked when we were swimming or
2 that Matt George was also swimming naked with us. We
3 were all used to seeing each other naked in the showers
4 and we just thought Matt George was teaching us to
5 swim.'

6 Moving to 103, he says:

7 'To me Matt George was nothing but a bully.'

8 Then moving to 104 on page 20, he goes back to
9 Mr MTT and says that he was the person who would
10 give boys the belt, and you had to drop your trousers
11 and pants and he'd hit you over your bare backside,
12 which is something he'd previously said. And he said
13 that you could get the belt for really any silly reason
14 at all.

15 Then he moves on at 105 to talk about another man
16 who taught boxing when he was there, and he describes
17 him as another bully. He says:

18 'They had a wee boxing gym in Kerelaw. He would
19 punch you in the belly and knock the wind out of you,
20 particularly if he found you out of your bed at night.
21 He was a sort of night watchman and only worked at night
22 but he would come down sometimes and take the boys to
23 the gym for the boxing. He used to get the boys to
24 fight each other and constantly threatened us. He would
25 say, "If you do this ... if you do that ... I'll skud

1 you". And he would.'

2 Then he goes on that he remembers an organised
3 boxing match in Bellahouston Park, which he and other
4 boys went to, he says he got disqualified and the person
5 who taught him boxing punched him. He said:

6 'If you lost a bout he would batter you. I hated
7 him, he was just a bully. If he was on at night I would
8 try and stay in my dorm as he'd punch you for anything.'

9 Then at 108 he goes back to Matt George and says:

10 'It was only Matt George who sexually assaulted me.
11 With the others it was all physical abuse. The other
12 members of staff clouted everybody, including me.'

13 He mentions an English teacher who would give you
14 a slap on the back of the head for any silly wee thing.

15 'From most of the staff this was a normal
16 occurrence.'

17 He says:

18 'Even the staff who did not physically abuse you
19 were aware of those that did because they would see it
20 but did nothing about it.'

21 He then turns to bullying amongst the boys, and he
22 says:

23 'There was bullying amongst us boys as well. That
24 was happening every day. It was part of life there and
25 it was because of the way we were treated there by staff

1 like Matt George. They encouraged it and turned you into
2 a bully. You were either a bully or you got bullied.
3 It was name calling backed up by physical violence.
4 I sometimes picked on people simply because I could.

5 The staff would see it, but instead of stopping it
6 would laugh and encourage it. Sometimes they would even
7 join in with the name calling. I used to get called
8 "googly eyes" because I had a squint in my eye. Staff
9 would call me that as well.'

10 He says:

11 'I told Mr MTT about the bullying. If I said
12 it was by another pupil he would go and speak to that
13 pupil or give him the belt maybe.'

14 At paragraph 112 he says:

15 'I used to run away a lot from Kerelaw, I remember
16 once when my dad took me back, I begged him not to take
17 me all the way but to drop me nearby so it would look as
18 though I was going back voluntarily.'

19 However -- he names the member of staff -- a member
20 of staff saw him and he says he was beside his car and
21 tried to grab 'Peter', and he says that he chased
22 'Peter' round the car, and as they were running round
23 his car, the man's car, he tried to tell him that he was
24 going back to Kerelaw. However, he says:

25 '... he caught me and slapped me about the head

1 a few times and then put me in his car.'

2 At 114 he moves on to the subject of bed-wetting,
3 and said bed-wetting was still a problem for 'Peter' at
4 Kerelaw:

5 '... and I was terrified people would find out about
6 it. Some of the staff were okay about it but others
7 would try to bring you down in front of others and make
8 you feel bad about it. Matt George was one. He would
9 call things like "pissy-bed" in front of people.'

10 And the man who chased him round the car was another
11 who would call him such things.

12 Then he goes on to the subject of reporting of
13 abuse, and I think this explains why his father went to
14 Kerelaw, so I'll just take a little bit of that.

15 LADY SMITH: Yes. Thank you.

16 MR PEOPLES: He does say that the first person he told about
17 Matt George's sexual abuse was his older sister, about
18 two years later, and that she had advised him to tell
19 his father, and he says:

20 'The reason I told her was that I ended up sniffing
21 glue and she asked me why. I told her it was because it
22 took away the pain and took me to another place. I then
23 told her that I had been getting bullied and sexually
24 abused.'

25 He continues:

1 'She told my dad and he went to Kerelaw a couple of
2 days later to see Matt George.'

3 He remembers his dad coming into the Baird Unit,
4 that was one of the units where he was, and walking into
5 the dining hall where Matt George was. 'Peter' says:

6 'I was kept in the unit so did not see what happened
7 but my dad later told me that he punched Matt George.'

8 Then he says:

9 'I also know that my dad spoke to SNR [REDACTED],
10 Mr MTT [REDACTED] about it, but cannot be sure if that was the
11 same time as he saw Matt George or another occasion ...
12 I remember my dad spoke to Mr MTT [REDACTED] for about half
13 an hour before I went into Mr MTT [REDACTED]'s office. When
14 I went in I heard Mr MTT [REDACTED] say, "I am sure it will
15 never happen again". Mr MTT [REDACTED] asked me why I had not
16 reported it and I told him I had tried to but that
17 nobody would listen. I had complained to him previously
18 about the bullying but not the sexual abuse. Having
19 said that, as far as I am concerned Mr MTT [REDACTED] must
20 have known about both the physical abuse and sexual
21 abuse that was going on in that place.'

22 He says:

23 'The only person I really told about the abuse was
24 my sister. I felt too ashamed and disgraced to speak
25 out about it to anybody else.'

1 Then he says, 119:

2 'I did not tell anybody else about what happened in
3 the toilet until I spoke to the police about it years
4 later.'

5 He says the police came out to his house about
6 a year before the statement was given, that would have
7 been around 2015, and took a statement. But he says he
8 didn't hear any more from them.

9 Well, again, as with the previous read-in, I can
10 perhaps update the matter, that in the second trial in
11 2022, there were convictions which related to 'Peter',
12 and that Matt George was convicted of indecent assault
13 on an occasion between [REDACTED] 1978 and [REDACTED] 1980 at
14 Kerelaw School, when he was convicted of seizing hold of
15 'Peter', forcing him into the toilets there, repeatedly
16 punching him on the body, seizing him by the throat,
17 George exposing his penis, masturbating in 'Peter's'
18 presence, forcing 'Peter's' head down and attempting to
19 penetrate his mouth with George's penis.

20 He was also convicted during the same period of
21 assault to injury on various occasions at the school,
22 involving punching and kicking 'Peter' on the body,
23 striking him on the head and body with a wet towel,
24 throwing a lit cigarette at him, all to his injury.

25 So that was obviously subsequent to the statement he

1 provided to the inquiry.

2 LADY SMITH: Yes, it was 2018, I think, wasn't it?

3 MR PEOPLES: 2018. And the dates libelled in the indictment
4 would, I think, coincide with probably the probable
5 period when he was at the school when these things were
6 happening.

7 Then 'Peter' tells us that he left Kerelaw in 1980,
8 so that would coincide with the dates I've mentioned.
9 That's at 121. He tells us that after leaving Kerelaw
10 he spent a relatively short period in his father's
11 house, but his stepmother kicked him out of the house
12 and, as he says, he sofa-surfed for a while and was then
13 homeless for a time. And he spent -- between his 16th
14 and 18th birthdays he was in and out of detention
15 centres. He tells us about the places he was in during
16 that period, and we had these read in during the SPS
17 hearings.

18 LADY SMITH: Yes.

19 MR PEOPLES: So I'm not going to go over those again, if
20 I may.

21 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

22 MR PEOPLES: Then so far as impact is concerned, he deals
23 with that from paragraph 133 on page 25.

24 First of all, he says that because of the way he had
25 been treated he began picking on his younger half

1 siblings, who were his stepmother's children. He
2 mentions his brother, who he says killed himself through
3 abuse, partly abuse that he says happened to his brother
4 due to 'Peter's' behaviour and conduct, but also abuse
5 that his brother had done to someone else, because
6 I think he did abuse a relative in the family.

7 He tells us that his brother took his own life in
8 around 2000.

9 He explains what he meant by that, what he did, and
10 he basically said he forced oral sex on his brother in
11 the same way that Matt George had abused 'Peter', so
12 he's quite open about what he had done.

13 Then he tells us, and again it's not an unfamiliar
14 story, that he became a drug addict. That's at 140. He
15 lost contact with his children, started using heroin
16 when he was about 18, and used it intravenously until
17 about five years before his statement was provided, and
18 he had, until nine years before giving the statement,
19 also a drinking problem.

20 He tells us at 144 he also many times tried to
21 self-harm and commit suicide. At the time of giving his
22 statement he was on anti-depressants and was seeing
23 a psychologist.

24 He said at 147 that he was unemployable due to his
25 past, because every time there was a disclosure they

1 didn't want to know me, and he had also not received any
2 proper education.

3 If I just go to the end, I mean the rest of it
4 can -- I think we can read, but that's the broad
5 picture.

6 LADY SMITH: Yes.

7 MR PEOPLES: And he signed his statement on 2 November 2016.

8 Could I move on to another read-in if I may.

9 LADY SMITH: Yes please.

10 MR PEOPLES: This is a person who will be referred to as
11 'David'.

12 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

13 MR PEOPLES: 'David's' statement to the Inquiry is
14 WIT.001.001.8847.

15 'David' (read)

16 MS FORBES: Like the previous read-in, part of 'David's'
17 statement was read in on Day 398 of the Scottish Prison
18 Service hearings, that was 13 December 2023.

19 Again, when I come to the appropriate bit, I'll --

20 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

21 MR PEOPLES: -- I'll not read it again, because we've
22 covered that before.

23 'David' was born in 1968 and he tells us about his
24 life before care between paragraphs 2 and 6. I will
25 just shortly summarise that, if I may. His mum and dad

1 split up when 'David' was a baby, and he had a younger
2 and older brother, and they were brought up after the
3 split by a man who became his mum's partner, and he
4 tells us that that person sexually and physically abused
5 'David' and that 'David' often ran away from home.

6 He says on one occasion, he describes his mum's
7 partner battering him with a belt until 'David' was
8 bleeding.

9 Then he says that when 'David' was about 10 years
10 old, his mum and her partner split up and his real
11 father came back into his life, and he says in that
12 section of his statement:

13 'Life was brilliant for a while.'

14 But within two years, the parents had split up
15 again, his mum had another partner, who 'David' says
16 simply wasn't a nice man.

17 'David' started getting into trouble and was
18 skipping school, and he was sent by a Children's Panel
19 to a children's home in Ayrshire when he was around 13,
20 which would be about 1981, for about a year.

21 He tells us about that home between paragraphs 7 to
22 9, and he then tells us that he moved on to another home
23 for around three or four months, and he tells us about
24 that second children's home between paragraphs 10 and
25 28, and I'll just pick out a couple of things --

1 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

2 MR PEOPLES: -- I'm not going to go into the detail. It's
3 not, obviously, an establishment we're dealing with in
4 this case study.

5 Secondary Institutions - to be published later
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19 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

20 MR PEOPLES: He tells us about Kerelaw School between
21 paragraphs 29 and 53 of his statement, and he tells us
22 at paragraph 29 that he was placed in Fleming Unit. So
23 he would be in the open school, in one of the boys --
24 well, it would be a boys unit at that stage, and he says
25 at paragraph 31 that initially he thought it was

1 brilliant, was the way he puts it.

2 Then going on, and I'm not going to go through the
3 routine, which I think I can move to perhaps
4 paragraph 43, under a heading that's relating to
5 discipline, and he says there:

6 'I never saw any of the boys getting hurt by the
7 staff or even anyone getting manhandled. Staff
8 sometimes had to restrain boys by sitting on them, but
9 some of them were big boys. I can honestly say that
10 most of the staff in Kerelaw were cool.'

11 Was his description.

12 He says that punishments really were loss of
13 privileges, at 44 of his statement, and that could
14 include loss of weekend leave, as well as other things
15 such as loss of pocket money or not being allowed to go
16 on trips.

17 Then he has a section headed 'Abuse' at Kerelaw',
18 which starts at paragraph 46 on page 11. I'll take some
19 parts of that statement. He says first of all at 46:

20 'I thought Matt George was just being pally and
21 cuddly when we were in the art class. He was always up
22 cuddling me. Looking back he was creepy.'

23 Then he goes on at paragraph 47 to say:

24 'Matt George took us in a minibus to his house.'

25 Halfway down he says:

1 'He took me through to another room away from the
2 other boys.'

3 Towards the end of that paragraph he continues:

4 'When we were in this other room, I don't know what
5 happened but he stuck his dick in my mouth. I just
6 remember I was boking and the smell. That was the one
7 and only time that this happened.'

8 Then he says:

9 'My friend ... used to shout at Matt George in the
10 classroom "get your hands off me you beastie bastard".
11 I never suspected a thing but I know now why he said
12 it.'

13 LADY SMITH: That description of when he was at his house,
14 being singled out, and taken to another room of course
15 picks up on what the previous witness was describing.

16 MR PEOPLES: Yes. That was at least one boy we know what
17 happened to.

18 LADY SMITH: Yes.

19 MR PEOPLES: Continuing on page 12 at paragraph 49, he turns
20 to another member of staff and says that one weekend, on
21 a Saturday, he and another boy had lost their weekend
22 leave and a member of staff was working that weekend who
23 took 'David' and the other boy on a round of golf or to
24 caddy for him.

25 Then at paragraph 50, 'David' continues, at one

1 point the member of staff hit a ball, handed 'David'
2 cigarettes and his golf clubs and told him to go down to
3 where the ball was and face the flagpole for two
4 minutes.

5 'David' says:

6 'I did what I was told. I was petrified and didn't
7 know what was going on. After a few minutes [this is
8 the other boy that he was with] appeared from nowhere
9 and he was as white as a ghost. I asked him over and
10 over if [the member of staff] had hit him and he kept
11 saying "no." Eventually he told me never to tell
12 anybody and that "he put his hands down my trousers".'

13 He says that the member of staff must have known
14 that the boy had told 'David' what had happened,
15 because, 'After that he kept his distance from me'.

16 As regards reporting, he says:

17 'I didn't trust anybody enough to tell them about
18 Matt George when [he] was at Kerelaw.'

19 If I could just move on, at paragraph 53 on page 13,
20 he says he left Kerelaw just before he turned 16 years
21 of age, and he describes living at home with his mum,
22 and initially working as a milk boy and then having
23 spells on fishing boats, as well as drinking and getting
24 into bother with the police, joyriding in stolen cars,
25 and he ended up being given a sentence of detention in

1 Glenochil Detention Centre, when he was aged 17.

2 He talks between paragraphs 55 and 63 about his time
3 in the various SPS establishments, and that's what was
4 read in on Day 398 on 13 December 2023.

5 Then if I move on in his signed statement to life
6 after care, which he deals with, or tells us about at
7 paragraphs 64 through to 67. I just pick out that he
8 met his daughter's mum when he was about age 22, which
9 would put it at about 1990, I think. They split up and
10 he was given custody -- well, I think there must have
11 been more than one child by then, but he was given
12 custody of his children.

13 He said he married another woman in 2003 and they
14 had two children together. The marriage lasted only
15 four years, and he also says that he has had -- he has
16 obviously worked, but he says he has had 40 jobs or more
17 since leaving care.

18 When it comes to impact, which is between paragraphs
19 67 and 75, he returns to Matt George at paragraph 70 and
20 says when he was aged about 20, which would be about
21 1988, he saw Matt George participating in a fun run.
22 Matt George saw him. Matt George asked him to go to
23 a shop to get him a Mars bar, and 'David' says he tried
24 to launch his Buckfast bottle at him but the police were
25 around, and he was nearly arrested. He said he was with

1 friends, but he didn't tell them the real reason why he
2 had done this. I think he said something about having
3 an argument with him or something on a previous
4 occasion.

5 At paragraph 71 he tells us that he turned to
6 alcohol in adulthood, and that in the years before he
7 gave this statement to the Inquiry he had contemplated
8 suicide, but his children and a grandson had given him
9 a reason not to do so.

10 At paragraphs 72 to 73 he said that in 2018 he had
11 made two attempts to get the police to come to see him
12 so he could give a statement about Kerelaw, but 'no one
13 ever came', as he put it.

14 Then he says at 76, under 'Lessons to be learned':

15 'When I was in care, if there was somebody who
16 I could have trusted, I would have told them about
17 things.'

18 He's saying there that there was no one he felt he
19 could trust. But had there been, he would have been
20 prepared to say things.

21 As far as the situation is concerned, this statement
22 was -- he gave the usual declaration at paragraph 78 and
23 signed the statement on 18 May 2018.

24 Again, like the previous two read-ins, I can take
25 the matter forward a little, and say that in 'David's'

1 case, at the second trial, Matt George was convicted of
2 indecently assaulting 'David' on an occasion between
3 [REDACTED] 1983 and [REDACTED] 1984, and the locus was at
4 a house in Largs, or elsewhere to the prosecutor
5 unknown, and he was convicted of pushing 'David' to his
6 knees, seizing hold of 'David's' head, penetrating
7 'David's' mouth with his penis, and ejaculating into
8 'David's' mouth.

9 So that takes matters forward. He is the third
10 person who, I think, came to us, and subsequently there
11 was a further trial and all three of the people I've
12 read in this morning, there were convictions.

13 LADY SMITH: They were all complainers and the charges were
14 found proved.

15 MR PEOPLES: Yes.

16 I think that takes me to the end of my read-ins.

17 I am not sure what the best plan is now. I don't know
18 whether Ms Forbes has -- yes, I think the next read-in
19 she thinks will be maybe longer than the time available
20 before the break.

21 LADY SMITH: Well, we've managed four in the time available,
22 I think.

23 MR PEOPLES: Yes.

24 LADY SMITH: Given everything that has to be processed in
25 those four, we should stop there, and then when the oral

1 witness is ready, if it's a bit longer than 15 or 20
2 minutes, it doesn't matter. We'll certainly aim for
3 quarter to.

4 Thank you.

5 MR PEOPLES: Thank you.

6 (11.22 am)

7 (A short break)

8 (11.47 am)

9 LADY SMITH: Ms Forbes.

10 MS FORBES: My Lady, we have a live witness next and she is
11 anonymous and is known as 'Sophie'.

12 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

13 'Sophie' (affirmed)

14 LADY SMITH: 'Sophie', do sit down and make yourself
15 comfortable.

16 A. Thank you.

17 LADY SMITH: 'Sophie', thank you for coming here this
18 morning to help us with the evidence that we're going to
19 ask you about. I have your written statement. I've
20 read your written statement. But having you here to
21 talk about some aspects that we'd like to explore with
22 you is of tremendous help to me.

