

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

HCA [REDACTED]

Support person present: Yes

1. My full name is HCA [REDACTED] and that was my name at birth and while in care. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1963. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before care

2. I was born in Glasgow and lived with family. My mum's name was [REDACTED], and my dad was [REDACTED]. The oldest of my siblings was my sister, [REDACTED], then there was me and then my sister, [REDACTED].
3. We moved to Airdrie in 1968 and my dad died in 1969. My youngest brother, [REDACTED], came along after my dad died.
4. I started St Serf's Primary School in Airdrie but I didn't go all the time. I turned into a bit of a brat after my dad died. I was always running away from school. I wasn't listening to anybody or doing what I was told.
5. When I was about seven years old, I saw a child psychologist because I wasn't going to school. They were trying to figure out what was wrong with me. I only saw him weekly for a couple of weeks or a month, and then it stopped because I didn't want to see him again.

6. I then went in front of a Children's Panel when I was about seven years old, because I wasn't going to school. I went with my mother. There was a social worker there as well but I can't remember his name.
7. It was decided at the panel that I would be placed in care. After the panel, the social worker took me to a place in the middle of nowhere. He might have explained what was happening to me, but I didn't really listen to anyone in those days. My mum came with us too.

St Ninian's Children's Home, Gartmore

8. I was about seven years old when I arrived at St Ninian's, near Aberfoyle. I remember it looked like a big castle when we drove up to it. I remember going in and meeting one of the Christian Brothers, who ran the place.
9. SNR [REDACTED], who was called Brother MJJ [REDACTED] met us. He was wearing a black cloak with a collar, which all the Brothers wore. I remember getting my dinner and then my mum left.
10. Brother MJJ [REDACTED] was too friendly. After my mum left, he was asking me to go and sit on his knee. I didn't want to and said I wouldn't because I hardly knew him.
11. Another Brother then showed me around the place that evening. I was shown the grounds, the classrooms and the dormitories.
12. There was a games room on the ground floor, where you could play table tennis and other things. The dormitories were on the first floor where all the boys slept. There was a room in the basement where all the shoes, clothes and personal possessions were kept.

13. The home was for only boys. I think there were about a hundred boys in there. The boys were mostly about my age, but there were a few younger and a few a bit older. I think the oldest there was about fourteen years old.
14. The boys were split into groups within the home which were called cottages. The groups were called St Patrick's, St Andrew's, and I think the third one was called De La Salle. I was in St Patrick's cottage. They were called cottages but they were really just groups, but were all still in the same building. The boys were separated into these three groups for when we played games and sports.
15. I shared a dormitory with about five other boys when I first got there. It was a big room with bay windows and six beds in it. I moved about while I was in there, and the other dormitory I was in had about three beds in it.
16. The Brothers also slept in the main building. Their bedrooms were along from the dormitories, on the same floor.
17. There were about ten Brothers who worked and stayed at St Ninian's.

Routine at St Ninian's

18. One of the Brothers would come into the dormitory to wake us up. We would get up and go to the bathrooms, which were across from the dormitories, to brush our teeth and get washed. The Brother would supervise us doing that.
19. Then we went to the chapel, which was in the building, to do our prayers. One of the Brothers led the prayers. We didn't have a choice about it. We had to go.
20. We then went to the dining room to have our breakfast. After breakfast. We had some time to go back to the dormitory to make our beds and clean our sleeping space.

21. Then we went to school, which was in a building straight across the road from the main building. The school was just for the St Ninian's boys.
22. We stopped for lunch and went to the dining room, and then had classes in the afternoon again.
23. After school, we had some free time before tea time to do what we wanted.
24. We then had tea at about 5 pm.

Mealtimes / Food

25. All the boys ate in the dining room at the same time. There were cooks who came in to make the food but we didn't see much of them.
26. I don't remember much about the food, but I do remember we had mince and tatties all the time. I felt like I had it coming out of my ears.
27. I think you would get punched if you didn't eat your dinner. They also wouldn't let you have any sweets from the tuck shop if you didn't eat.
28. There was a tuck shop that you could get sweets from once a week. You never got money, but you got told a certain value and you could get so many sweets worth that amount from the tuck shop once a week.