23 Your written statement is in that red folder that's
24 on the desk there, so it will be available if you want
25 to use it.

1 We'll also bring the statement up on screen as we're
2 looking at different parts of it, so that will be there
3 too.

4 A. Okay, thank you.

5 LADY SMITH: You don't have to use either, but they're
6 available if you think they would help you.

7 A. I've not actually read my statement.

8 LADY SMITH: Ah, well I have.

9 But 'Sophie', seriously, it's difficult, I know, to
10 come into a public place --

11 A. Yes.

12 LADY SMITH: -- and it's no doubt been explained to you that
13 although there aren't very many people here, some people
14 are connected by an online link to follow the evidence
15 as well, and a transcript is being made of your
16 evidence. And that's not easy to agree to do that,
17 because we're asking you to go back in your memory to
18 your childhood and talk about things that weren't at all
19 easy for you, if I can put it at its most anodyne, which
20 it isn't at all.

21 If at any time you want a break, whether just
22 pausing where you are, or leaving the room, please let
23 me know. Or if there's anything else I could do to make
24 the whole business of giving evidence more comfortable
25 for you, my mission is to make it as comfortable as

1 possible, whilst still assisting you to give the
2 clearest and most accurate evidence you can.

3 A. Thank you.

4 LADY SMITH: So let me know if there's anything we can do to
5 help.

6 If you are ready, I'll pass over to Ms Forbes and
7 she'll take it from there. All right.

8 Ms Forbes.

9 Questions by MS FORBES

10 MS FORBES: Thank you, my Lady.

11 Good morning, 'Sophie'.

12 A. Good morning, ma'am.

13 Q. Beside you there is a red folder with your statement in
14 it. That statement has a reference number, and I am
15 just going to give it for the transcript, you don't have
16 to worry about the reference number, but I am just going
17 to read it out, it's WIT-1-000001258.

18 If I could ask you, 'Sophie', just to open the
19 folder and go to the very last page of your statement.

20 All the paragraphs in the statement are numbered,
21 and on the very last page there, paragraph 134 is the
22 last one, and you'll see that that's where there's
23 a declaration that you agree to, which is:

24 'I have no objection to my witness statement being
25 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.

1 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are
2 true.'

3 You've signed that and it's dated 25 May of last
4 year.

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Is that right?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Is that still the position?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. You can go to the front of the statement now, or put it
11 to one side. It's up to you what you want to do with
12 that.

13 First of all, 'Sophie', I'm just going to start by
14 talking a little bit about your life before you went
15 into care. You tell us that you were born in 1969; is
16 that right?

17 A. I was, love, yes.

18 Q. You talk about your life at home before going into care
19 between paragraphs 2 and 6 of your statement, and you
20 say that you were born in Irvine, is that right?

21 A. Mm-hm.

22 Q. Initially you lived with your parents?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. And it was in the village of Kilmaurs?

25 A. 'Kilmaurs'.

1 Q. Is that how you say it 'Kilmaurs'? That's near
2 Kilmarnock?

3 A. It is.

4 Q. I think you say that your parents split up when you were
5 about seven and later divorced?

6 A. Well, my mum left when I were three.

7 Q. But your mum left before that; is that right?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. And you were one of eight children?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. And you were in the line, you were third eldest?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. You tell us, 'Sophie', at paragraph 3, that life at home
14 wasn't easy and involved initially sexual assault from
15 your dad?

16 A. From my dad, yes.

17 Q. That was from a very young age?

18 A. Very young, yes.

19 Q. Also your dad would do something else. He would send
20 you to a neighbour's house up the road, and I think you
21 tell us he would give you an envelope to take there with
22 a note in it, is that right?

23 A. Mm-hm.

24 Q. Then when you went there, that person would also
25 sexually abuse you?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And then he would put money in the envelope --

3 A. To give to my dad.

4 Q. -- and that would go back to your dad?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. You also say that your dad's cousin would visit the

7 house.

8 A. Mm-hm.

9 Q. And again there was money exchanged with your dad and he

10 would also sexually abuse you.

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. This was about four or five when that started?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And it went on for years?

15 A. Years.

16 Q. So it happened more than once?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. That was the life that you were --

19 A. Living.

20 Q. -- living with, when you were a young girl?

21 You go on to say, 'Sophie', that the house with your

22 parents, there was a lot of drinking?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. And that the house always seemed full of drunk people.

25 A. Mm-hm.

1 Q. And there was never any food.

2 A. Never.

3 Q. You don't remember getting any Christmas presents --

4 A. No.

5 Q. -- or birthday presents, and even toys and games and

6 things like that --

7 A. There was nothing like that.

8 Q. Okay. One thing you say is at that time you don't

9 remember the social work being involved trying to help?

10 A. No.

11 Q. It was just the police that you'd see?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. I think you go on to say that your mum left and there

14 was long spells when you were quite young when she

15 wasn't living with you?

16 A. Mm-hm. So we'd be put in care then.

17 Q. You say you were put into a children's home.

18 A. Round the corner from my dad.

19 Q. And that would be until she came back; is that right?

20 A. Yes, and then we'd get took back out and took home.

21 Q. I think you say that started when you were about maybe

22 five, but could have been younger?

23 A. About three, I think.

24 Q. And that you were in and out of that children's home

25 quite a few times?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. When your mum left, I think you say she had -- there was
3 somebody down in the Lake District that she would go to
4 stay with.

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. A man?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. I think you remember --

9 A. Me and her once walked it. It took us two days.

10 Q. I think you say that later, that one time she came to
11 take you from the children's home and you walked the
12 distance down there?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. I think, 'Sophie', you tell us the first time that you
15 went to the children's home that it was as a result of
16 a big fight in the house and the police getting
17 involved.

18 A. Mm-hm.

19 Q. That part of your statement that you tell us about your
20 time in the children's home is sort of redacted, because
21 it's not part of this case study that we're dealing
22 with --

23 A. Mm-hm.

24 Q. -- so I won't go into it in too much detail, but I do
25 have some of the things that happened, which I think is

1 important, just to highlight to see the journey that you
2 went on.

3 A. Yes.

4 LADY SMITH: Just before Ms Forbes goes to that, can
5 I reassure you, 'Sophie', although what you're seeing on
6 screen is redacted under black, I have the text and
7 I have read it. All right?

8 A. Oh, thank you.

9 LADY SMITH: Ms Forbes.

10 MS FORBES: My Lady.

11 I think you say that while you were at the
12 children's home you would go home at the weekend to stay
13 with your dad?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. But your other siblings who were there at the home with
16 you, they didn't go home?

17 A. No.

18 Q. And it was just you?

19 A. Mm-hm.

20 Q. But that when you went back you were being sexually
21 abused by your dad still?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. However, I think you say that there was a time that your
24 mum would appear at your primary school --

25 A. She'd just turn up.

1 Q. And she'd take you and some of your siblings down to
2 England with her?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. I think you tell us, 'Sophie', that when you were maybe
5 seven or eight she came and took you to England and you
6 were there for about two years?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. That was staying with her and her new partner?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. But then your dad appeared at the primary school in
11 England --

12 A. Mm-hm.

13 Q. -- and took you and your brother back?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. I think you tell us, upsettingly, that on the train
16 journey home you were so frightened about going back
17 that you soiled yourself?

18 A. Oh yes.

19 Q. That's because I think you tell us that you knew the
20 abuse would start again?

21 A. Straightaway.

22 Q. I think you say you were only back a very short time,
23 a day or so, and then you were back in the children's
24 home again?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. But you would still see your dad every night?

2 A. Every night.

3 Q. And he would continue the abuse?

4 A. Yes.


5 Q. Then at that period, 'Sophie', I think you say you

6 didn't see your mum again for a couple of years?

7 A. No, I'd never seen her for a few years.

8 Q. And then she turned up again when you were about ten?

9 A. Yes. Yes.

10 Q.  Secondary Institutions - to be published later

11

12 A.

13 Q.

14

15 A.

16 Q.

17 A.

18 Q.

19

20

21 A.

22 Q. I think this is the time you tell us your mum came back

23 at one point and walked you, essentially, down to

24 England --

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. -- which took two days.

2 Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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3 Q. I think this is the time you were sent to Newfield?

4 A. It is, love, yes.

5 Q. You tell us about Newfield, 'Sophie', from paragraph 46
6 of your statement. This is titled 'Newfield Assessment
7 Centre'?

8 A. Mm-hm.

9 Q. I think you say that you were sent there so they could
10 decide what they were going to do with you, and you tell
11 us you were there about age ten?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And you were there for about six months?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. During your time at Newfield, 'Sophie', I think you say,
16 the way you put it at paragraph 74 is:

17 'There wasn't a lot of love or care shown by staff
18 ...'

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. '... but there was no abuse.'

21 A. No.

22 Q. But by this time I think you say you were on what you
23 describe as a downward spiral?

24 A. That were right.

25 Q. This is when you started self-harming?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. I think you say there's nothing significant, either good
3 or bad, that you want to tell us about Newfield?

4 A. No. No.

5 Q. Although you do say that when you were self-harming
6 there they just would patch you up again and nobody
7 would ask you what was happening --

8 A. No, no.

9 Q. -- why you were doing it?

10 A. Never got help or owt like that.

11 Q. Whilst you were at Newfield your dad was still involved
12 in your life --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- and he was taking you out, is that right, during the
15 day, and he was still sexually abusing you?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. At paragraph 51, 'Sophie', you tell us you ran away from
18 there a couple of times as well?

19 A. Mm-hm.

20 Q. Then it was decided at a Children's Panel that you would
21 go to a different children's home; is that right?

22 A. Which was Redheugh.

23 Q. Yes, and you tell us about that from paragraph 53, and
24 you were still self-harming while you were there, right?

25 A. Terribly, and solvent abuse, and ...

1 Q. Glue sniffing, was it?

2 A. Yes.

3 Secondary Institutions - to be published later



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11 Q. The police would catch you and you were taken back to
12 Newfield again?

13 A. Redheugh.

14 Q. Sorry, I think was there a time that you were maybe
15 taken from there to Newfield for another period?

16 A. Yes, I went back in Newfield after Redheugh.

17 Q. I think that was because you'd ran away?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Is that essentially why that happened?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. So you weren't doing anything bad?

22 A. No, I wasn't.

23 Q. You weren't committing any crimes or anything?

24 A. No, just against myself.

25 Q. I think there was another Children's Panel after that

1 second time in Newfield because, again, you were running
2 away?
3 A. Yes.
4 Q. You were sent to a children's home in Southannan; is
5 that right?
6 A. Yes.
7 Q. You tell us about that from paragraph 66.
8 A. That were terrible.
9 Q. Yes.
10 I think you describe that place, 'Sophie', as being
11 the worst place you were in; is that right?
12 A. Definitely.
13 Q. I think you say at paragraph 78 that the abuse you
14 suffered there was relentless.
15 A. Constant.
16 Q. Just again, just to highlight some of the things that
17 happened that you've told us about while you were there.
18 There was bullying by one of the girls you shared a room
19 with?
20 A. Yes.
21 Q. She would frequently slap or spit in your face?
22 A. Mm-hm.
23 Q. At day and night boys would come into the room in
24 balaclavas and try to smother you.
25 A. Mm-hm.

1 Q. And one of those boys then sort of said you were his
2 girlfriend --

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. -- and started to sexually abuse you?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. And he would do that every opportunity he could.

7 A. Any time.

8 Q. Yes.

9 A. In front of staff or anything.

10 Q. And nothing was done about that?

11 A. No.

12 Q. This involved putting his hands on your breasts or down
13 your pants, putting his fingers inside you?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. He was also physically violent towards you as well?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. I think you tell us he was a bully and it was
18 a nightmare.

19 A. Mm-hm. A living hell.

20 Q. You also tell us, 'Sophie', about a staff member there
21 who would spit in your face?

22 A. Aye.

23 Q. This was a male staff member.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. If you ran away he would be the one that would come and

1 collect you --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- and then you would get what you would describe as

4 a 'hammering'?

5 A. Proper hammering.

6 Q. He would often be involved in restraining you?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And hitting you?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. You also tell us, 'Sophie', about another member of

11 staff, a male member of staff, who was very violent, and

12 he would also restrain you on the floor?

13 A. The restraining was shocking.

14 Q. You describe being held by the neck and him nearly

15 choking you?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Bending your arms up your back and holding them there

18 for --

19 A. Your legs up your back.

20 Q. And he would also punch you in the stomach?

21 A. Mm-hm.

22 Q. It wasn't just you, you saw him doing that to other

23 people too?

24 A. Quite a lot of people.

25 Q. From there you were regularly running away again?

1 A. I think I were there 16 months. I stayed in it two
2 nights. Self-harming.

3 Q. Oh, sorry, 'Sophie'.

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. There was still the self-harming going on?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. I think you say also by this time you were making
8 yourself sick.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Again, as a result of what was going on, I think the
11 decision was taken that you would go to Kerelaw?

12 A. Yes. For my own safety.

13 Q. Do you know was this because of the running away or
14 because of the --

15 A. Well, they said it was, that's what they said.

16 Q. Again, there was nothing being done at that time --

17 A. No --

18 Q. -- to investigate the self-harming?

19 A. -- nothing.

20 Q. I'm just going to move on then, 'Sophie', and talk about
21 your time in Kerelaw. That starts in your statement
22 from paragraph 88. I think you say that it had only
23 been opened about a year at that point?

24 A. Yes, I was the first girl in Ayrshire to go in there.

25 Q. So the rest of the people who were in there were boys?

1 A. I think there were 15 boys when I went in.

2 Q. You talk about there being three units, but they were
3 only using really two?

4 A. Yes, the other unit was where I could have a shower or
5 whatever.

6 Q. So because you were the only girl they were at that time
7 using that other unit for you to take showers, because
8 it would be separate from the boys?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. I think you describe the room that you were in whilst
11 there, and the fact that the furniture was all secured
12 to the floor?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. You describe it as a very plain room, with no decoration
15 or anything like that.

16 A. You couldn't have nothing. There were a window down the
17 door.

18 Q. Your bedroom, was that locked in the evening?

19 A. Yes. It was locked from 7.00 pm.

20 Q. Even though you were the only girl there, I think you
21 described that as being horrendous, being the only girl,
22 but you say you didn't have any abuse from any of the
23 boys that were there?

24 A. No. They sort of looked after me, in a way.

25 Q. I think you tell us a little bit about staff, and the

1 staff member you remember was [REDACTED] ?

2 A. Yes, a bad man.

3 Q. I think you describe him a little bit later to us.

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. It's a little bit later on in your statement, where
6 I think it's paragraph 98, you say he was a 'horrible,
7 evil little man'.

8 A. Yes, he were.

9 Q. You tell us, 'Sophie', a little bit about the sort of
10 routine at Kerelaw, and you have mentioned that, that
11 you would shower in the unit that wasn't being used?

12 A. Mm-hm. But you knew somebody were watching you.

13 Q. I think you tell us that, that you got this feeling that
14 there was somebody watching you?

15 A. Mm-hm. Always.

16 Q. What would give you that impression?

17 A. It's just a gut feeling you have. And I were that used
18 to abuse anyway, so you just know.

19 Q. I think you talk about that a little bit more at
20 paragraph 98. So just while we're on that topic,
21 I think you say that you would hear the doors opening
22 and closing when you would be in the shower?

23 A. Yes. You'd know someone were there.

24 Q. You've mentioned this thin piece of glass that would be
25 in your bedroom and that was something I think you

1 commented that you think someone from outside was
2 looking in.

3 A. Always, they were always watching. I had no privacy at
4 all.

5 Q. The staff -- I know you've mentioned one of them, but
6 were the staff mainly male or was there a mixture?

7 A. They were a mixture, actually. They restrained very
8 hard and all. There might be six on one person -- on
9 one child.

10 Q. Did you experience that?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. When they would restrain, what would be happening before
13 they would take that decision to restrain someone? What
14 would be going on?

15 A. You might be like, I don't know, being a bit cheeky or
16 something like that. Before you knew it, you were
17 grabbed straight down. That were it. And then dragged
18 up to your room.

19 Q. Did you form the impression that the restraint was the
20 sort of first thing they would do?

21 A. Yes. Yes.

22 Q. Was there any attempts to sort of --

23 A. No.

24 Q. -- talk people down, or anything like that?

25 A. No.

1 Q. 'Sophie', at paragraph 91 you describe a little bit
2 about the make up of Kerelaw, and the fact that it was
3 a secure place.

4 A. Mm-hm.

5 Q. And --

6 A. So there were two big gates you had to go through before
7 you went into the unit.

8 Q. I think you say the only time you were allowed out was
9 when you would get some exercise in the yard?

10 A. Yes, and then you could earn points.

11 Q. If you earned points, would you then receive anything?

12 A. Yes, you could go out for a trip, eventually. But,
13 like, that were when you went into second unit.

14 Q. Was there sort of a unit that you would be in initially?

15 A. Yes. That's the starting unit, and then you'd earn your
16 points, and you'd get more privileges then.

17 Q. Then if you received more points, would that mean that
18 you could then be moved to this other unit?

19 A. Or you'd get privileges with the points.

20 Q. Whilst you were there, 'Sophie', I think you said that
21 there was some education --

22 A. Mm-hm.

23 Q. -- and you did go to classes.

24 A. I can't remember much of that bit.

25 Q. But I think you tell us the rest of the time you just

1 sat and chatted or watched the TV?

2 A. Or played pool, did table tennis, and things like that.

3 Q. You comment there weren't any trips or holidays out?

4 A. No, nothing like that. You could go to the local shops

5 if you had enough points, with one of the staff members.

6 And I did do that and I ran away from there.

7 Q. Yes, I think you tell us about that a little bit later.

8 Was it you and a boy who ran away together?

9 A. Yes, we ran away.

10 Q. Was that an occasion when there was, I think, a car

11 stolen, or a van?

12 A. Yes, we stole a car, a BMW.

13 Q. But then you were brought back after that; is that

14 right?

15 A. Yes, straight back to Kerelaw, and then you go back to

16 basic.

17 Q. So all the points removed?

18 A. Everything.

19 Q. And no privileges?

20 'Sophie', you tell us because of things that

21 happened to you, you seemed to have problems, perhaps,

22 with periods.

23 A. I still have treatment now for bladder infections.

24 Q. I think you tell us later in your statement that you

25 actually had to have a hysterectomy quite young?