Washing / bathing

29. We had showers, usually after playing football.
30. Different cottages had showers on a different day. You would just be told to go and get a shower on a certain day, and you'd go and do it.

31. It was a big communal room with showers in it. There would be a member of staff, either a Brother or a civilian member of staff who would stand and watch while you showered. There was no privacy.
32. I think you could go and get a shower yourself if you wanted to as well. You just had to ask and you'd be allowed to.

Clothing / uniform

33. I went in to the home wearing my own clothes, but then the home gave us clothes. I got new shoes and new clothes.
34. We had shorts to wear as part of our school uniform during the week. At the weekends, we wore casual clothes, which were jeans or corduroys. The home provided these clothes too.
35. You were given a number for your clothes so you knew which ones were yours when they came back from the laundry. They would be bundled together for you in a parcel with your number on it after being washed, and you had to go down to the laundry room and pick it up.

School

36. We went to school, which was just for the boys in the home, from Monday to Friday.
37. We had different classrooms for different age groups. I think I moved about classes for different subjects.
38. The Brothers taught some of the classes. They were really crabbit and impatient. They would hit you in class for really little things.

39. There were also guys, who weren't priests, who came from outside to teach in the school. They didn't teach us much, and they didn't teach without giving our punches and slaps.
40. There was a teacher called Mr McGill, who came from outside the home to teach.
41. I started secondary school when I was about twelve years old. I went to St Margaret's High School but I couldn't do the work that they gave the class, because I had learned nothing in St Ninian's. I lasted about a week at St Margaret's.

Leisure time

42. We had some free time after school and before tea time where we could play outside or inside. There was a big yard so we used to be able to play football, or just sit about the grass.
43. We could go back into the building and do other things within our own groups. We could play snooker, table tennis, watch TV or listen to the jukebox. It wasn't always easy to get near the jukebox because people would always be on it.
44. There was also a space to build model aeroplanes.
45. There was also staff around to supervise the boys. Sometimes it would be a brother and sometimes it would be the civilian staff.
46. We had a man called GXC, who was a civilian member of staff, who would usually supervise our group. He was alright at times, but he could be a bit crabbit. He would hit you on the back of your legs if he thought you were misbehaving.
47. We had to go the chapel on a Sunday, and then there was spare time where we could do what we wanted and play games.

Chores

48. Sometimes, you would be in class and a Brother would come and ask if you wanted to get out of class to do a task, which was sometimes gardening. I got out of class a few times to help with gardening.
49. There was a civilian worker called Jimmy McKinstry, who was a handy man and did the gardening. I sometimes helped him with the gardening, and this would usually be during class time when everyone else was at school.

Trips and holidays

50. On the weekends that I did not go home, we would be taken for walks in Aberfoyle on a Saturday. One of the Brothers would drive us in a bus. We would go for a long walk with one Brother at the front and one behind the boys so that they could keep an eye on you.
51. We would also go to Ayr for a break during the summer holidays. It would be like a summer holiday, and we would stay there for a week. I think most of the boys went together for that.
52. We would spend most of the holiday on the beach. We would each get some money so we could buy a treat, and then we would just entertain ourselves.

Birthdays and Christmas

53. I usually went home for Christmas time, but I did spend a couple of Christmases at St Ninian's.
54. The home would have a function on over Christmas and they would get a magician to come in and a DJ would play music. A guy came in to play a guitar once as well.
55. I can't remember if we got a Christmas dinner or any presents.

56. I remember being in St Ninian's over my birthday, but they didn't do anything to celebrate birthdays.

Healthcare

57. There was a matron in the home, who you went to see if you were ill. Boys went to her if they had ear aches, sore throats or cuts, and she would check it and give you something for it.
58. I went to see her after begin hit by a cricket bat on my back by a Brother called Brother Ben. He took me and told the matron that I had fallen. I told her what had really happened, but she didn't say anything. She just looked at it, saw it was bruised and just said it would be fine in a couple of days. She didn't give me anything for it.
59. The matron never really asked any questions or said anything, even when you did tell her that you had been hit by a member of staff. She just patched you up and sent you away.
60. I got sunburn once when I was there, and it was pretty bad. The matron gave me cream but I never got taken to a doctor. I never saw a doctor while I was in there.
61. I did go and see a dentist in Stirling. That was the only time I went to see someone and it was just for a general check-up.