1 A. 29.

2 Q. These are sort of problems that you suffered with from
3 puberty onwards?

4 A. All my life I've suffered them.

5 Q. During your time there this was a problem that you had,
6 but you weren't taken anywhere to be seen about that?

7 A. No. No. I've never been to be seen, until I was
8 an adult, and myself.

9 Q. You talk about the fact that there was a time when you
10 punched a wall and hurt your hand --

11 A. Mm-hm.

12 Q. -- and they took you to hospital for that from Kerelaw;
13 is that right?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. You still have a scar on your hand from that?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. But I think you tell us that if you were self-harming,
18 which you tell us was almost on a daily basis --

19 A. It were on a daily basis.

20 Q. -- the staff would just restrain you and put bandages on
21 you.

22 A. And that would be it.

23 Q. And you weren't taken to hospital --

24 A. No.

25 Q. -- to get any treatment for that? And nobody asked you

1 why?

2 A. Never. Never, ever.

3 Q. You told us a little bit about running away and the
4 incident with the other boy. I think there was another
5 time you ran away as well where I think you'd gone to
6 your mum's and you didn't want to go back?

7 A. Mm-hm.

8 Q. At the time in Kerelaw, were you actually at a certain
9 point getting to go home to see your mum?

10 A. Yes, I went one day and it were her birthday and there
11 were loads of alcohol. I think I were only about 12 at
12 the time, and obviously I had the alcohol, and when they
13 come to get me, obviously, I were paralytic, and I woke
14 up the next morning and I had carpet burns from the top
15 of my head all down one side of my body to my feet.

16 Q. What was that from?

17 A. That were IIQ ██████████ dragging me upstairs.

18 Q. You tell us a little bit more detail about that if you
19 go forward in your statement at paragraph 100, this is
20 when you say you went to your mum's and you got drunk
21 and the staff came and picked you up.

22 A. It was for two hours, you would go out for two hours.

23 Q. Then when you got to Kerelaw there was IIQ ██████████ --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. -- and there was three other staff involved?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. I think you tell us they dragged you all the way from
3 the front gates all the way up the stairs?

4 A. No talking or nothing it was just grabbed. As soon as
5 you got to that front gate you were grabbed and you were
6 dragged up.

7 Q. I think you say a little bit earlier in that paragraph
8 that when the staff came and picked you up you were
9 fighting with them?

10 A. Mm-hm.

11 Q. But at this point when you get to Kerelaw, what were you
12 doing?

13 A. I just gave up.

14 Q. But they still --

15 A. I still tried to fight with them, but ...

16 Q. I think you are quite candid and say there:
17 'I know I was showing off but their restraining went
18 a bit far.'

19 A. It always did.

20 Q. You didn't deserve that?

21 A. Yeah, I were a kid.

22 LADY SMITH: 'Sophie', you say you were dragged from the
23 front gates into the building and all the way up the
24 stairs.

25 A. Mm-hm.

1 LADY SMITH: What sort of distance was it from the front
2 gates to the building?
3 A. So from here to the end of that room up there, but up
4 stairs and everything.
5 LADY SMITH: Yes. Thank you.
6 Ms Forbes.
7 MS FORBES: 'Sophie', when you --
8 A. So it were by my feet, and your head would be hitting
9 every ...
10 Q. I was just going to ask you, because you're talking
11 about carpet burns on your face, so that means that at
12 some point your face was coming in contact with the
13 floor?
14 A. Yes.
15 Q. Is this as you were being dragged?
16 A. Yes.
17 LADY SMITH: What about when you were still outside, what
18 did they have hold of?
19 A. I was on the floor. I was on the floor with a few of
20 the staff members.
21 LADY SMITH: Were they dragging you by your feet or by your
22 arms?
23 A. By my feet they dragged me.
24 LADY SMITH: Thank you.
25 You said possibly the length of the hearing room

1 from where you are sitting to that wall?

2 A. Yes, and up the stairs.

3 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

4 MS FORBES: This is you getting taken out of the vehicle

5 that they brought you back in --

6 A. Mm-hm, yes.

7 Q. -- and then essentially dragged all the way from outside

8 inside?

9 A. From the transport to my bedroom.

10 Q. Okay.

11 You describe, I think, **IIQ** at that time,

12 something about being able to see in his eyes how you

13 thought he felt --

14 A. He were bad. There was something bad about that man.

15 Q. Okay. I think you say that you could see in his eyes

16 that he hated children?

17 A. Mm-hm.

18 Q. And is that the impression you got?

19 A. Oh definitely. He told me he hated me.

20 Q. Is that something he said to you?

21 A. A lot. And I'd never amount to anything, or, 'You're

22 just nothing, nobody will ever listen to you'.

23 Q. When they said that, when he said that, how did it make

24 you feel?

25 A. But I were nothing, were I, then?

1 Q. At this time you're already hurting yourself; is that
2 right?

3 A. Mm-hm.

4 Q. On a daily basis as well?

5 You tell us, 'Sophie', that while you were there,
6 that you had problems with wetting the bed as well, is
7 that something that happened?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. When that happened, did staff say anything to you about
10 that?

11 A. They'd just laugh at you and things like that.

12 Q. And would they --

13 A. Everybody knew in that place that I'd wet the bed.

14 Q. How would they make everyone know?

15 A. At tea time or dinner time or whatever.

16 Q. Yes. So it would be said?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. That was in front of the other boys?

19 A. In front of everybody.

20 Q. Would you also be called names?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Was that 'dirty bastard'?

23 A. All that sort of stuff.

24 Q. You tell us a little bit more, 'Sophie', about some of
25 the things that were going on in Kerelaw, and you've

1 told us a little bit about what happened with the
2 shower, and your feeling of lack of privacy all the
3 time. I think you say that you don't know who it was
4 that was doing that, but you suspected it was --
5 A. I think it were **IQ** .
6 Q. And you --
7 A. He always seemed to be there.
8 Q. Was he someone who was always very physical with you?
9 A. Yes. His, like, his full beam was on me and he would
10 like push you like that (indicates).
11 Q. You're indicating a closed fist on your face, on your
12 cheek?
13 A. Yes, he would go like that, and push you like that
14 (indicates).
15 Q. When would he do that? What was happening when he would
16 do that?
17 A. Maybe if I were cheeky or something like that.
18 Q. I think you tell us, 'Sophie', that he would be involved
19 in restraining you a lot?
20 A. Yes. He were the main character.
21 Q. So he was the main person who would do that?
22 A. Yes.
23 Q. When he was restraining you, he would twist your wrists
24 right back?
25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Or if you were on the ground he would --

2 A. Or your arms would be up your back, like I say, your
3 legs would be -- so you'd be on your stomach and your
4 legs would be pushed up towards your back. And they'd
5 sit on them.

6 Q. And I think you say also that he would have his knee
7 sometimes --

8 A. On your back.

9 Q. Sorry, on your neck, sorry?

10 A. Yes, like if you were on your back and they were
11 restraining you, they would be sat like on your legs to
12 keep you still.

13 LADY SMITH: How many people would be restraining you,
14 'Sophie'? You've told me about [REDACTED].

15 A. There might be three or four.

16 LADY SMITH: Okay.

17 A. I can't remember their names, my Lady.

18 LADY SMITH: No, it's fine if you can't remember their
19 names.

20 A. It's him I always remember.

21 LADY SMITH: But it would be more than just him restraining
22 you?

23 A. Yes, definitely.

24 LADY SMITH: And there could have been several people
25 altogether?

1 A. Yes, there was several.

2 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

3 A. They would come from all over the building just to
4 restrain, you know, big me.

5 MS FORBES: At that time, 'Sophie', you were still quite
6 young, is that right?

7 A. I think I were 11/12.

8 Q. So this is a grown man who is restraining you, and the
9 other members of staff who were involved in restraining
10 you, they are all adults as well?

11 A. They were all adults.

12 Q. Would there be a mixture of men and women or --

13 A. It would be mostly men, to be honest, who done the
14 restraining.

15 Q. From your point of view, were you doing anything that
16 you thought justified being restrained at the time?

17 A. I weren't hitting them. I might have been self-harming
18 or something, they were trying to stop me doing that.
19 I might be fighting against that. But not to them, it
20 were to myself.

21 Q. When you were self-harming, what was it that you were
22 doing?

23 A. Cutting.

24 Q. So you'd have something sharp on you at the time?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. From that point of view, you might see how they would
2 want to get that off of you --

3 A. Mm-hm.

4 Q. -- but from your point of view --

5 A. Oh, yes.

6 Q. But from your point of view, this was going too far?

7 A. Mm-hm. They were restraining you and keeping you there
8 for an hour like that.

9 Q. I think you say, separate from self-harming, you would
10 also have this restraint from [REDACTED] for silly
11 things?

12 A. Stupid things, like -- stupid, like if you didn't say
13 'thank you' or owt like that.

14 Q. What about refusing to go to bed, or something like
15 that?

16 A. Oh, refusing to go -- he would just march you straight
17 up.

18 Q. I think you describe him bending your arm up your back
19 and marching you to your bedroom?

20 A. Yes, he done that quite often, regular.

21 Q. You comment there was no need to be so violent, and
22 I think you would also comment that none of the other
23 staff bothered you like he did?

24 A. No, it were only him, really, that stood out to me.

25 Q. You also say that you saw him doing that to the boys?

1 A. Yes. It were usually littler boys. He never usually
2 picked on the bigger ones. But he wasn't a big man, but
3 to me he was a big man.

4 Q. Compared to you he was a grown adult?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. But I think you comment, 'Sophie', that even when he did
7 it to the boys, it didn't seem so bad on them?

8 A. No, I used to think to myself he does it a lot worse to
9 me. I don't know, he might not have liked me.

10 Q. I think you describe yourself there saying you were
11 still tiny and weak compared to him?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. This restraint from [REDACTED], how often would that
14 happen to you when you were there?

15 A. It were regular, it were just a daily occurrence.

16 Q. So it could be daily?

17 A. I hated it when he were on shift.

18 Q. Was he what they called a residential care worker or did
19 you know what his title was?

20 A. I have no idea, he were just there. He were just staff.

21 Q. Apart from the restraints, I think you say there were
22 some other things that staff could do, and that would be
23 to turn off the lights in your bedroom?

24 A. Yes. They done that a lot too. For anything. You
25 didn't have to do much for that to happen. And they'd

1 just turn lights off and all. So you could have a radio
2 or something in your bedroom, but they turned it off
3 from outside, so ...

4 Q. They had the power to switch your lights off and they
5 also had the power to switch your radio off.

6 A. Stop everything, yes.

7 LADY SMITH: Sorry, explain to me how they were able to do
8 that, 'Sophie'?

9 A. The plug were outside the bedroom, so ...

10 LADY SMITH: Right, so they could just cut it off?

11 A. Yes, they just turned it off when they wanted to.

12 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

13 A. A lot of the time it was supposed to be 7 o'clock, but
14 they just put it off when they ... maybe 6 o'clock, or
15 ...

16 LADY SMITH: Mm-hm.

17 MS FORBES: Did you get the impression they were doing that
18 for any reason?

19 A. I just thought it was what they done in there.

20 Q. Did you see it as a punishment of some kind?

21 A. No, it were just a routine thing. You just accepted it
22 because you had to do.

23 Q. Was there a kind of set bedtime, for example, that
24 lights would go off?

25 A. Yes, 7 o'clock.

1 Q. Right.

2 A. Sometimes if you got some points you could have it a bit
3 longer, but most of the time it was 7 o'clock you were
4 in your room, and locked in.

5 Q. Just so that I understand, 'Sophie', would they turn the
6 lights off in your bedroom before 7 o'clock sometimes?

7 A. Sometimes, yes. It depends how they were or what
8 happened or ...

9 Q. So you wouldn't be expecting it?

10 A. No. No, they'd just do it.

11 LADY SMITH: You told me you were locked in. What if you
12 needed the toilet during the night?

13 A. You'd ring and ring and ring, shout, shout, shout.
14 Sometimes they'd come and let you go to toilet.
15 But most of the time, you didn't really ask. After
16 the door were locked, you never asked for nothing. You
17 just accept things and ...

18 LADY SMITH: Yes. Thank you.
19 Ms Forbes.

20 MS FORBES: You were in Kerelaw for quite a period of time?

21 A. I think it were about a year and a half, I think.

22 Q. Yes. Just from the dates point of view, would that have
23 been from about 1983 to 1985, or ... something like
24 that?

25 A. Something like that, yes. I think I were about 13 by

1 then.

2 LADY SMITH: About 13 when you went into Kerelaw?

3 A. I think it were about 12/13. I can't remember ...

4 LADY SMITH: That's okay. Don't worry. I don't expect you

5 to remember exact dates. It just gives me a feel of

6 what stage of life you were at?

7 A. Yes. I was still -- I was still under 15. So, yes.

8 MS FORBES: I think you say, 'Sophie', a little bit later,

9 that you were maybe about 15 when you went to Bellsford

10 House in Kilmarnock?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. But it doesn't matter too much about the dates, but you

13 were in Kerelaw, in any event, for about, I think you

14 say, a year and a half, something like that?

15 A. Yes, it were about a year and a half.

16 Q. The way you came to leave Kerelaw was, I think, going to

17 a Children's Panel?

18 A. Mm-hm.

19 Q. I think you tell us about that, paragraph 102, and you

20 say that you think the reason that you were put out of

21 Kerelaw was to find somewhere where they could integrate

22 you into life outside care?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Were you told that that's what they were planning to do?

25 A. No, I just got told that we were going to a children's

1 hearing to try and get you out of Kerelaw. There was
2 nothing else they could do in -- well, they never done
3 nowt anyway, but there were nothing else, basically.

4 Q. During that whole time, you didn't get to go back and
5 live with your mum permanently?

6 A. No. No.

7 Q. But, as we spoke about a little bit earlier, 'Sophie',
8 there was a time when you'd lived with her for two years
9 down in England?

10 A. Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

11 Q. And the only reason that came to an end was because your
12 dad took you back to Scotland?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. But then you almost immediately were in a home?

15 A. Yes. My dad had been to court for abusing my elder
16 sister, pleaded guilty, and then they left me with him.

17 Q. I think you tell us about that, 'Sophie', a little bit
18 later in your statement, and you say that's not
19 something you knew at the time, is that right?

20 A. No, I've only just recently ...

21 Q. But you found out later, when you obtained some records,
22 that actually the period of time when your dad was able
23 to take you away, out of care for the day, he had
24 already been convicted of abusing your sister?

25 A. Yes, and pleaded guilty.

1 Q. And that was sexual abuse?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. But he was allowed to take you?

4 A. Mm-hm.

5 Q. He also had, I think, your brother at the same time?

6 A. He physically abused my brother.

7 Q. I think that's one of the things you comment on in your
8 statement later on, that you don't know why that was
9 allowed to happen.

10 A. Mm-hm. I don't know why any of it were allowed to
11 happen.

12 Q. This place, Bellsford House, was identified as a place
13 that you could go to, and one of the members of staff
14 from Kerelaw took you there; is that right?

15 A. Mm-hm.

16 **Secondary Institutions - to be published later**
17 **[REDACTED]**
18 **[REDACTED]**

19 Q. And you were only there for one or two weeks?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. When you ran away, you'd go to stay with one of your
22 friends and her family?

23 A. Yes. In a different place. Yes.

24 Q. Was that in Airdrie?

25 A. It was, love, yes. Yes.

1 Q. 'Sophie', you then tell us a little bit about what
2 happened after you ran away. You were working in
3 a café?

4 A. A community café, and I were doing all right.

5 Q. I think you tell us you were quite happy at that time?

6 A. Very happy, yes.

7 Q. But you had been reported missing, because you had ran
8 away, and the police were looking for you, but they
9 didn't know you were in Airdrie?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Then I think you say after a year or so --

12 A. When I was 16.

13 Q. -- when you were 16.

14 A. I asked for a children's hearing myself, a panel, and
15 just to come off care.

16 Q. You took the step of contacting someone so that you
17 could officially have that removed?

18 A. Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

19 Q. That then you wouldn't be scared of the police looking
20 for you any more?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. You tell us that after that, I think, this is the period
23 when that is removed and you are no longer under the
24 care of anybody, you went to live with your mum for
25 a while, is that right?

1 A. Yes. Yes. My mum let me do what I wanted, so it were
2 all right, you know.

3 Q. I think you then say, though, that you went to
4 Sheffield, you decided to move away?

5 A. I were 17, I went for two weeks to Sheffield and I met
6 my husband first day.

7 Q. And you've been there ever since?

8 A. I've been there ... and he passed away two years ago.

9 Q. I'm sorry to hear that?

10 A. I was devastated.

11 Q. You were together a very long time.

12 I think from that you've had two daughters together;
13 is that right?

14 A. Mm-hm.

15 Q. And you have three grandchildren?

16 A. Three grandkids.

17 Q. I think you tell us that you like spending a lot of time
18 with them?

19 A. Oh, yes. I can't get rid of them.

20 Q. I think from what you say, you don't want rid of them,
21 do you?

22 A. No, they're good.

23 Q. And they're down close to you, is that right?

24 A. In (Inaudible) yes, and this lady.

25 Q. Sorry, yes, is this your sister-in-law?

1 A. Yes, my best friend too.

2 Q. She has been a great deal of support to you; is that
3 right?

4 A. Tremendous.

5 Q. Just thinking, 'Sophie', a little bit about what you
6 tell us about the impact of your time in care. I think
7 you tell us at paragraph 108 that when you look back,
8 it's almost as if it was happening to someone else and
9 not you?

10 A. That's what I can do, you see, I can put myself above
11 it.

12 Q. I think you describe it like an out-of-body experience?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. I think you say that's why you're able to talk about it
15 now?

16 A. I've never spoke about it until now.

17 Q. But --

18 A. Nobody listened, so ...

19 Q. One of the things you comment on is that you lost out
20 a lot on your education whilst you were in care?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And you basically never had an education. But you've
23 managed to get through on your own?

24 A. Oh yes. Yes.

25 Q. And you learned to -- you taught yourself, really, to

1 read and write?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. But you don't think it held you back getting jobs,
4 because you were able to talk?

5 A. Oh yes, I can talk.

6 Q. I think you tell us a little bit more about your
7 daughter and your grandchildren, and that growing up you
8 took your children on holiday every year, and they got
9 everything they wanted?

10 A. Everything.

11 Q. Was that because you wanted them to have a different
12 life?

13 A. Yes. Yes. Completely different. I've never had social
14 services involved, I've -- nothing. And I lived quite
15 a -- there were a bit of domestic violence in my life,
16 but he changed.

17 Q. I think you tell us about that. There were some
18 difficult times with your husband --

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. -- but that latterly that stopped?

21 A. Yes, he completely changed and he were a good man.

22 Q. Yes.

23 A. But what you do, you put up with things.

24 Q. Yes.

25 A. Because you're that used to putting up with things.

1 Q. Yes.

2 Thinking about hopes that you have for the Inquiry,
3 'Sophie', I think you tell us in your statement, and
4 this is a little bit further on at paragraph 130, that
5 you hope that things change so that the people who work
6 in any care establishment are the right people for the
7 job. And it was obvious to you that a lot of the staff
8 when you were in care didn't want to be there?