Family contact

62. You got to go out at the weekends to go on home on leave. I wasn't allowed out for the first three weekends, but after that, as long as I wasn't bad, I got to go home.
63. You got points through the week for being good or points taken off for being bad. If you made enough points through the week, then you got to go home. You would get given money to go home.

64. I was stopped from going home at the weekends quite a lot for being bad.
65. When I did get leave to go home, a school bus would take you into Glasgow Buchanan Street Bus Station, and then I would go to the station and get a train to Airdrie. Another boy, zGKH would come with me because he lived in Airdrie too.
66. My mum was still living in Airdrie with my siblings. Eventually they went into homes as well. went into St Euphrasia's in Glasgow, and she had a bad time in there as well. Years later, my brother ended up in St Joseph's as well as St Phillips, I think.
67. Whenever, I was allowed to go home for the first few weekends, I returned to St Ninian's when I was supposed to. They told me I would be allowed to go home every weekend.
68. Then, they stopped me going home a few weekends because they thought I was behaving badly and didn't have enough points to be allowed to go home.
69. After that, whenever I was allowed to go home for the weekend, I would run away and not return back to the home after the weekend.
70. The police would be sent to find me. They always found me and then contact the home, and somebody would come and pick me up.

Running away

71. I ran away from St Ninian's a few times as well and got as far as Stirling. The first time, I just came back because I never knew what way to go.
72. Other times I ran away, I would always get caught by the police. They would call the home and then somebody would come from the home to pick me up. It was usually one of the civilian teachers who would come to pick me up.

73. I would get punished when I got back by getting the belt, and would also not be allowed to go home the following few weekends.
74. I remember appearing before a children's panel a few times and they would tell me that I would get sent to a place where I would be locked up if I didn't stop running away.
75. I never had any visits from my family or social work when I was in the home.

Discipline and punishment

76. The teachers in class, both civilian and Brothers, gave you marks through the week if you were good. You also got marks taken off if you were bad. Most of this was done in class, but you could also get marks given or taken out in the home. If you got into a fight, for instance, you would get marks taken off.
77. Then, at the weekends, you would be allowed to go out if you reached a certain number. I think it was sixty or seventy marks you had to get. If you didn't reach that number, you would be punished by not being allowed out at the weekend.
78. I can't really remember who or how marks were recorded, but it was the teachers and the Brothers who gave or took away your marks.

Abuse at St Ninian's

79. The Brothers hit the boys in class for little things like talking or getting an answer wrong. They would hit you with a ruler, or hit you on the head with your knuckles. This happened to me and I saw it happen to other boys.
80. One time, I got into a fight with another boy, outside in the grounds during a dinner break. One of the Brothers, who was called Brother Ben, saw the fight, came out and smashed me in the back with a cricket bat.

81. I got checked by the matron afterwards. Brother Ben took me to go and see her. She had a look and saw that I had bruising, but that was it. I never got anything for it.
82. I think it was Brother Ben also used to electrocute us, but I might be getting mixed up with names and another school. There was a box thing that was attached to metal bars, and if you were bad in class, he would tell you to hold the bars, and when we did, it would electrocute us. It was a science thing that was being used in the wrong way. I think it was being used as a punishment.
83. I was told to hold the bars in class a few times. I think it was for not listening. The Brother would tell me to hold the bars and I would get electrocuted. I was also told that I wasn't getting allowed out at the weekend as a punishment. I saw other boys getting electrocuted as well.
84. There was a civilian member of staff called Mr GXC who used to supervise the group that I was in, when we did activities after school. He would hit you on the back of the legs with something if he thought you were being bad. We would be wearing shorts so we would always have marks on the back of our legs from it.
85. I don't remember the names of many of the brothers and staff but they did used to batter us a lot.
86. Whenever I was due to go home for leave, Brother MJJ, who was SNR SNR in there, would be the one to tell you if you were going home or not. He would call you into his room or office and get you to sit on his knee. He would have an erection under his gown. I was always trying to pull away from him and he would try to hold you there as you were wriggling to get away. This happened quite a lot.
87. The boys never spoke about it, but it was openly known that everyone tried to avoid sitting on his knee, so it maybe happened to other people.