9 A. No. They weren't the right people for them -- them
10 jobs.

11 Q. You comment that you might have got food, but there was
12 no love or affection.

13 A. No, I've never felt love, affection or anything in any
14 of them places. You just had to do your own thing.

15 Q. You talk about risk assessments at paragraph 131, and
16 say that in your opinion there should be risk
17 assessments done on a regular basis and that children
18 should be asked if they're okay and if they have any
19 issues.

20 A. Yes. They've never asked.

21 Q. And that children should be given a voice and listened
22 to?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Is that something you think is quite important?

25 A. I think it's very -- it's the most important. You've

1 got to listen to these kids, because they're not lying
2 to you. They're telling you the truth, what's actually
3 being done to them.

4 LADY SMITH: I see, 'Sophie', you also mention the
5 importance of watching how children are behaving?

6 A. Mm-hm.

7 LADY SMITH: Is that because you recognise that children
8 often communicate not by words but by what they're
9 doing --

10 A. By actions.

11 LADY SMITH: -- and what their behaviour is like?

12 A. If you've got a 10 year-old girl cutting all their face
13 up and all their neck and their arms, you've got to be
14 asking yourself: why is that child doing that? But
15 nobody ever did? Nobody wanted to know. You know, you
16 had to be strong yourself.

17 LADY SMITH: Or it may be that a child is misbehaving?

18 A. All I were doing was running away.

19 LADY SMITH: You're not the first one to tell me that. I've
20 heard about a lot of people who were running away and
21 nobody was asking why they were doing it?

22 A. For example, I once ran away from Southannan in my
23 nightie, three inch of snow, and I thumbed a lift in
24 a big truck. That were regular. Getting lifts.

25 LADY SMITH: Yes, and you were in your nightie?

1 A. In my nightie once, with snow.

2 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

3 Ms Forbes.

4 MS FORBES: My Lady.

5 Just on that point about asking children what's

6 happening, I think you say that you think staff should

7 be trained so they can identify signs of abuse?

8 A. Definitely, just to see it straightaway.

9 Q. Because you were self-harming regularly and nobody

10 asked?

11 A. No. And from an early age I were self-harming.

12 Q. You say at that time, from your experience, the staff

13 just didn't want to know?

14 A. No, they didn't want to know. They'd just shove you

15 off, 'Oh shut up, don't be daft', you know. You were

16 a child in care. Nobody listened. At that time.

17 Q. I think you say, you know, just lastly in this part

18 about hopes for the Inquiry, at paragraph 133, that you

19 hope that the abuse you suffered in care isn't still

20 going on today. And that you just --

21 A. That's tormented me, that. Not saying nowt all these

22 years. I wish I'd have said something sooner, but ...

23 Q. But you've come forward now.

24 A. But you try to get on with your own life.

25 Q. From what you've said, 'Sophie', you've been able to

1 have a marriage --

2 A. Mm-hm.

3 Q. -- children, and the grandchildren that you have a great

4 relationship with now.

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. And hope that that second part of your life has been

7 a lot more settled and a lot more loving.

8 A. Oh, it's been -- yes.

9 MS FORBES: 'Sophie', thank you very much for answering all

10 my questions today. I don't have any more questions for

11 you, unless there's something you want to say that you

12 haven't had a chance to say?

13 A. I just want it better for kids. That's all I want.

14 These children that go into these care homes and ...

15 I just think about them. They might come from filthy

16 houses and mums and dads that don't care, but they're

17 kids. Every kid's the same, ain't they? They should be

18 given a voice like everybody else.

19 MS FORBES: Yes. Well I know it's not been easy, 'Sophie',

20 but thank you very much. I'm really grateful to you for

21 coming today.

22 A. Thank you.

23 LADY SMITH: 'Sophie', let me add my thanks. I said to you

24 that I knew you were approaching something that was

25 going to be very difficult, giving evidence here in this

1 Inquiry. Thank you for doing that.

2 A. Thanks for listening.

3 LADY SMITH: No, thank you for adding to my learning with
4 what you've contributed to what we're doing here. It's
5 really important.

6 A. Hopefully it makes it a bit better.

7 LADY SMITH: I hope so too.

8 A. I think it will.

9 LADY SMITH: We hold what you've given us in trust, you
10 trust us to make it work for children now and in the
11 future and we will do our very best.

12 A. Thank you.

13 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

14 Please feel free to go and have a restful afternoon,
15 you've earned it.

16 A. Thank you.

17 (The witness withdrew)

18 LADY SMITH: Ms Forbes?

19 MS FORBES: My Lady, we could continue now with some
20 read-ins. I'm not sure if it might need to stop over
21 lunch and start again. But I think Mr Peoples has one
22 to start with.

23 LADY SMITH: Let's do that and do a cogent section before
24 the lunch break, have the lunch break and then come back
25 at 2.00 pm.

1 Thank you.

2 MR PEOPLES: My Lady.

3 LADY SMITH: Mr Peoples.

4 MR PEOPLES: Can I perhaps now start with a read-in from

5 a person who will be referred to today as 'Henry'.

6 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

7 'Henry' (read)

8 MR PEOPLES: His statement is WIT-1-000001186.

9 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

10 MR PEOPLES: 'Henry' was born in 1975, and he tells us about

11 life in care between paragraphs 2 and 12. He was born

12 in Glasgow and grew up in Govan. He has four sisters

13 and a brother, some of whom are no longer with us.

14 He tells us at paragraph 3 that he would describe

15 both his parents as alcoholics, and, having said that,

16 he said he thought life was good and easy as a child and

17 never went without food.

18 But 'Henry' refused to go to his local school. He

19 tells us he went, I think, the first day to primary

20 school, describes it as being kicked out and never went

21 back, and he said he wouldn't go to secondary school

22 either, other than perhaps when he had someone's dinner

23 ticket and sneaked in to have a meal.

24 He tells us in that section that he's not entirely

25 sure when social workers became first involved with the

1 family, but does know that some of his sisters ended up
2 in care, and he knows that he was in some children's
3 homes.

4 I can perhaps take paragraph 8 just to... I think he
5 acknowledges quite freely, and he says:

6 'Because of the number of places I was in I get
7 a bit confused about where I was and when. I have been
8 in Larchgrove, Cardross, Park Lodge Glenrothes,
9 Newfield, St Philip's, and Geilsland and maybe others.'

10 The picture is he has been in a lot of places and
11 perhaps a lot of different types of settings, such as
12 assessment centres, children's homes, and List D
13 schools.

14 He says at paragraph 9 that when he was around
15 nine years of age, which would put him in about 19 --

16 LADY SMITH: 1984?

17 MR PEOPLES: Yes, 1984. That he went to Larchgrove with his
18 brother and was there for two or three weeks for
19 an assessment, and then went to another assessment
20 centre at Cardross. It still seems there was
21 a reluctance to go to school, and indeed he says in
22 neither of the places was he asked to start going to
23 school, although that may be one of the reasons he ended
24 up in those places in the first place.

25 He said he didn't have a problem with Cardross,

1 other than that they removed clothing from him to stop
2 him running away, which he was doing, he said, just to
3 get home, and that when he did run away from the various
4 places he was in, he was regularly picked up by the
5 police, who he says 'as often as not would give me
6 a kicking before taking me back, though I'd just run
7 away again the next day.'

8 So clearly running away for him was really the
9 principal goal at that time, but not, maybe, very
10 successfully.

11 LADY SMITH: Yes.

12 MR PEOPLES: At paragraph 11 he says:

13 'I would say that I went into actual care when I was
14 nine or ten [that's 1984/1985] and was thereafter
15 constantly in various places, including prison, until
16 I was about 37.'

17 The first place he says he remembers is St Philip's
18 in Airdrie, which would be probably a List D School, but
19 it was beginning to change from List D to residential
20 school around 1985, 1986, I think. So that made -- and
21 in his statement he deals with St Philip's between
22 paragraphs 13 to 30. I'll just pick up a few things.
23 Just, he says he thinks he was around ten when he went
24 there, and he tells us about the routine, and I'll not
25 read that at this stage.

1 There's a section headed 'Abuse at St Philip's'
2 which begins at paragraph 25. I'll only pick up one
3 thing that's said there at this stage, just because it's
4 something we've come across before. There was
5 a punishment they used to do which was when you
6 misbehaved they would take you out of the dorm in the
7 middle of the night and make you stand in the corridor
8 for hours and hours.

9 He thinks he was in -- this is at paragraph 29 --
10 St Philip's for around about three years, but for much
11 of the time he was on the streets, as he said,
12 presumably thanks to his running away.

13 Around that time he does have a memory that he may
14 have been, or was in Longriggend for a short period, but
15 doesn't have a great recollection of his time there.

16 He then goes on to deal with his time at Kerelaw,
17 and he was taken there. He says that he was taken to
18 the open school, but as he was driven there, they passed
19 the open school and it said it meant he was going into
20 the locked unit. So I take it from that it means he was
21 in the secure unit at that time. Because that would fit
22 in with, I think, the existence of a separate secure
23 unit possibly around 1983 --

24 LADY SMITH: 1983, yes.

25 MR PEOPLES: -- that would have opened up properly, and

1 would have accommodated both girls and boys. Unlike the
2 other school, which at that time I think was simply
3 units for boys.

4 LADY SMITH: Okay.

5 MR PEOPLES: So that's the broad picture, I think.

6 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

7 MR PEOPLES: Because he does say there were boys and girls,
8 in the next paragraph, and they slept in single, he
9 calls them cells, and I think that would coincide with
10 the sleeping arrangements in the secure unit, that the
11 children would have their own rooms, rather than dorms
12 or something of that nature.

13 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

14 MR PEOPLES: He describes the routine, and I'm not going to
15 go through all of that.

16 But he also has a section at page 8, which is headed
17 'Abuse at Kerelaw', and I can perhaps take some evidence
18 from what he says at paragraph 43. He says:

19 'They had a silent cell up the stairs, which you
20 would be put in as a punishment. If you did something
21 wrong you would be restrained and taken to the cell. It
22 was just a bare silent cell where you would be locked up
23 for several hours and it had no toilet. They took all
24 your clothes off you and also made you spread your legs
25 and carried out an invasive search of your backside.'

1 That's his recollection that there was searching,
2 including this type of search, at that time.

3 Indeed, he says in the following paragraph at 44
4 that on one occasion four young people decided to
5 escape, but it turned into a protest, which involved
6 going to the roof. But they realised that they wouldn't
7 be able to go anywhere, so instead stayed up there to
8 protest about the way they were being treated. They say
9 they stayed on the roof for approximately two hours, but
10 when they eventually came down there was no punishment
11 handed out to us for what we had done.

12 He then tells us that among the kids, this is at
13 paragraph 45:

14 '... were what we called a King and Queen, kids
15 considered favoured by the staff. They got to stay up
16 a lot later at night, but as often as not it was only
17 the Queen who got to stay up. I don't know if anything
18 was going on, but it was very suspicious.'

19 Then he adds:

20 'I do know consensual sex was going on between the
21 boys and girls in Kerelaw.'

22 Then, as regards leaving Kerelaw, he says at
23 paragraph 46:

24 'I remember staff telling me there was no reason to
25 hold me any more and even though I didn't know what

1 I was going to do or where I was going they let me out.'

2 He says:

3 'I must have been under juvenile supervision,
4 because a few months later I got five months. I was
5 supposed to then go back to Kerelaw but went to Kibble.'

6 He tells us about Kibble, and he says he went there
7 shortly after being in Kerelaw, and he was there for
8 about five months.

9 After Kibble, as he tells us on page 10, he went
10 home to live with his mum and dad for around three
11 months before he was arrested. He was fully committed
12 to Longriggend, and then he got a seven-year sentence
13 followed by a six-year sentence, sentences which were
14 served consecutively.

15 Then in the section 'Life after being in care', as
16 he has told us earlier on, at paragraph 50 he says:

17 'Most of my adult life was spent in and out of
18 prison until I was 37.'

19 He says that about 10 years before he stopped
20 getting into trouble, partly he attributed it to smoking
21 weed which helped calm him down. He also says he smoked
22 heroin for years, which started when he was in prison,
23 but he is now clean or off that. He says he takes
24 tablets every day, which means that if he takes opiates
25 of any kind they make him very sick.

1 He says he has never been employed for any length of
2 time. What he goes on to say in relation to impact of
3 his times in care:

4 'I find it difficult to explain the impact that my
5 time in care has had on me. It made me what I am,
6 a violent sociopath. I have been diagnosed with PTSD.
7 It is the same with so many people of my age that
8 I know. We all just moved from one institution to
9 another and it continued into adulthood. It's as if we
10 were all on a conveyor belt.'

11 He says at paragraph 52:

12 'I find it difficult to have relationships with
13 people other than my family and I keep myself to myself.
14 Nobody but my dad ever sat me down to find out why
15 I refused to go to school as a child.'

16 This is this theme again of no one asked the
17 question, there is something that should be
18 investigated, whether it's running away, whether it's
19 not attending school. But he, again, is saying it's
20 something that obviously we heard with the previous
21 witness.

22 LADY SMITH: Meanwhile the child is not being educated,
23 quite apart from anything else.

24 MR PEOPLES: Indeed. Then he tells us the consequence in
25 the same paragraph:

1 'The complete lack of education afforded to me while
2 I was in the various establishments has meant it has
3 always been difficult for me to find work. Any time
4 I look for work I'm asked about my qualifications and
5 I have nothing to offer so don't get the jobs.'

6 Not only not asking the questions and investigating,
7 but the consequence he spells out. What he is saying is
8 obviously not an unfamiliar thing that we've heard in
9 the course of this Inquiry.

10 He says under 'Lessons to be learned', if I could
11 just finish off, he says:

12 'I would like to think that a lot of things have
13 changed and that more things will be disclosed these
14 days. People working in such places should know how to
15 deal with children who are smart arses and not just be
16 kicking the shit out of them.'

17 I suppose it's don't meet violence with violence and
18 perhaps have people who are skilled enough to do things
19 in a different way, however challenging the situation
20 might be.

21 He goes on to say he has no objection to his
22 statement being published, and believes the facts that
23 he stated in his witness statement to be true. He
24 signed his statement on 30 January 2023.

25 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

1 MR PEOPLES: I think that takes us conveniently, probably,
2 to lunchtime.

3 LADY SMITH: We'll stop for the lunch break now.

4 MR PEOPLES: We can resume afterwards. I think there will
5 be more read-ins this afternoon.

6 LADY SMITH: We will sit again at 2 o'clock.

7 Thank you very much.

8 Before I rise, one of the names that has cropped up
9 so far today is **||Q**, and he has the protection
10 of my General Restriction Order, so cannot be identified
11 outside this room.

12 Thank you.

13 (12.58 pm)

14 (The short adjournment)

15 (2.02 pm)

16 LADY SMITH: Ms Forbes.

17 MS FORBES: Good afternoon, my Lady.

18 The next statement is from an applicant who has
19 waived his anonymity. His name is Francis McCourt, and
20 the reference for his statement is WIT-1-000001251.

21 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

22 Francis McCourt (read)

23 MS FORBES: My Lady, Francis was born in 1975.

24 He initially lived with his mother and father and
25 sister. His parents' marriage broke down when he was

1 18 months old, and as a result of that his sister and
2 him were brought up by his grandparents in Glasgow's
3 East End. His mother went away to Germany for a job,
4 and his grandparents said that they would become their
5 legal guardians. And he lived with his grandparents and
6 a number of other family members, including some
7 aunties, together in the one apartment, and he comments
8 that there were three single beds in his bedroom alone.

9 He attended primary school, and remembers his early
10 childhood as being very happy. He said that they were
11 brought up in a loving family and they had a cracking
12 life. However, his grandmother died when she was 45 in
13 1986, and he says he was either nine and a half or
14 ten years old at the time, and it was a horrible time.
15 His grandfather then was left with a lot of children to
16 look after by himself, and was struggling to do that.

17 There were some issues in the family as well, and
18 some infighting, and it was quite a turbulent time and
19 had a major impact on him. He felt that the family was
20 breaking down and things were falling apart. That,
21 Francis says, was the catalyst that led to his behaviour
22 changing and him starting to play truant from school.

23 I think there was a time when his aunties had moved
24 out, but they moved back in. But by the time he was in
25 primary 7 he was dogging school very regularly.

1 He then had a social worker and he was taken to see
2 a child psychologist, but eventually the police began to
3 get called out about him not going to school and he got
4 involved with the children's hearing system. But,
5 Francis comments, there was nothing criminal going on
6 that led to that happening. He said he only attended
7 one hearing before he was placed in care, and that when
8 he was about 11 years old, and the decision was to send
9 him to Larchgrove for assessment.

10 He was taken to Larchgrove on the day of the hearing
11 and he says that there was already a staff member from
12 Larchgrove waiting at the hearing venue, so that he
13 thinks, looking back, the decision to send him to
14 Larchgrove had already been made.

15 He remembers crying when he was being taken away and
16 he was upset about being taken away from his family.

17 He talks about Larchgrove between paragraphs 9 and
18 14, and he says he was about 11 when he went there in
19 1986 and was there for a period of about seven days. He
20 said that he was only there a couple of nights before he
21 jumped over the wall and ran back to his grandfather's
22 house, which was very close to Larchgrove. The police
23 were then called and took him back, and he did the same
24 again.

25 Then it was decided that Larchgrove wasn't working,

1 and a children's hearing was called, and it was decided
2 to place him residentially full time at St Philip's.

3 He talks about St Philip's between paragraphs 15 and
4 58 of his statement. He was, again, still 11 in 1986
5 when he went there, and Francis says he was there for
6 three years, so thinks he would have left around about
7 1989.

8 He has fond memories of the staff at St Philip's,
9 and when it comes to the issue of running away, he said
10 that for the first wee while -- this is at
11 paragraph 45 -- it all worked out fine, but he was
12 trying to figure out how to get back to where his
13 grandfather stayed, and he discovered there were ways to
14 get out which boys called 'the five paths', and he
15 started running away again after a short time at
16 St Philip's.

17 He talks at paragraph 49 about his exposure to crime
18 whilst he was running away ended up with him getting
19 more seriously involved with the police. He was being
20 charged with lots of things, but Francis says he didn't
21 really care, and to him the worst they could do was send
22 him back to the home for the level of criminality he was
23 doing.

24 But going forward in his statement to paragraph 52,
25 he comments that he had a brilliant time at St Philip's,

1 and ultimately in relation to leaving he says at
2 paragraph 54 it was the running away that led to him
3 being moved to another institution. The number of times
4 he ran away increased over time, and he would be glue
5 sniffing, drinking alcohol, or going about with someone
6 who was up to no good. One of the last times he ran
7 away from St Philip's was with a couple of boys and they
8 ended up down in Blackpool. He was away for two weeks
9 at that time and his family were worried sick about him.

10 He went to a children's hearing in Glasgow and it
11 was ultimately decided that St Philip's wasn't the place
12 anymore for him and he would be transferred to Kerelaw.

13 He talks about Kerelaw then from paragraphs 59 to
14 162. He thinks he was in Kerelaw between 1989 and 1991.
15 However, he was actually born in [REDACTED] 1975, which
16 would make him --

17 LADY SMITH: Yes.

18 MS FORBES: -- 14 at the time, and then if that's correct 17
19 when he left. But later he tells us he was in Geilsland
20 when he was 16, so it might be he was a little bit
21 younger when he went.

22 LADY SMITH: Right, okay, thank you.

23 MS FORBES: What Francis tells us is that over the time he
24 was in Kerelaw he was in both the open units and the
25 secure unit, and he spent, he thinks, about a year in

1 the open, a year in the secure, and then a final year in
2 the open side again.

3 He talks about staff at paragraph 64 and says he
4 found all the staff in the secure unit to be good, they
5 were a wee bit more relaxed, and he found their approach
6 a little bit easier when compared to the staff in the
7 open units.

8 At paragraph 65 Francis says that the only teacher
9 that crossed over both sides of Kerelaw was the PT
10 instructor, FSR [REDACTED], and he did sessions with
11 everybody.

12 Going over, from paragraph 66, he names a lot of
13 staff. He says SNR [REDACTED] was a guy called
14 [REDACTED], LEF [REDACTED] was SNR [REDACTED] of
15 Kerelaw whilst he was there, he was a big English guy.
16 EUM [REDACTED] was a residential worker on the open side of
17 Kerelaw, he was known as EUM [REDACTED]. He worked in the
18 Wilson Unit. He had a kind of key worker type of role.
19 He was a local man who came from the surrounding area.

20 He talks about an individual who was a residential
21 worker in the open side of Kerelaw and she worked in
22 Wilson Unit alongside someone called EUM [REDACTED], and
23 then a Mrs KAM [REDACTED] was a senior care worker at Kerelaw,
24 and he says that she was a lovely woman, who was a bit
25 like a matron but was as hard as boots.

1 At paragraph 72 Francis says **GUU** was
2 a care member of staff in Fleming Unit and she was from
3 Ayr. John Muldoon worked in one of the units, he was in
4 on the open side. Francis says:

5 "I am aware he has been prosecuted but he never
6 touched me during my time at Kerelaw.'

7 At paragraph 74 he says:

8 **KBW** was a care worker who worked on the open side
9 in Wilson Unit. I don't remember his surname. He came
10 from Mount Vernon in Glasgow, I would see him in the
11 local shops in my area from time to time, because
12 Mount Vernon was right next to where I came from.

13 **KGH** was a night shift worker who worked in one of
14 the open units I was in. I don't remember his surname
15 but know that he lived locally to Kerelaw. If I'm right
16 about the first unit I was in, he would have worked in
17 Fleming Unit.

18 **FSR** was the PT instructor at Kerelaw, I think
19 he was a more senior member of staff, he worked with
20 boys and girls, both from the open and secure units.
21 Matt George was the art teacher. He worked solely with
22 children in the open units.

23 He then goes on to say, Francis says:

24 'I have heard from the police that he worked at
25 Kerelaw from 1975 until the day it closed. I think he

1 was a more senior member of staff.'

2 At paragraph 79 Francis says:

3 'KBK [REDACTED] was a maths teacher, he worked solely
4 with children from the open units, he was an older
5 chap.'

6 Then he talks about the different make up of
7 children at Kerelaw and says from paragraph 81 onwards:

8 'There was both boys and girls, the age range was
9 about 13 to 16 or 17.'

10 He says he would have been one of the younger
11 children there.

12 He comments that he was in Kerelaw with some
13 unsavoury people and that was particularly the case in
14 the secure unit.

15 At paragraph 82 he says:

16 'I was in there with murderers, child prostitutes,
17 drug dealers and people like that. I was in there with
18 some seriously dangerous characters. In that way, my
19 time there was definitely an eye opener. The secure
20 unit contained a full mix and catalogue of offenders and
21 there was me who was there for dogging school then
22 running away from places I had been placed in care.'

23 He then talks about the routine at Kerelaw. He says
24 he had heard some things about Kerelaw before he went,
25 and he remembers some of the staff at St Philip's saying

1 to him that you will know all about it if you ended up
2 there, and he took from that that Kerelaw was a 'no
3 nonsense kind of place'.

4 Going over to paragraph 86 he talks about the
5 routine and he says that after breakfast you would have
6 your cigarette and then have maybe three classes until
7 lunchtime, before going to the dining hall for lunch.
8 Then another cigarette before having another three
9 classes in the afternoon. And then you would go back to
10 your unit at the end of the school day.

11 He also talks about being taken out on trips if the
12 unit had access to the van and if they weren't taken out
13 they would play football in the grounds or watch
14 television in the units. It was a similar routine to
15 the evenings at St Philip's.

16 Francis says the daily routine was the same on the
17 open and secure sides of Kerelaw, the only difference
18 being that everything was done within the secure unit
19 itself during the day rather than having access to the
20 other parts of Kerelaw for things like school or
21 leisure, and you weren't allowed to go home at the
22 weekends.

23 Going over to paragraph 91, he talks about what
24 would happen in the secure unit in relation to
25 showering. He says that you would go for one shower at

1 a time, and they would lock the boys up in between each
2 boy having their showers. He says:

3 'There was a bit of privacy because there were
4 cubicles, however, there weren't shower curtains and the
5 cubicles were open.'

6 Francis says the staff could come in when they
7 wanted, so they would see you showering:

8 'I remember both male and female staff members
9 coming in to hurry us up. I remember in particular
10 a female staff member called GJU walking in.
11 She came from Ayr, she was notorious for doing that.'

12 He again, at paragraph 97, talks about FSR
13 being the only teacher that worked across both sides.

14 Then at paragraph 99 talks about when you're on the
15 open side of Kerelaw they took you out to places like
16 Largs, but that didn't happen when you were in the
17 secure unit. Although he thinks that during the time he
18 was in the secure unit he was taken on holiday to the
19 Isle of Arran to an outdoor activity centre, where they
20 stayed for a week.

21 He also remembers, paragraph 100, being taken out
22 camping on a couple of occasions on the open side.

23 In relation to visits at paragraph 104 he says that
24 he got more visits whilst he was in the secure unit and
25 he explains that that's because he wouldn't be going

1 home at the weekends, and on the open side he would
2 either be on the run or would have been allowed to go
3 back home during the weekends.

4 He then says that he had multiple children's
5 hearings during his time in Kerelaw, and the only
6 positive thing at a hearing was being moved back into
7 the open side.

8 Francis talks about a time when he was at Kerelaw
9 where, near the end of his time in the secure unit where
10 there was an idea to maybe foster him out to a man and
11 a woman, and when his aunties heard about that they hit
12 the roof and refused to allow him to be fostered.

13 At paragraph 109 Francis comments at the end, the
14 last three sentences:

15 'My family were never the problem when it came to
16 the way that I behaved. It was me being bad not them.
17 I just wanted home to stay with my grandfather.'

18 He talks about an incident after he injured his
19 hand, at paragraph 110, and this involved an incident
20 with FSR that he talks about later, and he says
21 he never received any proper first aid when he injured
22 his hand. All that was done was a tea towel was wrapped
23 around it and he was taken to hospital.

24 He talks then about running away, and says that he
25 didn't ever run away from the secure unit whilst he was

1 there, but he tried to break the bars on his bedroom
2 window but didn't manage to escape.

3 Paragraph 112 Francis says he ran away from the open
4 side of Kerelaw on multiple occasions, not so much
5 during the first few months, but as time went on and
6 more and more things were being done by the staff
7 towards him, he started to run away more often.

8 He says at paragraph 112:

9 'Ultimately, the only reason I was trying to escape
10 was because of what was happening rather than wanting to
11 get home.'

12 At paragraph 114 Francis says the way that the staff
13 at Kerelaw initially dealt with his running away was to
14 make him go to school in slippers, and that's what they
15 did with all the boys who ran away.

16 He says:

17 'I would be walked by staff there and back. When
18 the slippers didn't stop me from running away, they made
19 me walk back and forth to school with staff in a pair of
20 socks. That didn't stop me either. I remember
21 an occasion when I walked all the way from Kerelaw to
22 Glasgow in my socks.'

23 Francis says that he remembers that the last time he
24 ran away from the open side during that first year he
25 was there, he was on the run for two weeks. He ended up

1 in Shettleston Police Station, and a children's hearing
2 followed that. He didn't have any idea he was going to
3 be placed in the secure unit, and when he was told that
4 at the hearing, and that it was purely because of him
5 running away, he says nobody ever asked him why he was
6 running away, and instead he was placed in the secure
7 unit at Kerelaw after a year.

8 Francis says:

9 'I would have told them if someone had turned round
10 to me and asked what was happening.'

11 He then talks about abuse at Kerelaw from
12 paragraphs 117, and I'm just going to read from
13 paragraph 117.

14 'The abuse I suffered happened at different times
15 over the three years I was at Kerelaw. It was all
16 either physical or emotional abuse. I didn't experience
17 anything sexual beyond inappropriate sexual language
18 used by staff. I only suffered abuse in the open side
19 of the place rather than in the secure unit. That was
20 during the first and third years I was there. A lot of
21 it was happening around the same time surrounding the
22 same incidents. I would be getting it off one staff
23 member then another the next day and so on. Although it
24 wasn't happening with individual staff members every
25 week it was happening across those staff members that

1 were abusive all the time.

2 The incidents that I set out in this statement are
3 all the ones that I recall. However, there are others
4 where I don't remember the detail. I remember seeing
5 other residents being assaulted and restrained on
6 multiple occasions by staff members. It was always
7 full-grown adults restraining people and kneeling on
8 their chests. They used to steam right in heavy handed.
9 They used to just swing people about. It was full on to
10 see. You could tell that there wasn't any procedure or
11 training behind the way in which staff would tackle the
12 residents. It was as if they were fighting and
13 "anything went" if the staff member got the upper hand.
14 Looking back, I think a lot of the abuse I witnessed and
15 experienced just came down to whatever sort of mood the
16 staff members were in.

17 FSR [REDACTED] was a PT instructor at Kerelaw. He
18 worked with residents both from the open units and the
19 secure unit. He just wasn't a nice man. I remember on
20 the first day I was at Kerelaw, the boy I was sharing my
21 room with [he names him] said that I needed to watch out
22 for FSR [REDACTED]. He told me that if I ran away,
23 FSR [REDACTED] would give me "a doing for it". I didn't
24 believe [the boy] because up until that point I had
25 never had a finger laid on me by any staff member at any

1 home I had been in. My first impressions of FSR
2 were that he was all right. I remember that the first
3 time he met me he asked me where I was from. I told him
4 that I was from Barlanark. He asked me whether I knew
5 a guy [and named him], I said that I did and then
6 FSR said he used to play amateur football with
7 him. I thought that since I knew someone he knew that
8 might leave me in good standing.

9 After settling into Kerelaw for a while I started
10 planning how I could run away. I familiarised myself
11 with the place and did a bit of enquiring with the other
12 boys about where the nearest train station was and how
13 you could get to Glasgow. I decided to take my chance
14 to run away after a couple of months. I realised that
15 FSR's class would be the easiest one to run away
16 from. During one of his classes I asked to use the
17 toilet then used that as an opportunity to run straight
18 out of the gym hall doors.

19 I was on the run for a couple of weeks before I was
20 caught by the police and taken back to a police station.
21 It was through the night, so a couple of social workers
22 collected me from there and returned me to Kerelaw.
23 When I went back to my room [he names the boy who] was
24 there. He said that I should have listened to him
25 because FSR was now "gunning for me" because

1 I had run away.'

2 Then he states that he didn't believe him at the
3 time:

4 'Later that week I had a run of classes. I think it
5 was art with Matt George, followed by English, then PE
6 with FSR . As I walked into the gym FSR
7 directed the rest of the class to pull a trampoline out
8 of the back cupboards and told me that he wanted a word
9 with me. He told me to go into the area in the shower
10 room and toilets where we got changed. The room was
11 located right next to FSR 's office. I then went
12 into the room before FSR . He shut the door
13 behind him when he entered. There was no one else in
14 the room. FSR then started punching and kicking
15 me all over. It was a barrage of punches and kicks to
16 my head, my face, and my body. I was down on the floor
17 balled up in a foetal position. I was only 13, a wee
18 boy, and he was a man. As he was doing what he was
19 doing he was saying, "Ye wee prick, don't ever run away
20 in my class again". Once he had finished, he said that
21 again before going into the gym to take the class.
22 I entered the gym a little later all red and
23 dishevelled. I wasn't bleeding, but I was certainly
24 roughed up.

25 That was the first time that anything like that had

1 happened to me during my time in care. Looking back, in
2 FSR's world I must have made him look bad by
3 running away from one of his classes. He was in charge
4 of me and I had bolted away. From that day onward my
5 relationship with FSR was tainted. There was
6 always an undercurrent of him not liking me.

7 A few months after the incident after I was
8 assaulted by FSR I ran away again during the
9 night. On that occasion I was returned at 2.00 am and
10 physically assaulted by KGH, who was the night
11 watchman in our unit. The following day I had a PE
12 class with FSR. I knew what was coming because
13 of what had happened the first time round. I remember
14 that I held back as we were all going into his class in
15 the gym hall. I was holding back because I just knew
16 I would get punched again. FSR couldn't contain
17 himself when I walked in. He lunged at me, I about
18 turned on my heel to get out of the door and he punched
19 me twice on the back of my head. I ran to the left
20 towards a nearby annex. I could see a staff member [he
21 names the staff member] in that annex. I ran up to the
22 window she was on the other side of to bang on to raise
23 the alarm. As I did that my hand went right through the
24 window.

25 FSR stopped in his tracks after my hand went

1 through the glass. Blood was gushing from my wrist. He
2 didn't try to help or do any first aid. He didn't do
3 anything at all.'

4 He then says that the woman and some of the other
5 care staff came out to see him. He thinks that an
6 English teacher may have been there as well.

7 He goes on:

8 'A bandage or a tea towel was then put around my
9 hand. I was then taken to Crosshouse Hospital in
10 Kilmarnock by two male staff members.'

11 He then tries to describe or name them.

12 He then says later in that paragraph:

13 'I ended up getting ten stitches all around my
14 wrist, my hand was all bandaged up.'

15 He says that he remembers during his time in
16 hospital the two staff members stopped him from speaking
17 and spoke to the hospital staff on his behalf. They
18 said that he'd banged a window and his hand had gone
19 through. They didn't mention that he had been getting
20 chased by FSR, following getting punched.

21 He then goes on to say from paragraph 126:

22 'When I returned to Kerelaw from the hospital
23 Mrs KAM, who was a senior care worker, asked me
24 what had been going on. I told her that FSR had
25 punched me a couple of times and that I had been trying

1 to get away. Mrs KAM said something like "Just
2 forget about it, it's all right". I didn't report it
3 after that, and nothing further was done.

4 After the incident where I sustained an injury to my
5 wrist I didn't have to go to gym for a while. When
6 I eventually returned to gym, FSR never assaulted
7 me again in the way he did before I injured my wrist.
8 He must have got a fright because he never put a hand on
9 me again. Instead, he would use sports as a pretence to
10 do things. He did that so, if he was ever questioned,
11 he could say it was all just part of sports. That
12 continued throughout the rest of my time at Kerelaw.

13 Those assaults happened in various ways. He would
14 boot me when he was taking the ball off me if we were
15 playing five-a-side football. I remember on one
16 occasion, just before I went into the secure unit in the
17 first year I was at Kerelaw, we were playing cricket up
18 at the big field at the top. It was summer time and it
19 was the school's sports day. I was the batter and,
20 suddenly, I saw FSR walk up to the boy who was
21 supposed to be bowling to take his place. FSR
22 wasn't trying to bowl when he bowled the ball at me. He
23 was trying to hit me with the cricket ball. It wasn't
24 an overarm bowl. It was a full-on pitch and he was
25 going in for the kill. He ended up hitting me on the

1 leg. I threw my bat down and refused to play after he
2 did that.

3 Both FSR and I knew what he was doing. He
4 was doing it in plain sight of all the other staff. He
5 was using the cricket ball to hurt me. It was all put
6 down to being "just sports", FSR taking it
7 seriously and him just being competitive. It wasn't
8 competitive though, because the only reason he was
9 throwing the ball was because I had run away from him
10 during one of his classes.

11 FSR would sometimes get other boys to bully
12 those boys he didn't like. He had his favourites who
13 would do that for him. That would happen during sports.
14 I wasn't athletic but I could run for Scotland.

15 FSR would put the older boys who would do it for
16 him on you during whatever sports you were playing. The
17 older boys would give you a hard time when they were
18 tackling you. They would come in rough when they went
19 into you. It was the same thing as with FSR.
20 They were using sports as a cover to assault you.

21 I didn't have to deal with FSR during the
22 time I was in the secure unit because the gym hall was
23 in the open part of Kerelaw. The staff ordinarily would
24 have to grab hold of the boys and girls when they took
25 them across to the gym. I would refuse to go and kick

1 off instead. In the end, the staff just gave up trying
2 to take me across for gym classes. By the time I was
3 back in the open unit again and returning to
4 FSR's classes, I had grown a bit. I still wasn't
5 being physically assaulted by him in the way he had
6 before I injured my wrist. However, there was still
7 an undercurrent of him not liking me. He would still
8 make snide remarks about me and carried on with all the
9 stuff in sports he was doing before. He'd belittle me
10 and say that I was a waste of space. He'd say that he
11 wouldn't have let me out of the secure unit and if it
12 was down to him he would have thrown away the key.

13 I didn't see FSR assaulting boys in the
14 manner he did to me in the shower room. However, I do
15 remember seeing him hitting other people. I remember
16 seeing him whacking a table tennis paddle right off
17 another boy's head. I can't remember the boy's name,
18 but the incident occurred in the upper part of the gym
19 hall. I can't remember why FSR did what he did.
20 Knowing him, he had probably lost a game of table tennis
21 or the boy had given him some backchat. The guy had
22 a really short fuse. FSR must have done what he
23 did to me to other boys otherwise why would everybody
24 else know that that was what he did when boys ran away?'