88. Jimmy McKinstry was the handyman and gardener. Everyone thought he was a good guy, because he was always bringing things in for the boys from his holidays or just wee treats.
89. When I started doing the gardening with him, he got me into the garden shed and he started cuddling me. I thought it was ok because he was like a father figure.
90. After cuddling for a while and carrying on, he pulled his penis out and started playing with himself. He started rubbing me on the bottom with it. I struggled to get away from him, and he was telling me it was ok and not to tell anybody. He was saying that he would make sure I got out at the weekends and making all these promises.
91. This started when I was about eight years old. It started within the first year that I was in the home. He got me three times in the shed and did that. Then he also got me down near the gate and did it two times there as well. It all happened within a year, then I kept out of his way.
92. He told me not to tell anybody or I would get put into a worse home or a place that was like a jail and I wouldn't get out. He would scare me like that. I didn't tell anybody, but I started running away regularly after that and would stay away from him.
93. The first time I ran away and got brought home, three members of staff were involved in giving me the belt as a punishment. They were the science teacher, Mr McDougall, would hold down one arm, and Mr McKenna [REDACTED] who was a big, Polish, man would hold my other arm. They'd have me bent over a chair and hold my arms down on the table. Then the third member of staff would hit me over the bum with a belt.
94. I don't know how many times I got belted. It was over my shorts, on my bum, but would hit my bare legs as well.
95. Another time I ran away, and tried to hitch a lift to Airdrie, but a police man stopped and caught me. He took me to the police station and a member of staff came to pick me up. I got belted when I got back to the home for that, as well.

Bed wetting

96. I never wet the bed, but some boys did. The brothers and staff used to come into the dormitories at night and touch the boys up under the sheet and asking if they needed a pee.
97. They would come in and touch me under the sheets. Sometimes I would wake up, they would ask if I needed a pee, and I would say no. One of the members of staff was McKinsty as he was sometimes the watchman at night, and he would go round and do that as well.
98. If someone did wet the bed, the staff would bring you down for it and try and embarrass you by making it obvious to all the other boys. They would hang the sheets and mattress on the verandah outside the dormitory so that everybody who was passing would see and know who had wet the bed. Then the bed wetters would be made fun off by the other children.
99. You could get showered after you'd wet the bed. The bedding would also be changed, but until it was, they got paper sheets, which smelled of vinegar.

Leaving St Ninian's

100. I was running away a lot, so I was appearing before panels. The panel gave me a chance to start going to an outside school again. I agreed to try and went to St Margaret's High School when I was about twelve years old. It was only up the road from my mum's house so I would walk there. I went for a week, but couldn't handle the work because I hadn't learned properly in St Ninians.
101. I stopped going to school after about a week and appeared before a panel again. My mum was there, and there was also a woman social worker there, called Mrs Wilkinson. That was the first time I had seen her. There were different social workers all the time.

102. I can't remember what was said at the panel, but they explained to me afterwards that they decided that I should get sent to an approved school, and it was because they wanted me to go to school.
103. I left St Ninian's when I was about twelve years old.

St Phillips Approved School, Airdrie

104. My mum and the social worker took me to St Phillips Approved School when I was about twelve years old and I was in there for about a year. It was just up the road from my house.
105. Mr Kane ran St Phillip's and he was in charge over all. Mr ^{HCB} was ^{SNR} ^{SNR}.
106. It was an approved school for boys, but it wasn't very big. There were about thirty boys in it. Most of them were my age and some were a bit older. We were all between the ages of twelve and fourteen years old.
107. I was given clothes to wear when I went in and had my own locker to keep my clothes in. They gave me jeans and shoes and things to wear. It wasn't a uniform.
108. The place was like a normal scheme with a few detached houses, which we called cottages, in one area. One part was still getting built when I got there.
109. There were about fifteen boys in the cottage that I was in, all about the same age. I moved into another cottage after a while, which was a unit for ten boys. I got moved into that for good behaviour and there was a bit more freedom in that one.
110. There were staff that were in charge of and ran the separate cottages. They were mixed male and female staff.