25 Then he questions why the boy who warned him would

1 have warned him in the way he did when he first arrived:

2 'FSR [REDACTED] was both physically and verbally abusive
3 to boys in Kerelaw. I know that he will try and claim
4 that the things he was doing, outside of the physical
5 assaults, were all part of playing sport and because he
6 was a sports teacher. I know that he used sports as
7 a cover to hurt and bully boys. The sports were used to
8 get at you.'

9 He then moves on to talk about someone else. In
10 paragraph 134 he says:

11 'KGH [REDACTED] was the night watchman in Fleming Unit. That
12 was the unit I was in over the course of the first year
13 I was at Kerelaw. KGH [REDACTED]'s forte was to target boys who
14 had run away during his shifts after they were returned.
15 You would climb up the stairs, go to your bed, and think
16 everything was "hunky-dory". You would then hear your
17 bedroom door open and KGH [REDACTED] would beat you up.

18 I didn't learn my lesson following being assaulted
19 the first time by FSR [REDACTED], because I ran away again
20 a few months later. On that occasion, I climbed out
21 a unit window at night. I got to Kilwinning train
22 station, found the tracks and followed them towards
23 Glasgow. I knew that if I stayed on the line I would
24 hit Glasgow eventually. I counted down the stations
25 until I was where I wanted to be. It took me ages.

1 I was on the run for a couple of weeks before I was
2 caught, collected by a standby social worker, and
3 returned to Kerelaw. It was 2.00 am by the time I was
4 returned.

5 I was taken up to my room and then I got into my
6 bed. I was in my bed for five minutes thinking
7 everything had settled when KGH opened the door and
8 came in. KGH then threw a quilt over me and punched
9 me all over my body through the quilt whilst holding my
10 head. Although the quilt softened the blows and
11 I wasn't injured, it still hurt. I was still a wee boy
12 being battered by a man.'

13 LADY SMITH: I suppose from KGH's perspective the quilt
14 may also have quietened any noise the boy was making.

15 MS FORBES: Yes.

16 'Whilst he was doing that he was saying "don't run
17 away during night time whilst I am on shift. Got the
18 message?" I ran away on multiple occasions through the
19 night after that and KGH battered me a good ten times
20 in the same way, it was the same routine every time, you
21 just knew what was coming.'

22 He then says the boy he shared his room with would
23 have seen KGH assaulting him each time he came back
24 and that one of the nights he ran away with that boy.
25 They got as far as Kilwinning station and gave up, and

1 when they got back to Kerelaw they went back to the
2 room. At paragraph 137 Francis says:

3 'KGH physically assaulted the two of us together.
4 He did [and he names the boy] first and then he did me.
5 I remember seeing [he names the boy] getting his doing
6 and thinking "oh fuck, I'm next", I knew what was
7 coming.'

8 He then goes on to speak about someone else at
9 paragraph 138:

10 'Matt George was my art teacher on the open side of
11 Kerelaw. He taught me throughout the two years either
12 side of the year I was in the secure unit. At first
13 I thought he was a cool funky kind of guy. He was in
14 a way. I remember him having a big moustache like
15 Tom Selleck from Magnum PI and acting just like you
16 would imagine a quirky art teacher would. I remember
17 that he would go on about doing martial arts and having
18 a black belt and that sort of stuff. There would be
19 about five girls and five boys in Matt George's classes.
20 He was always a creep and "nicey nicey" towards the
21 girls. He never did anything physical towards them,
22 however he used to treat the boys like shit. He used to
23 do all the things he was doing in front of the girls in
24 the class and would be laughing whilst he did that.

25 I remember that Matt George used to make

1 inappropriate comments to me and others in front of the
2 class. I remember him calling me "baldy balls" and
3 saying that I was a virgin. I don't know whether he
4 said those things because of something sexual but, to
5 me, I think he did that because he liked to belittle
6 people. He was trying to embarrass you in front of the
7 girls in the class.

8 About three or four months after arriving at Kerelaw
9 I had an art class with Matt George, I remember that
10 during the class he rubbed his hands together and then
11 slapped me around the back of my head. He then grabbed
12 me by one of my "pressure points" and said that it was
13 good for me. He was grabbing me by the back of my neck
14 and squeezing the back of my shoulders. He was kidding
15 on that it was a massage, but I could tell he was trying
16 to hurt me. It was sore and was done in front of
17 everybody else in the class. He continued to do those
18 things in classes from then on. Things progressed from
19 pressing my pressure points to doing choke holds on me.
20 He would put his arms around my neck and apply the
21 pressure on and off to my throat with his arm. I would
22 be choking and he would be smiling. He would just treat
23 it all as a laugh after he did all those things to me
24 and others. He'd kid on that it was some sort of
25 massage. However, him applying full force to pressure

1 points and choking you was sore. Matt George didn't do
2 those things every week but he did it every now and
3 again. It happened multiple times throughout my time at
4 Kerelaw when I was in the open side, the years either
5 side I was in the secure unit.

6 There were never any other teachers around when
7 Matt George was physical with you. However, he would do
8 what he did in front of other residents. It wasn't just
9 me that Matt George would put in choke holds, grab
10 pressure points, and make inappropriate comments
11 towards. He did that to other people in my classes as
12 well. It sounds terrible but you used to be happy when
13 it happened to other people because it wasn't happening
14 to you. That was selfish, but that was the way that
15 I would think back then. Ultimately, the grabbing of
16 pressure points, the choke holds and the inappropriate
17 comments towards me kind of stopped. I think they
18 stopped because I was getting older and there were
19 younger newer kids who were coming into Kerelaw.

20 There were three occasions when I was taken,
21 alongside other boys and girls, to Matt George's house.
22 I don't know why he took us there. He stayed in a big
23 fancy house in Largs. I can remember his house as plain
24 as day because it stuck in my mind. It was quite
25 somewhere for a boy from the East End of Glasgow to be

1 taken. The first time I was taken to his house I met
2 his wife, but on the second occasion it was just him
3 that was there. I remember Matt George showing us
4 pictures of his daughters and saying that they were at
5 art college in Glasgow at the time. Nothing ever
6 happened to me like what happened in the classrooms when
7 I was in his house. However, I remember waiting in the
8 living room whilst he disappeared with some of the other
9 children. I remember him going off to collect a box
10 from somewhere else. Looking back, it was inappropriate
11 for a member of staff to be taking children back to his
12 house.'

13 He then talks about the secure unit, in
14 paragraph 143, and he says that he did great in the
15 secure unit and didn't run away, and kept his head down.
16 It got to the stage where he was trusted and he was
17 given a video card and allowed to go into Stevenston on
18 his own, to Blockbusters, and that, he says, was all
19 part of him being built up to return to the open side.
20 There was no abuse towards him when he was in the secure
21 unit and he says that the staff members who were abusive
22 to him had no access to him during the time he was in
23 the secure unit, because they were all on the open side.

24 Then he talks about the only person that he could
25 have potentially encountered was FSR but, as he

1 explained before, he would kick off so he wouldn't have
2 to attend his PT classes.

3 So to that regard he didn't -- in that regard he
4 didn't cross Matt George, KGH, or FSR's paths
5 for a year whilst he was there.

6 He did see fights breaking out amongst the residents
7 and saw staff having to intervene in the secure unit,
8 and he saw staff members being assaulted by residents,
9 as well as a staff member being hit with a pool cue.

10 He says that, looking back, being placed in the
11 secure unit was the best thing that could have happened
12 to him. It was a period he didn't have to deal with any
13 abusive staff members and he had quite a happy wee life
14 when he was locked up there. But as soon as he was
15 released back into the open side the abuse from staff
16 members all started again.

17 He then goes on to talk about someone else, at
18 paragraph 147.

19 He says that after the secure unit he was put into
20 Wilson Unit, and that was a mixed-gender unit.

21 EUM was a care worker who worked in that unit.

22 He wasn't bad like Matt George, KGH, or FSR:

23 'The physical abuse I suffered from him was only one
24 time around about the middle of the third year that
25 I was there. It would have been about six months before

1 I left Kerelaw.'

2 There was a small housing scheme located to the back
3 of Wilson Unit. The local lads from the scheme would
4 come up and try to chat up the girls that were in
5 Kerelaw. A lot of the boys didn't like that happening
6 and would jump out the window to chase those boys off.
7 It was all a game of cat and mouse and was all mediocre
8 stuff. One night there was a squad of us who had
9 decided to chase off the boys. One guy had a rolling
10 pin, I had a table leg, and someone else had something
11 else. We all hid what we had under our beds. Around
12 that time, for some strange reason, I had decided to
13 shave my hair down only one side of my head. On one
14 side was jet black hair and on the other it was
15 completely shaven.

16 Somehow, the staff got wind of us hiding our weapons
17 under our beds and took them into the office within the
18 unit.'

19 He says that he, another guy, who he names, and
20 another boy who he can't remember the name of were
21 called in to speak to EUM . There was only
22 EUM and the three of them in the office.

23 He then says:

24 'The weapons were laid out on the desk and
25 EUM started shouting at us. The next thing

1 I knew EUM snapped, picked up either the rolling
2 pin or the table leg and hit me twice round the head
3 with it. He hit me on the side of my head which was
4 shaven. I went down on the floor and started crying.
5 I then got up and ran to the toilet. My head had
6 a massive bump on it, but it wasn't split open. It was
7 bloody though and swelled right up.

8 As soon as EUM did what he did he knew what
9 he had done. He came running into the toilets after
10 me.'

11 He names another member of staff, a female member of
12 staff, who also came in, and then he says:

13 'EUM kept on saying "sorry" to me whilst
14 I was crying and looking at my head in the mirror.
15 EUM was basically kissing my arse because he
16 knew what he had done and was panicking.'

17 He then said that EUM and the female member
18 of staff dampened the bump and put something over it.
19 He says:

20 'I wasn't taken to the hospital and didn't receive
21 any medical treatment following the assault. I think
22 that decision was made because my head wasn't split.
23 The top layer of skin had been scraped off, and it was
24 bloody, but my injury didn't require stitches.

25 Following the incident, EUM phoned my

1 family. I think that was on the day he hit me. He was
2 only doing that to try and cover himself. By this stage
3 my mother had moved back to Scotland and was staying at
4 my grandfather's waiting for a house of her own to be
5 offered to her. She told me later on that EUM
6 told her that there had been an incident where he had
7 hurt me. He didn't tell my mother exactly what he had
8 done so my mother said something like, "Oh, he must have
9 deserved it". I think she took it as me getting given
10 a slap around the back of my head rather than something
11 more serious.

12 The staff in the unit kept me in for about four
13 weeks until the swelling on my head went away and my
14 hair grew back on the shaved side of my head. That
15 meant I was kept in for three weekends in a row.
16 I heard from my mother later on that she was asking why
17 I wasn't being let out during the weekends, but
18 EUM just said it was due to my behaviour. In
19 the end, my mother and her boyfriend [and he names him]
20 was visiting Stevenson and decided to visit me at
21 Kerelaw.'

22 He says he remembers that EUM and the female
23 member of staff were on shift that day and sat there
24 during the visit. He states:

25 'My mother asked me what had happened but I still

1 felt I couldn't tell her what was happening during the
2 visit. The following weekend I was allowed out on leave
3 and went back to my grandfather's house. That was when
4 I told my mother and grandfather exactly what had
5 happened. I told them that I had a massive bump on my
6 head and that was why I had been kept in for three
7 weeks.

8 Every single staff member that worked in Kerelaw
9 would have known that something would have happened if
10 they'd seen me. That goes for the staff who came on
11 after EUM and [the female member of staff's]
12 shift and all the teachers in the school. They would
13 have known because I walked about for a week with
14 a massive egg on the side of my head. It was an obvious
15 injury to the side of my head that had been shaved. It
16 was a good week before the swelling started to go down
17 and my hair started to grow back. It was common
18 knowledge that EUM had hit me across my head
19 with a rolling pin or table leg, because I was going
20 about telling everyone what he had done. Every one of
21 the staff members will have known where that bump came
22 from and not one of them spoke up. Even the staff
23 members I regarded as good people didn't speak up for
24 me. Nobody did anything.

25 Looking back, it's hard for me to think even those

1 people I thought were good people, were good. Not one
2 of them voiced any concern. Any normal person would
3 have said it wasn't right what EUM had done to
4 me. However, that wasn't what happened. They all
5 covered each other's arses. I was the one who was
6 punished through being kept in for three weekends in
7 a row, rather than EUM being investigated.
8 There was no investigation, no suspension, and no
9 reporting to the police. I was kept in so the swelling
10 would resolve itself and nothing was done about
11 EUM.

12 About 11 or 12 years after the incident, when I was
13 about 27 or 28, I met EUM. My life wasn't going
14 well at that time. I used to hang around Paddy's Market
15 when it was located behind the High Court in Glasgow.
16 I was still bad with the drugs and was yet to report
17 EUM to the police. I bumped into EUM
18 and his wife in the market. I walked right up to
19 EUM and asked whether he remembered me. I could
20 see in his face that he knew exactly who I was. The
21 first thing that came out of his mouth was something
22 like, "I do remember you, I have told my wife that
23 shouldn't have happened and I'm really, really sorry".
24 He effectively admitted what he had done there and
25 then.'

1 He then talks about someone else. He says:

2 'KBW was a care worker who worked in Wilson Unit.
3 He never gave me a hard time, but he did to others.
4 Wilson Unit was on the open side of Kerelaw rather than
5 in the secure unit.'

6 He then names a girl, who would have been about 13
7 or 14 when she was in Wilson Unit with him, and he says:

8 'I remember witnessing her being dragged about and
9 battered by KBW and another male staff member in the
10 unit. It all started at the office door in the unit.
11 I don't remember the name of the other staff member.
12 Back then staff didn't have any training in restraint,
13 so they were swinging her all over the place.
14 I remember [her] looking all dishevelled and red after
15 the incident.'

16 As far as he knows there was never any investigation
17 undertaken following that incident and he met her in
18 adult life and talked about it and she told him that
19 she'd asked the staff for a cigarette and it had all
20 kicked off over that.

21 Francis comments:

22 'I think she was cheeky when she was turned down or
23 something like that. That was enough for the staff to
24 decide to manhandle her all over the place.'

25 He then talks about another incident at

1 paragraph 158:

2 'I heard during my time at Kerelaw that there was
3 an incident where a boy had his wrist broken during
4 a time when staff were trying to restrain him. He had
5 been placed in a hold, a lock or something like that.
6 I can't remember which staff member was involved. That
7 happened in my unit during my time there, but I didn't
8 witness it. I think that was in Wilson Unit rather than
9 Fleming Unit.'

10 Then he names the boy he thinks it was.

11 He then goes on to say, from paragraph 159, that he
12 didn't report what Matt George was doing because, he
13 says, he saw it happening to that many other people. He
14 tried to report FSR and he had been told by
15 Mrs KAM to forget about it, and he says that every
16 one of the staff knew what happened with EUM, so
17 there was no point in reporting it. He says, at
18 paragraph 159:

19 'Everybody knew about what had happened and nothing
20 was done about it. I was just told to "shut up"
21 whenever I tried to tell any staff members about the
22 things that happened.'

23 Then he says, at paragraph 160, that he never ever
24 reported what was happening to a social worker, because
25 he classed them the same as the staff in Kerelaw. And

1 when the police were involved during the times he was
2 caught running away, he could tell they weren't
3 interested and never reported anything to them.

4 He comments at the end of paragraph 160:

5 'At the end of the day, I was taken off my family
6 for dogging school and that left me with no trust in
7 anyone.'

8 When he told his grandfather about what was
9 happening at Kerelaw he would remind him that it was
10 a 'bad boys' school' and say that was just what
11 happened. He says that looking back that was the start
12 of him accepting what happened in Kerelaw as the norm,
13 and it wasn't until nearly 30 years later, when he spoke
14 to the police properly, that he started to think that
15 the things that people like FSR, KGH, and
16 Matt George did constituted child abuse.

17 Francis then says that they didn't know what to do
18 with him when it came time for him to be leaving
19 Kerelaw, and ultimately he went to Geilsland when he was
20 about 16 years old. He talks about that from
21 paragraph 163 to 169.

22 He says he was about 16 when he went there in about
23 1991, and he was there for about six months, and he says
24 nothing bad ever happened to him at Geilsland. The
25 staff were good to him, and not one of them laid

1 a finger on him. None of them spoke to him in a bad
2 way, and they were all pleasant people.

3 He says, though, that he only lasted six months in
4 Geilsland before he was kicked out. There was a couple
5 of incidents where he was fighting with other residents.
6 He says it was a stupid thing, and in the end the staff
7 there decided they couldn't allow him to stay any
8 longer, and they asked him to get in touch with his
9 social worker and she then came to visit him and said
10 something like, 'That's you. Your order has been lifted
11 and you can go'. He says there wasn't anything like
12 a children's hearing. And that was basically him free
13 to go, and at the end of his time in care, and he
14 comments at the end of paragraph 171:

15 'As mad as it all started it was just as crazy as it
16 finished.'

17 Then he talks about his life leaving care from
18 paragraph 172 onwards, and he says that he initially
19 went, I think, to stay with his grandfather and his
20 aunties were there, but his uncle had said that he
21 should come down to England where he stayed to get a job
22 and make a new start and he ended up going down there.
23 He had a job in a hairdressers for a day, and then he
24 got a job in a kitchen, and something happened between
25 him and his auntie and he had to leave in relation to

1 something about housework.

2 When he came back to Glasgow then from England, his
3 grandfather refused to let him stay with him. He ended
4 up having to get back in touch with his social worker,
5 and at that time he would have been about 17 and a half
6 or 18, and he was told by her that there was nothing
7 further they could do for him, that he needed to make
8 his own decisions in life. However, she did manage to
9 get him into a hostel and it was nicknamed by those who
10 stayed there 'The Spike', no other hostel would take
11 him.

12 Francis says it was one of the roughest hostels in
13 the city. Not long after he arrived, someone introduced
14 him to heroin. He jumped straight into it and advanced
15 to injecting it intravenously. He then realised after
16 about a week, he woke up feeling ill, and someone told
17 him that he now had a habit. He was naive and didn't
18 even know what a habit was. He then was told that he
19 would have to steal, beg, and borrow to feed it.

20 Francis comments that that was him then for about
21 ten years, and it was ten years of chaos. He went
22 between different hostels in Glasgow. He would get
23 involved in crime, to try and get money to get a fix.
24 Get arrested, get remanded. Go through cold turkey and
25 then get straight back into it again. He said that

1 people started to recognise him and he had to get
2 involved with some serious characters and do other
3 things to get money to feed his habit.

4 He comments that it was very heavy duty stuff he was
5 doing by that stage, and that he was a violent man. By
6 the time he was about 28 he was homeless and he would
7 try and borrow money off his uncles from the pub, and
8 then someone asked him about whether he knew about the
9 homeless addiction team, or HAT team, and he then got
10 involved in that, and when he spoke to the doctor they
11 said if they were serious they would help him get off
12 heroin.