- 111. I remember a man called either Mr McKay or McKenzie, who I got on well with. I can't remember the name of the other staff.
- 112. There was a dining area and a kitchen in the cottages. We got our meals made for us. I don't remember if the food was good.
- 113. We had access to the kitchen and you could make yourself a cup of tea and some toast if you wanted it.
- 114. It wasn't a religious place.

Washing/bathing

- 115. There were two showers in the shower room and you could have a shower whenever you wanted to.

Schooling

- 116. There was a school in St Philips. A new building was built and those became our dormitories, and the old dormitories became the classrooms.
- 117. It was an ok school, and I was starting to pick up a bit in class. It was a small class so the teacher had more time with us so I was learning there.
- 118. You would be told to stand outside the class in the corridor if you misbehaved. Then you would be asked to come back in for a while. There was no physical punishment.

Leisure time

- 119. We had time after school to do what we wanted. I used to get fishing rods, which we had in school and go fishing in the burn near the school, within the grounds.

120. I'd climb trees and stuff within the grounds.
121. I remember taking a car motor apart and then building it back up again. I was interested in that.
122. There was a lot more freedom in St Philips than in other places.

Weekends and family contact

123. I was getting home most weekends, and I started drinking in local bars when I was home at the weekends.
124. I had also started sniffing glue, which I started in school at St Philip's. I stole it from the cupboards in class and was using it outside the school. Nobody introduced me to it; I just discovered it myself and I enjoyed it. I never got caught.
125. Then I started sniffing glue when I was home at the weekends, as well as drinking. Lots of boys did it around where I lived. This then led on to me smoking cannabis at the weekends as well.
126. The staff at St Philips knew I was drinking but I was doing it at the weekends so they couldn't stop me.

Abuse at St Philips

127. One of the punishments for misbehaving was to deny you a home visit at the weekend. That never worked with me. I would just leave and go home anyway because I only lived a quarter of a mile away. There were no fences around the home and we weren't locked in so I would just leave. They staff didn't call the police on you if you did.
128. I ran away with one of the boys one week. We broke into a bowling green and we threw red paint about in it. I got some red paint on my trousers, which got me caught.

129. I was supposed to get the belt for it, but instead Mr ^{HCB} got angry with me and threw me against a wall. He threw me so hard that I burst a hole in the wall.
130. The back of my head and back hit the wall. There were no visible injuries but I had a sore back for a while after that.

Bed wetting

131. You could get up to use the toilet at night if you wanted to, but I never did because I was a deep sleeper and didn't get up in the night.
132. I wet the bed when I first went in there. They'd take the wet bedding off the bed and hang it over me while I stood there. They said embarrassing me would make me stop doing it.
133. I think I wet the bed twice in there and then stopped.

Leaving St Phillips

134. I was getting into trouble because of glue sniffing and drinking. I was also breaking into places to get money to buy alcohol and glue.
135. I was caught a few times when I broke into places. I ended up in front of a children's panel again. The social worker, who was a big, tall man called Mr Anderson, was there. My mum was there too. The panel decided to move me to St Joseph's in Tranent.

St Joseph's List D School, Tranent

136. I was about thirteen years old when I went into St Joseph's, and I was there for about a year.

137. It was a religious place, ran by Christian Brothers. I recognised Brother Ben, Brother Murphy and Mr **GZI** who had also been at St Ninians. I had gotten on with Mr **GZI** in St Ninian's and he recognised me as soon as he saw me.
138. It was a big place with a big mansion house and three cottages in the grounds, which was where the dormitories were. It was for boys only. I knew some of the boys in there from Airdrie.
139. The cottage that I was in was ran by Mrs **MCR** who was a witch. She stayed in a house that was next to the cottage.
140. I shared a dormitory with about five other boys. The home gave me clothes to wear while I was in there, and I had a locker by my bed to keep my things in.
141. There were showers in the cottage and you could shower whenever you wanted to. We had privacy to shower.
142. The food wasn't great but you didn't have to eat it. You would go hungry though, if you didn't eat it. We also got to get sweets from the tuck shop once a week.
143. We did have school in the big, main building. The Brothers taught us as well as civilian teachers. I don't remember any of their names.
144. We didn't learn normal school stuff like maths or English. We did practical things like putting beads on a string.
145. There was a massive park in the grounds and I used to play football there in my free time. There were also bikes in there so I would take a bike and ride to Musselburgh and back. We had freedom to do that. They were quite relaxed with us because we were older.
146. I was allowed home at the weekends.