13 At that time, when he sought help, he was using
14 about £70 worth of heroin a day. He was at rock bottom.
15 He says that he needed a lot of methadone to begin with,
16 but he worked through it and got to a place where he was
17 holding himself together, and after about six months he
18 suggested to his doctor reducing the dosage, and after
19 about a year he got to a very low dosage and by that
20 time he was about 30 years old.

21 He ended up getting his own flat and he was trusted
22 enough to take his own methadone for the whole week.

23 Then, finally, he just stopped taking the methadone,
24 and after that it was like a heavy dose of flu, but then
25 he felt brilliant. He never relapsed and he never

1 looked back.

2 Francis said he really started to live the life he
3 should have been living had he not been on heroin from
4 then on. He got a job in demolition, did other wee
5 jobs. He did all the stuff he should have done when he
6 was a younger guy and he was generally just getting his
7 life together. For the first time in his life he felt
8 like a normal man. He had girlfriends and then he met
9 a woman who he had a daughter with. She had two kids of
10 her own, and then they got a house together. He had
11 always thought that he couldn't have kids and it was
12 a surprise when she got pregnant. His daughter was born
13 in 2015.

14 They stayed together for about a year and a half,
15 but then his partner hit the drink and the relationship
16 fell apart. He moved out with his partner's two
17 children and his daughter to a friend's house and did
18 that for about nine months. He then says that he
19 brought up his daughter on his own for about the last
20 six years, at the time of giving this statement, and
21 that she's -- again at the time of giving this
22 statement, she would be older now -- over seven and
23 a half years old, and she's the best thing that has ever
24 happened to him.

25 After she came along he did a 180-degree turn with

1 his life and he has an amazing life now. No one
2 believes him when he says he used to be a heroin addict.

3 In relation to impact, he says that he was left with
4 a lot of trust issues after leaving Kerelaw, and he says
5 at paragraph 187:

6 'You weren't educated in Kerelaw. I could have
7 ended up being a film critic the number of videos they
8 put on during the classes I went to. It was all just
9 watching movies.'

10 He says that nobody picked up on things back then,
11 but he thinks he is dyslexic, and he is self-taught when
12 it comes to reading and writing. He continues to have
13 difficulties with reading and writing and his daughter
14 comes home with homework from primary school and asks
15 him to help her but it all goes over his head and it is
16 a muddle. He feels as though he's letting her down.

17 He doesn't know, he says at paragraph 188, what it
18 was that made him turn to drugs. He thinks it was
19 a case of being in the wrong place at the wrong time and
20 it was just put in front of him. The experience was
21 offered to me, he says, and I impulsively became
22 involved.

23 He has been diagnosed with severe epilepsy and he
24 says at paragraph 189 that he had never suffered
25 a seizure before the assault by EUM, although

1 the doctors haven't been able to pinpoint what causes
2 the seizures, they have said that the blow to his head
3 by EUM could have caused them to start. For
4 years he thought his seizures were all drug related, but
5 now thinks it could be because of what EUM did
6 to him, and he will have to take medication for the rest
7 of his life for epilepsy.

8 At paragraph 192 he says that his sister always said
9 to him that he was a wee toerag and that he was always
10 laughing and smiling before he went into care, but
11 within a matter of months he had turned into somebody
12 else.

13 He comments:

14 'By the time I came out of Kerelaw I was a different
15 guy and didn't return to the way I was before I was in
16 care.'

17 He talks at paragraph 195 about being in contact
18 with Future Pathways, and he has asked them to help him
19 get a bit of counselling.

20 In relation to reporting of abuse, he says that he
21 was 32 when he first started to speak about what
22 happened in Kerelaw. He spoke to a lawyer about the
23 incident with EUM and the rolling pin, but
24 didn't go into the detail of the other incidents. He
25 said that he knew the incident with EUM wasn't

1 right, but all the other stuff he experienced wasn't on
2 his radar as abuse. He viewed it as the norm for places
3 like Kerelaw.

4 He then says, at paragraph 198, that there was
5 a news broadcast and suddenly an image of Matt George
6 and John Muldoon appeared and at the end of the article
7 there was a call from the police for anyone else who had
8 experienced abuse at Kerelaw encouraging them to come
9 forward and he couldn't sleep for three weeks thinking
10 about what he had seen. He then did get in touch with
11 the police and he said within a few days of calling
12 there were officers interviewing him and he gave them
13 information about what took place.

14 Later on in his statement, he talks about lessons to
15 be learned.

16 At paragraph 211 he says:

17 'I shouldn't have experienced what I did. I was
18 taken off my family for dogging school.'

19 At paragraph 213 he states:

20 'The abuse I suffered in Kerelaw was so normal that
21 I didn't question it until I reported what happened to
22 the police last year. I've lived most of my life
23 thinking that it was just the way it was, and I couldn't
24 report it. Everybody who worked there knew what was
25 going on and nobody did anything about it.'

1 He talks about a local lady who worked there
2 whistleblowing, but that was a long time after he left,
3 and he says:

4 'One woman saw what was happening and spoke up.
5 Looking back at my time at Kerelaw, the abuse went on
6 and the lower members of staff were scared to question
7 what the more senior staff were doing. The junior
8 members of staff just couldn't question the hierarchy.
9 I think that was why they didn't say anything.'

10 At paragraph 217 Francis states:

11 'A lot of people say that it must have been hard for
12 the staff at Kerelaw because they were dealing with
13 a bunch of tearaways. However, that didn't mean that
14 they didn't need to put any effort at all when it came
15 to educating us. There were some nice people in
16 Kerelaw. However, they knew what was happening with
17 those staff members who were abusive, and they never
18 spoke up about them. They were good people because they
19 weren't hitting me, but they weren't that good when it
20 came to reporting things.'

21 Then in relation to 'Hopes for the Inquiry', he says
22 at paragraph 219 that he hopes that through the
23 statements that the Inquiry are taking from people
24 everything comes out, and says:

25 'I want Kerelaw to be exposed and the truth really

1 to come out about what happened there. I want it out
2 there, in black and white, what the place really was
3 like.'

4 Then he comments that his daughter and stepchildren
5 are around the age that he was when he was taken off his
6 family and when he was in the places he was in, and it's
7 about doing something to stop what happened to him
8 happening to other children in the future.

9 He has then signed that, and it's dated 16 May 2023.

10 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

11 It's now just after 3 o'clock. I think we should
12 take the short mid-afternoon break now, and then some
13 more read-ins after that?

14 MS FORBES: Yes my Lady.

15 LADY SMITH: Let's do that.

16 Actually before I rise, I will mention some names
17 just now in case people haven't noticed as we've been
18 going through Francis McCourt's statement.

19 A number of names were spoken about, all of whom
20 have the protection of my General Restriction Order.

21 That's FSR, [REDACTED], LEF,
22 EUM, GUU, and Mrs KAM, a man
23 called KGH, KBK, and a man called KBW, and
24 they're not to be identified outside this room.

25 Thank you.

1 (3.04 pm)

2 (A short break)

3 (3.14 pm)

4 LADY SMITH: Ms Forbes.

5 MS FORBES: My Lady, the next statement is from an applicant
6 who is anonymous and is known as 'Hector'.

7 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

8 MS FORBES: The reference for his statement is
9 WIT-1-000000708.

10 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

11 'Hector' (read)

12 MS FORBES: 'Hector' was born in 1971 and he was born in
13 Irvine and brought up in Ayr, and he had a sister. He
14 didn't know his father, and says that in the early days
15 his mum wasn't around a lot, so as a young child his
16 early years were spent round at his auntie and uncle's
17 house, who were like a mother and father to him and the
18 only stability, and their children were like brothers
19 and sisters to him.

20 He used to spend a lot of time, then, at his
21 auntie's, and there was a time when his mum got a house
22 in Ayr when he was five, his sister was two, and he
23 started primary school in Braehead, [REDACTED]

24 [REDACTED]

25 In primary 3 then they moved about half a mile down

1 the road. He says his mother was always away working
2 and he said that she worked as a prostitute, and she
3 would tell them that she was going away for the weekend
4 but would come back two or three weeks later.

5 Life, though, was relatively normal. He says that
6 he would go to school and play in the street, he had
7 lots of cousins, friends, and family. He had a normal
8 childhood up to that point, relatively, and when he was
9 ten he said he started to excel at football and other
10 sports and he was one of the youngest pupils in Scotland
11 to achieve a Gold Thistle Award.

12 Between 10 and 12 he grew very quickly to about six
13 foot two and became physically bigger. He says that
14 after this period his relationship with his mother
15 changed, because she could not physically dominate him
16 in the same way as before and she could no longer give
17 him regular beatings.

18 When he was ten his mum decided to move to Dunoon
19 and then they returned to Ayr the following year, and
20 there was a chain of events leading up to him going into
21 care.

22 The first was a sexual assault on him by a woman who
23 came to visit one of his mum's friends and he said that
24 happened the weekend they moved to Dunoon. He was
25 staying in her spare room that night and he woke up and

1 she was in bed next to him naked, touching and feeling
2 his penis, and she told him that it was their little
3 secret.

4 He woke up in the morning and left and told his mum
5 what had happened when he went home and got a slap on
6 the face, around the ear, and told, I think that might
7 be to stop causing trouble.

8 Shortly after that incident when they'd moved to
9 Dunoon his mum was having a lot of American sailors to
10 the house, and when one of them was in the house in
11 a room with one of his mum's friends, his mum made him
12 sneak into the room to try and steal his wallet, which
13 he did, but he got caught and the guy started smacking
14 him around. His mum started hitting him to pretend it
15 had been him and not her who had been behind it.

16 After he had been beaten for trying to steal the
17 wallet, he ran away trying to get back to Ayr. It was
18 dark and he was tired and he felt asleep on a bench in
19 a bowling green. The police found him and took him back
20 to Greenock and his mum had to come and get him. The
21 police did ask him some questions about why he was
22 running away and he says he told them but they didn't do
23 anything and gave him back to his mum. And his mum told
24 the police that he was making things up, so that he
25 couldn't go back to his aunt's in Ayr.

1 He talks about his mum being a very controlling
2 person, and he says there were issues because of that
3 between them. He would challenge her. 'Hector' says he
4 would have to cook for his little sister and work milk
5 rounds to get money for food. He would bring milk,
6 cornflakes and bread home from when he had done his milk
7 round in the morning. He realised about that time that
8 his mother was never going to be a normal mother.

9 The physical abuse from his mum was constant at
10 a younger age, but after he went through the growth
11 spurt it changed, she couldn't slap, punch or kick him
12 anymore, but that's when she started hitting him with
13 whatever she had to hand. She would batter him with
14 brushes, hoovers, anything she had in her hand because
15 she couldn't physically hit him any more.

16 They ended up moving back to Dunoon because some
17 sailors made a complaint about money being stolen and
18 the military police got involved, and then the local
19 police, and within a day or two they left and went back
20 to Ayr.

21 They stayed in a caravan for a while, and then his
22 mum let him stay with his aunties, but it was difficult
23 to get to school from where his mum was staying at the
24 caravan site.

25 Whilst he was in first year his mum moved to Cumnock

1 and he said that Cumnock was a mining village and he
2 cannot put into words how bad it was. He talked about
3 him being a 'New Romantic' boy who embraced 1980s music,
4 but the people in Cumnock seemed to be all sniffing glue
5 and dressed as Sid Vicious and he didn't fit in and was
6 getting into fights because he was different from
7 everyone else. It was a terrible couple of months.

8 The social work involvement started then and it was
9 around this time that he was put into Coylton and his
10 mother said that she couldn't control him.

11 He wanted to stay with his aunt and uncle, but his
12 mum wouldn't let him stay with them and he ran away
13 again after one of his mum's boyfriends sexually
14 assaulted him, and he hitched a lift to Carlisle and
15 slept on the side of the road and was stopped by the
16 police. Initially they didn't believe that he was only
17 11 at the time, they arrested him and took him to the
18 police station. After that he was taken to a children's
19 home in Newark and then his mother arrived with one of
20 his cousins and she slapped and punched him the whole
21 way back.

22 He says that he thinks they were trying to get him
23 to go to school through the day being in the home, but
24 he was going home to his mother's at the weekend. He
25 was going to Coylton and having to take the bus to go to

1 Cumnock Academy. But he wanted to go to school with all
2 the people he had grown up with, and his cousins in Ayr.

3 He then talks about his time in Coylton from

4 paragraph 20, Secondary Institutions - to be published later

5 Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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14 He says that by then his mum was working
15 in Cumnock, and she would work in the bar and pick guys
16 up and get them to pay for sex. She was always bringing
17 men back to the house late at night. He was 12, but to
18 these guys he looked much older, and he says that he was
19 trying to be the man of the house and was starting to
20 assert himself to protect his little sister, and his mum
21 didn't like that.

22 He then describes a sexual assault that happened,
23 and it was perpetrated by a man his mum brought back to
24 the house. And as a result of that, his mum and her
25 boyfriend got involved, and he told them what had

1 happened and the guy kept saying he was sorry and that
2 there had been a misunderstanding. He was offering his
3 mum money to forget about it, and the next day his
4 mother walked him partially to school and then stopped
5 at a house where he saw the same guy come out and he
6 then says he now knows that she took money.

7 He went back to the home, I think, at Coylton at
8 that point, **Secondary Institutions - to be published later**

9 **Secondary Institutions - to be published later** he
10 was sent back to his mum's as normal and then he ran
11 away.

12 When he ran away that time he got a lift from
13 a truck driver who dropped him off in Carlisle and he
14 slept on the side of the motorway. He was eventually
15 again picked up by the police, who took him to a local
16 children's home. Then after his mum and cousin came to
17 take him back to Coylton, it was about a week or so
18 later, he was on his way to Kerelaw.

19 **Secondary Institutions - to be published later**

20

21

22

23 He says that he started to dig his heels in at
24 school after the sexual assault and simply just wouldn't
25 go back to his mother's or Cumnock Academy and that was

1 for him the catalyst that got him sent to Kerelaw.

2 He was at a children's home in East Ayrshire for
3 a couple of weeks [Secondary Institutions - to be published later]

4 [Secondary Institutions - to be published later]

5 Then, after those two weeks, he was picked up and
6 taken to Kerelaw.

7 He talks about Kerelaw between paragraphs 46 and 86,
8 and he remembers asking the social worker, 'What's
9 Kerelaw and why are you taking me there?' And never
10 received a proper answer.

11 He talks about there being four units at Kerelaw,
12 and tells us about his first impressions from
13 paragraph 47.

14 At paragraph 47 he says:

15 'My first impression was bleak and the first staff
16 member I met inside was a large English guy called
17 [zFSB]. He was a key worker who run the unit I was in
18 but also helped out with the sports with [FSR]. As
19 my time passed in Kerelaw I realised [zFSB] was
20 a horrible man and almost from day one I saw how he
21 bullied, physically abused the other boys including
22 myself. [zFSB] liked to taunt the boys including myself
23 with phrases such as, "Your life has changed now" and,
24 "We'll teach you to be a man". He would continuously
25 say told me, "Things were different now" and that this,

1 "Wasn't in a children's home now". In retrospect
2 I believe that zFSB was a control freak and thrived on
3 the power and physical domination he had over most of
4 the boys in the unit.

5 The first time I ran away from Kerelaw I'd only been
6 there for a few days. zFSB had given me a proper
7 beating in my bedroom. The reason he gave me the
8 beating was a boy from Hurlford who was called [he names
9 him] had jumped on my back in the recreation room.
10 I spun him around and threw him off my back, where he
11 fell and hurt himself off a table. zFSB came in and
12 saw him lying on the floor pretending to cry, saying
13 that I had beat him. zFSB then grabbed me by the back
14 of my hair and started to drag me down the corridor
15 towards the bedrooms. I told zFSB he was hurting me
16 and to let my hair go but he did not. I tried to
17 explain to him that [and he names the boy] had jumped on
18 my back without provocation and I had simply thrown him
19 off my back. zFSB continued to drag me by the hair
20 upstairs to my bedroom, which was at the far end of the
21 right-hand corridor. Once in my room, zFSB closed the
22 door behind and he started raining punches on my body.
23 I fell to the ground and curled up and tried to protect
24 myself and zFSB continued to punch me in my back, legs
25 and head for about another two minutes.

1 zFSB was a big, heavy man, probably about 20-odd
2 stone, a big bulky man. After the beating my legs and
3 back had bruises. He told me that "eventually I would
4 learn the hard way if I did not play by his rules".
5 Later that evening I climbed out of the window and
6 dropped down the two floors. I was followed by two
7 other boys, one I only remember as [and he names him,
8 his nickname] and another boy from Glasgow.'

9 He then says he thinks he was fortunate that he had
10 run away that night with the boy with the nickname. He
11 came with him when he said he was leaving. They had ran
12 towards Ardler plant, avoiding the main roads, going
13 cross country, and they ended up crossing into Irvine
14 Bay, and he had said to the others that they should keep
15 off the road.

16 As they headed towards Irvine they ended up getting
17 stuck in the marshlands, where it was very wet and
18 boggy, and the boy with the nickname couldn't swim and
19 started to panic. They eventually reached the edge of
20 Irvine Harbour, where the water was getting higher and
21 coming up to their chests. He says that as he was
22 a strong swimmer he swam to a rowing boat, loosened the
23 rowing boat from the boat it was tied to, and rowed over
24 to get the boy with the nickname and the other boy.

25 As they were rowing towards the harbour side

1 a police car passed, saw them, and picked them up. He
2 thinks that that whole incident helped cement his
3 friendship with the boy with the nickname.

4 After those events and on their return to Kerelaw he
5 shared a room with that boy, and he says he was
6 a physically dominant boy for his age and he was
7 a skinhead covered in tattoos. And sharing a room with
8 him and having his friendship made his time in Kerelaw
9 somewhat easier, as indirectly being a friend of him
10 meant that a lot of staff and boys did not physically
11 confront him.

12 Teachers and social workers were terrified of him,
13 as everybody knew he had stabbed teachers in school and
14 stabbed his father.

15 'Hector' comments that that was predominantly the
16 kind of kid that was in Kerelaw. They were mostly in
17 there for violent behaviour, either at home, in school,
18 or outside. He says:

19 'I was not like them, I was only sent to Kerelaw for
20 refusing to go to Cumnock Academy in my mind.'

21 He then says:

22 'After we ran away, we were taken to the
23 headmaster's office, I remember his name was
24 John Muldoon. During the meeting he admonished the three
25 of us for running away and bringing police attention to

1 the school. When he was telling us off I sniggered at
2 something he said and he smacked me with the back of his
3 hand twice on the head. Generally, if the boys were put
4 in front of him, there was a fear there. Thereafter,
5 I didn't personally have a lot of interaction with him.'