Abuse at St Joseph's

147. I didn't have any issues with abuse from the Brothers or teachers at St Joseph's. I think it is because the boys in there were a bit older and we were able to stick up for ourselves.
148. Mrs MCR who ran the cottage used to hit us over the head and on the backs of our legs with a slipper. She was an older, crabbit woman. That was the only physical abuse I got in there.

Leaving St Joseph's

149. I was running away a lot in there. Not for any reason, but just because I wanted to go be out and doing what I wanted to do. I was still drinking a lot at the weekends and sniffing glue. I was just taking whatever I could get my hands on to get rid of the memories.
150. I would get caught and taken back to St Joseph's by the police. I was cutting my wrists at the time and nobody bothered to ask me why. The police didn't even ask me why I was running away. They never asked me any questions.
151. I was then moved from St Joseph's to Rossie Farm because I was running away a lot. I don't think there was a panel to make that decision. I think the two places just agreed that I would be moving between themselves.
152. I wasn't told much about it but I remember being told by staff at St Philip's that I would have less freedom there.

Rossie Farm Secure Unit, Montrose

153. I went to Rossie Farm when I was about fifteen or sixteen years old. I think I went there with my mother and my older sister, [REDACTED] It was in the middle of nowhere.
154. We were met by a man called Mr Coulter, who was the main man in charge. We called the rest of the staff by their first names. The names I remember are Ross, Wee Jimmy and the joiner, Arthur.
155. The staff had uniforms that were a bit like a police officer uniforms or like what staff in jail would wear. The staff chose not to wear the uniforms and just wore normal clothes.
156. There were two buildings there within the grounds. One was an open school, where you could walk about, and the other was a closed unit where you had less freedom. I was put in the closed unit.
157. There was a playground and a big wall closing you in with a big wired fence at the top so you couldn't get out.

First day

158. I was shown around by a man, whose name I can't remember, and he told me what to expect. It was a secure unit, and was like a jail with bars on the windows and alarms everywhere.
159. I was given clothes to wear and my own clothes were taken off me, which I wouldn't see again until it was time for me to leave.
160. It was a place for only boys. There were about twelve or thirteen boys in the closed unit with me, and they were all about fifteen or sixteen years old.

161. There were about twelve separate cells in the closed unit. That is where you slept until you got moved into the big room, which had lots of beds and more freedom. You needed a certain grade to get in there, which you got with good behaviour.
162. I was put in a cell that was like a jail cell when I first went in. There was a small bed, sink, and bars on the window. There was also a shower at the bottom of the bed with a shower tray.
163. On my first night, I tried to pee out of the window, which only opened a little bit, so it ended up running down the wall. I set the alarms off and a man came in. I said I wanted to go to the toilet. He said there was a toilet I could use, and I just needed to press the buzzer and ask to go.

Daily routine

164. At the start, I was kept in the cell all day. I think they wanted to make sure you would settle down. Then after a few days, you got let out every day. They would let you out in the back to walk around. You were closed in with a wall so you couldn't leave.
165. There was a school in the closed unit, but I don't recall going to any classes. I was coming up for seventeen years old and so they couldn't make me go to school. They also said it would be better for me to learn to work for when I got out, so I offered to work in the kitchen and helped to make the dinners.
166. I quite enjoyed working in the kitchen and learned a lot.
167. I started joinery as well while I was in there. I did that because I knew they would have glue there for me to sniff.
168. I was building sheds with the joiner, who was called Arthur. I built up some trust with him and was getting out to work with him. Then he caught me sniffing glue and he didn't take me out with him for about a week. He then came and spoke to me and said

he'd take me out again but I wasn't getting to work with glue, so I started working with him again.

169. I got moved from the cell into the big room when I got the grades I needed, but then I was moved back to the cells again. I don't really know why that happened.

Visits and family contact

170. I never got home at the weekends. There was a chance to get out every six months if you behaved enough, but I never got out because they didn't think I was well behaved enough.
171. My mum and my sister visited me once, but it was a long journey for them and my mum wasn't keeping well at the time.
172. I met with them in the dining room, which wasn't being used at the time so it was just us.
173. I didn't get any visits from a social worker or go to any panels. I was basically just in there until I got out.

Substance misuse

174. One of my pals in there got out for good behaviour, and he came back and brought some alcohol in, which he'd syringed into oranges, so we never got caught for drinking.
175. Another time, he brought it in a bottle of Vosene shampoo, but hadn't washed it out properly. There were so many bubbles everywhere, and I got caught.
176. The staff didn't do much about it because I was seventeen years old by this point, so they just gave me a lecture about drinking and what it would do to my life if I didn't stop.

177. I didn't have any access to drugs in there, except for glue when I was doing joinery for a wee while, but I got caught there as well.

Abuse at Rossie Farm

178. The only issue with staff I had was with Wee Jimmy, who told me I needed to get the belt because I had been fighting. He was just a wee guy and I was seventeen years old and he told me to bend over to give me six of the belt.

179. He tried to belt me and I turned around and attacked him. I nearly choked the eyes out of his head.

180. I told them they could put me somewhere worse if they wanted to but they weren't giving me the belt at seventeen years old.

Leaving Rossie Farm

181. It was an ok experience in Rossie Farm. Everyone knew you were getting out at seventeen years old. After that, you knew that the only place they could put you in was the jail.

182. I got out when I was seventeen years old.

Life after care

183. I went back home to my mum's house. I carried on sniffing glue and was drinking heavily and getting lifted by police at weekends.

184. I met a girl and got her pregnant. I married her when I was seventeen years old.

185. I then went into jail when I was eighteen or nineteen years old. I was remanded in Barlinnie prison, then moved to Longriggend remand unit, before serving a three month sentence at Glenochil Prison. While I was inside, my mate, who had been serving five years in the jail got out and went away with my wife.
186. My wife still came to visit me in prison. I found out about her and my mate when I got out. I went home and the police turned up and said I had to get out the house because she wanted me out.
187. I got really bad after that and carried on drinking and sniffing glue. I was in and out of prison for most of my days for breaches of the peace and domestics after being on the drink.
188. I was sniffing glue in the house and a social worker caught me doing it in the house when there were children in the house. That was when I was about 26 years old and that's when I stopped sniffing glue.
189. I started drinking more after I stopped sniffing glue. I met another woman in my late thirties called [REDACTED] and she helped me get off the drink. I only drink beer now.
190. That was also around the time when I started talking about my childhood experiences in care. It was all coming back to me and I was able to remember the name of my abuser, McKinsty. [REDACTED] was the only person I told and she helped me through it quite a lot. I am still with her.
191. I have never worked.

Impact

192. I never told anybody about the abuse that was happening at St Ninian's. I could have told my mum or cousins but I didn't, and that kills me now.

193. My time in care has affected my relationship with my family. I put a lot of blame on my mum for me going in care, but it wasn't her fault.
194. I didn't get a proper education in care and have never really worked. The way I live my life now is down to them.
195. I live my life the way I want to and don't like being told what to do. I drank a lot and sniffed glue from a young age. It was the way I coped with things in my head because it helped me drown it all out. That led to me being in and out of prison for breaches of peace and domestics when I was on the drink.
196. I have always had sciatica and back problems, which started when I was in St Ninian's.
197. I have cut my wrists over the years and tried to hang myself a few times. I told my doctor about it and he put me on anti-depressants. They get changed and I was even on anti-psychotic medicine at one point. I am now on anti-depressants again.
198. I get nightmares and flashbacks sometimes. I started counselling about four years ago. I had tried before that but hadn't been ready.

Reporting of Abuse

199. I eventually reported Jimmy McKinstry to the police at Falkirk Police Station. That was about four or five years ago. As far as I know, the police charged him and then he died about two years later, before he got to court.

Records

200. I have never tried to get my records and I don't think I would want to. I don't want more memories. I want to get rid of the memories that I do have.

Lessons to be Learned

- 201. I trusted a guy whose care I was in, who I thought was a father figure so soon after my own dad had died, and he betrayed me by abusing me. Adults shouldn't be allowed to take advantage of vulnerable kids.

- 202. Kids in care need to have more contact with their family, either over the phone and in person, so that they can tell their parents if anything bad is happening to them.

- 203. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed..........

Dated..... 12 January 2021