6 He talks then about them starting to brings girls
7 there after he had been there for a while, and he talks
8 about some of the people who were in there with him. He
9 says the boys were academy school age and up, there were
10 no young kids and that he was one of the youngest there.

11 At paragraph 55 he says:

12 'The other staff I remember were Matt George and
13 FSR . I think most staff rotated around but
14 Matt George, FSR and zFSB were permanent staff.
15 I think they also did sleep ins. Some staff stayed on
16 site, there were staff houses on the ground where zFSB
17 stayed. That's probably why he stands out more for me
18 along with his physical and mental abuse. I did not
19 have as much interaction with FSR and Matt George
20 as I did with zFSB .

21 John Muldoon was the boss, I don't know what his
22 exact job title was, but he seemed to me to be the
23 headmaster. He was always dressed in a suit, the other
24 staff were all very casual. FSR was the PE
25 teacher. He was Scottish, but I think he had an English

1 accent because he had [I think that should say "played"]
2 football in England and had been there for a long time.
3 I remember he said it was ██████████ he had played
4 for. He was five eight or nine and had blondish hair.
5 I also remember he was balding at the front. I can't
6 remember ██████████'s surname. ██████████ was about six two,
7 six three, and looked like "Jabba the Hut". He had
8 short dark curly hair and in his mid 30s I would say.
9 Matt George had long dark hair, a sharp nose and a
10 moustache. He looked like Bono from U2. From my
11 perspective, they were the main abusers towards me.'

12 He talks about the school being within the grounds,
13 and that you would go to your different classes,
14 although he can't remember there being loads of subjects
15 or teachers. Classes were done by unit and not based on
16 ability or age, and he can't recall there being lots of
17 classes like English. He only remembers PE and art.

18 He says, at paragraph 57:

19 'The things that stick out are the four people who
20 I remember. The worst person was ██████████, then
21 Matt George, then ██████████, and then John Muldoon.'

22 He talks about meal times at paragraph 58 and says:

23 'You would eat with your arm over your plate because
24 if you didn't someone would spit in it or steal it.
25 There were punishments for everything, it was just

1 constant, if you didn't eat or didn't help with the
2 washing up et cetera, you would get forfeits.
3 I remember there was like rotas for doing things. If
4 you didn't do them the staff would take away your pocket
5 money.'

6 He says at paragraph 59:

7 'I tended not to stay in the games room, because
8 that's where a lot of the trouble was. I used to get
9 a lot of books from my uncle. If you took stuff in, it
10 generally got stolen or broken. It was that kind of
11 environment. You were constantly on guard.'

12 'Hector' then says, at paragraph 61, that he loved
13 sports in general and for me his body was a temple back
14 them. He was always trying to eat healthily in those
15 days, but at Kerelaw the food options were very limited.

16 He talks about having to do chores on a rota, such
17 as cleaning rooms, Hoovering, cleaning the toilets, and
18 doing the dishes, and they were quite strict.

19 At paragraph 64 he states:

20 'Visitors weren't allowed at Kerelaw and the only
21 time he got to see family or friends was by using pocket
22 money to go and visit them.'

23 At paragraph 65 he says:

24 'In my opinion, the general culture in Kerelaw had
25 a constant underlying threat of violence. Most of the

1 children came from violent backgrounds and in my
2 opinion, due to this, most situations ended up with
3 a physical altercation. Kerelaw is where I learned to
4 fight. I had never really been in a fight until I was
5 in Kerelaw. I had only ever had one or two scuffles as
6 a young boy. In Kerelaw I had to learn to defend
7 myself. I was tall and looked older than I was so
8 I think the boys who didn't know me saw me as a boy
9 around 16 instead of a 12 year-old. As I looked older
10 and was tall, older boys wanted to fight me to prove
11 themselves. I remember every day in Kerelaw it felt
12 like you were only seconds away from some kind of
13 violence, like a punch or a kick from another boy or
14 a member of staff. For me every day was brutal and full
15 of physical and psychological abuse.

16 Discipline in Kerelaw was tribal. If you were in
17 the wrong place at the wrong time and other boys started
18 fighting, for example in the pool room, and even though
19 you had nothing to do with it everyone in the room would
20 be punished. So, simply because you were in the wrong
21 place at the wrong time Kerelaw staff would take away
22 your pocket money or your weekend leave on a whim.'

23 In paragraph 67 he states:

24 'Eventually I realised I was going to be in Kerelaw
25 for a long time and to get through day to day you had to

1 be compliant to an extent. I would fight back and react
2 at times, but ultimately it became the type of life
3 where your daily routine was simply to avoid getting
4 your privileges taken away from you.'

5 He also says that one of the other forms of
6 punishment was the staff taking away smoking privileges
7 for children who were underage, but staff were giving
8 them money to buy cigarettes, and he comments:

9 'This is unthinkable today.'

10 At paragraph 68, 'Hector' says:

11 'During my time in Kerelaw zFSB in my opinion was
12 the worst staff member for this type of collective
13 punishment. zFSB thrived on creating animosity
14 between the boys and he would enjoy turning the majority
15 of the boys onto one kid by blaming them for the
16 punishment given out to all the boys. The result of
17 this is that that boy would be isolated from the rest of
18 the boys and bullied and beaten on occasions. In my
19 opinion, zFSB enjoyed this power and used it as some
20 kind of narcissistic game to create a "conquer and
21 divide" environment. After this type of discipline the
22 said boy or boys would be bullied and beaten until the
23 next time zFSB chose to do a similar thing.

24 For me, I had the misfortune of a couple of swift
25 "backhanders" to the head from Muldoon after I'd run

1 away. He wasn't happy about the fact I'd run away and
2 brought the police there. He didn't like the attention
3 to Kerelaw, so he wasn't happy. He made it clear that
4 if I brought the police there again there would be
5 trouble. He threatened us with the secure unit and
6 being locked down. He hit me and another boy [and he
7 names him] but he didn't hit [and he talks about the boy
8 that he shared a room with who has a nickname]. It was
9 enough to show me he meant business and think twice
10 about it. I didn't run away again but I did not return
11 after a weekend break. The social workers would come
12 and pick me up from my aunt's [and he names her]. From
13 my memory, there was no set rules or discipline, each
14 staff member seemed to have complete autonomy on how
15 they chose to discipline the boys and if anybody
16 complained about being punched or hit, they were always
17 either threatened with further physical violence or the
18 threat of getting locked up in the secure unit.'

19 He then talks about abuse at Kerelaw from
20 paragraph 70:

21 'FSR [REDACTED] was the PE teacher at Kerelaw. His
22 approach was always very physical. If we were playing
23 football, for example, and a boy made a mistake or we
24 had lost a game, he would get angry and aggressive.
25 I remember he said he had been a professional footballer

1 and had played for [REDACTED]. He says his
2 nickname was "FSR [REDACTED]" because of the way he used to
3 tackle. In my opinion he was the most adept at hiding
4 the physical abuse in the form of a tackle or any other
5 contact sport or physical activity. Ultimately it was
6 a man hitting a kid/s'

7 [zFSB] used to help teach rugby. When he did, like
8 FSR [REDACTED], he used rugby and the physical contact
9 within rugby to inflict serious injuries on the boys.
10 When I look back on it and recall the way he was
11 tackling the boys when he was a 20-stone hooker it was
12 staggering for me.

13 [zFSB] was just an animal, you would be walking down
14 to go to the games room and he punched you on the back
15 of the head for no reason. He would just walk past as
16 if nothing had happened. He was an antagonist. He
17 always took things off the kids, such as cigarettes, bus
18 passes or pocket money. He thrived on that, he loved
19 it. He was my main antagonist.

20 FSR [REDACTED] and [zFSB] were taking out their
21 frustrations on boys. If they didn't do what they were
22 saying they took it out by being physical.

23 Matt George the art teacher, tried to sexually
24 assault me. It was an "open secret" that he was
25 a "kiddy fiddler". He had a darkroom in his art

1 classroom where after taking photographs, he would
2 choose individual boys that I now know that he took
3 a liking to and he would make sexual advances whilst
4 under the pretence of teaching the kids to develop
5 photographs in the darkroom.

6 I think it was the second time I was in his
7 classroom, he asked me to come into the darkroom. After
8 about five minutes in the darkroom he came up from
9 behind me, and started groping me and trying to touch my
10 testicle areas and my bum. He was all over me like
11 an octopus with his hands going everywhere. Fortunately
12 I was big enough to push away from him. I managed to
13 get to the door and get out the room. I can remember
14 coming back out and the other boys were all laughing.
15 I vividly remember [he talks about the boy with the
16 nickname] laughing and when I walked towards him [he]
17 asked me "did [he] try to touch you up?" I remember
18 saying no, because I was embarrassed. I sat down.

19 After that incident in the darkroom, while in his
20 classroom, Matt George became very aggressive towards
21 me. He would hit me with dusters, rulers, anything he
22 had in his hand. He would whack me on the back of the
23 head or the ear. He was a terrible man. He was very
24 physical but that wasn't just towards me. It was to
25 others who spurned his advances.

1 The boys laughed about what went on with
2 Matt George. They would warn other boys and say things
3 like, "You better watch him in there". He would brush
4 it off and laugh. Looking back, we accepted it in
5 an ironic sort of way. Obviously it wasn't acceptable,
6 but I think we looked at it like, if he was paying
7 attention to "weaker boys" then we were okay. It was
8 that self-protection thing, because you're focused on
9 yourself.

10 Over a period of time Matt George used to try to
11 lure boys that had rejected him along with other boys by
12 saying that he could take you to his nice, big house in
13 Largs or out on his boat. He also used to select boys
14 to go out on day trips to paint outside or do art
15 projects. The boys who went out on trips tended to be
16 boys who hadn't spurned him. I didn't go out on those
17 trips and I didn't go to his house. I don't know if he
18 even had a big house or a boat but I do remember I used
19 to say that. I think inside I knew myself not to go,
20 because I had already had the experience with my mum's
21 friend and with him in the darkroom. Retrospectively,
22 Matt George was a constant menace in a sexual manner by
23 using his position to try to constantly get boys
24 isolated in his own space.

25 There was a high turnover of boys, coming and going

1 all the time, so there were probably a lot of new
2 victims. But his attention would still turn to the boys
3 who had been there for a while and try to "sweet talk
4 them". So there was a perpetual cycle of violence,
5 hitting you if you rebuffed him. I didn't talk about it
6 with other boys about what he done to them but it was
7 open knowledge.

8 After a period of time in Kerelaw, I learned that
9 when I tried to fight back against the physical and
10 mental abuse they took away your privileges. You were
11 leaving yourself open to more abuse. This was
12 an extremely vicious, violent cycle and for me my main
13 antagonist, zFSB, and being stuck there with him with
14 nowhere to go is something I will never forget.

15 On the physical abuse side, all of the staff didn't
16 hit me or any of the boys when [and he names the
17 particular boy with the nickname] was in the room. He
18 had a presence that put fear into them, he was never
19 openly aggressive. However, my thoughts are that they
20 knew he had committed violent acts in the past and
21 therefore, never wanted to antagonise him.

22 On the mental side, staff would constantly use their
23 inflated power to take away, would take their cigarettes
24 pocket money or bus passes for going home at the weekend
25 if you complained and didn't do what they asked for the

1 slightest reasons. That was a form of control. That
2 form of control and power over children wouldn't be
3 acceptable today.'

4 He then talks about times when he reported abuse and
5 said he got to the stage that no one listened to what he
6 said, and no one believed what he said because of what
7 his mother was saying and he realised, as a 12 year-old
8 child, that it wasn't worth fighting. He remembers
9 telling his auntie and uncle that he was being hit by
10 the staff at Kerelaw, but he thinks they just thought it
11 was part of being in a borstal.

12 He left Kerelaw when he was 15, and he says they let
13 him out in [REDACTED] 1986 because he was going into
14 fourth year. It was decided that he would go back to
15 Dunoon to stay with his mother, and he says that lasted
16 for about a month before he realised that she was up to
17 her old tricks. And then he decided he wouldn't be
18 staying there with her, and left and went to his
19 auntie's in Ayr, and this time his mother didn't try to
20 stop him or intervene with social work.

21 He talks about life after care between paragraphs 80
22 and 92. He says he got a job as a trainee chef at
23 a hotel in Cheshire, and his friend's parents allowed
24 him to stay with them to give him a chance in life. And
25 after leaving here and leaving his mother in Dunoon when

1 he was 16, he didn't come back to Scotland until 2007.
2 He said he didn't want to have any relationship with his
3 mother, however he kept in touch with her so that
4 he could keep a relationship going with his sister.

5 He qualified as a flambé chef, but chose not to
6 pursue that career and moved to Bristol in 1989 and got
7 a job with a newspaper, and that was the start of a long
8 career in the media world and he went on to work for
9 a variety of newspapers, and now has his own digital
10 marketing consultancy.

11 He met his wife in the early 2000s when he was
12 living in France, and he got married in 2004. They had
13 a son in 2005, but they divorced in 2008 and he met his
14 second wife in 2017, and they got married in late 2021.

15 After he left Scotland 'Hector' says he didn't speak
16 much with his mother and had no relationship with her.
17 However, when he came back to Scotland, his sister and
18 cousin convinced him that his son should have
19 a relationship with his mother, and when he started
20 school he would drop him every day at his mother's house
21 but would never go inside.

22 In relation to impact, he talks about that between
23 paragraphs 93 and 108. He states that, paragraph 93,
24 he says:

25 'I have learned that my time in care had a larger

1 impact on my life than I believed since I opened up and
2 spoke about my experiences with my family, which in turn
3 led me to psychiatrists, the police and the Inquiry ...
4 unlike a lot of kids at Kerelaw I was fortunate to have
5 the unwavering support [and he names his auntie and
6 uncle], of his auntie and uncle.'

7 And fortunately for him, his family has been very
8 supportive. He says that he can't complain about the
9 life he's had. He's lived and travelled around the
10 world, and comments at paragraph 94 that:

11 'I think working for newspapers meant I gravitated
12 towards truth. In those days when I was younger
13 newspapers were pillars of truth.'

14 And at paragraph 96 he says:

15 'This emotional self-protection thing stuck with me
16 my whole life. I don't think it's a good trait in
17 a human being, however this is the result and the impact
18 of my four years in care at Kerelaw and Coylton.

19 For me the legacy of Kerelaw was one of
20 embarrassment and shame because if people knew you had
21 been in a borstal, they just assumed you had done
22 something bad.

23 I think I've always felt it was an injustice that
24 I essentially went to jail for three years for refusing
25 to go to school and stay with my mother, even though

1 I had reported sexual, physical and mental abuse to
2 social work. There were options there for social work,
3 they could have chosen to let me stay with my auntie and
4 uncle, and they knew that support structure was there.
5 I served time for nothing. That's why I think social
6 work failed me massively, as much as my mother did when
7 I was a child. My childhood was taken away from me by
8 social work and my mother.

9 The impact on my education was hugely significant.
10 Whilst in Kerelaw I do not recall doing any exams or
11 preparing for any type of exams. In Kerelaw there was
12 no structure to the education. Once I left Kerelaw,
13 I had to work very hard to give myself a proper
14 education as a young adult. For me it was never that
15 I didn't want to go to school or be educated. It was
16 simply because trying to run away from the mental,
17 physical and sexual abuse that was happening in my home.
18 I think a lot of my anger towards social work and the
19 establishment is because they took away a really
20 important part of my life.

21 I felt massively let down by the system. I was
22 lucky that I had my own personal determination to make
23 something of my life. A lot of other people crumbled.
24 I can remember going for a job in Bristol, I lied and
25 said that I had six O-levels. They checked my school

1 background. I was ashamed. I obviously didn't get the
2 job. It had a massive impact on me. I realised this
3 was going to affect me for the rest of my life unless
4 I changed it. The injustices put on me by my time at
5 Kerelaw were never going to get in the way of my dreams
6 and what I wanted to achieve. The shame of losing that
7 job I carried along with the shame of being in Kerelaw
8 for all of my adult life, but it drove me to get
9 educated, have a degree, because I never wanted to
10 experience feeling that small in front of someone again,
11 and I never wanted to be a liar because integrity is
12 such an important thing for me as an adult. I think
13 that was when I closed up more. This experience made me
14 realise that my dreams and what I wanted to do could not
15 be built by trying to hide my past.'

16 I don't know if that should say 'I think that was
17 when I opened up more'.

18 LADY SMITH: I think it probably does intend to say that,
19 yes.

20 MS FORBES: He goes on to say that his experiences in
21 Kerelaw have not impacted on him starting relationships,
22 however almost all of his close friends, and many of his
23 close friends now, still don't know about his
24 experiences at Kerelaw as a child.

25 At paragraph 108 'Hector' states:

1 'This Inquiry should not just focus on the abuse,
2 physical, sexual and mental, it should also focus deeply
3 on social work, an organisation that in my opinion is
4 not fit for purpose, and is allowed powers which reach
5 beyond the legal limits of a court and they are allowed
6 to act with impunity, and because of these reasons this
7 is why ongoing abuse in social work run homes like
8 Kerelaw happened 35 years ago and continues to happen
9 today. If this review really wants to stop children
10 being abused in care at the hands of social work, then
11 they must seriously consider disbanding social work as
12 it stands as an organisation for the impunity it acts
13 with, both when I was a child, and as an adult, should
14 not be allowed to supersede the law of the land and for
15 me because they have this power to destroy the lives of
16 family and children is why we are having this type of
17 Public Inquiry. You have to cut out the badness at the
18 root.'

19 And then he goes on to talk about lessons to be
20 learned, and says that:

21 'The systems have to be more robust ...'

22 And there has to be more training and development
23 and more scrutiny in terms of oversight.

24 And at paragraph 113 he says:

25 'For me, my mother and the social work were the

1 catalysts for everything that happened in my life.'

2 And he then makes the usual declaration at
3 paragraph 115, and has signed it, and it's dated
4 2 June -- it says there 2021.

5 LADY SMITH: Yes, I see that.

6 MS FORBES: My Lady, I don't think another one would finish
7 within the time.

8 LADY SMITH: No, I think we should stop there for today.

9 Plans for tomorrow, Ms Forbes?

10 MS FORBES: My Lady, there is a witness who was rescheduled
11 from last week due to illness tomorrow at 11.45.

12 LADY SMITH: Good.

13 MS FORBES: But I think in between, the plan is for
14 read-ins.

15 LADY SMITH: Before and after we will do some read-ins.

16 Well, thank you very much for that.

17 Thank you.

18 (3.55 pm)

19 (The Inquiry adjourned until 10.00 am the following day)

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