

## **Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

GLP

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is GLP. My date of birth is 1982. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### **Life before going into care**

2. I was born in Dunfermline and for the first three months I stayed in the family home in Inverkeithing. In the house there was my mum, and my father, . Also in the house was my older brother and we were joined a year later by my brother . As the family grew we moved to another house in Cowdenbeath.
3. When I was between the ages of four and five my mum and dad split up. For the next year my brothers and I went to stay with my dad when he moved to Lanarkshire. After that year with dad I moved back to stay with mum, who was now in Rosyth. When I was staying with mum the atmosphere between her and me was not great. She was always showing preference to my two brothers and she looked at me as the outcast. I was also having some arguments with mum as I did not like that she was seeing different men. Mum was looking to have me placed into care as soon as possible. At this time I was not getting on well at school and was expelled for fighting with a teacher.
4. The social work were involved with the family during this time and Helen Cameron tried to help with the problems in the house. Helen worked in the Cowdenbeath office and remained my social worker throughout my time in care. My mum was still not happy and between her and Helen, they came to the decision that I was to be deemed out with parental control.

**Ovenstone Residential School, Pittenweem, Fife**

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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### **Leaving Ovenstone Residential School, Pittenweem, Fife**

17. When I was at the age of eleven maybe twelve and due to change to the High School, I was told that I would have to leave Ovenstone. I was told that the next place I would be moved to was Linwood Hall in Leven. Linwood Hall

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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### **Linwood Hall, Leven, Fife**

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**Rimbleton House, Rimbleton Park, Glenrothes**

36. When I was about thirteen, maybe fourteen, Linwood Hall stopped being a residential school and I would spend the nights at Rimbleton House and back to Linwood in the morning. At the weekends I could not go home to mum so again spent my weekends at Rimbleton. The social work would pay for a taxi to take me from Linwood to Rimbleton each school day and pick me up the following morning.

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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#### **Leaving Linwood Hall, Leven, Fife**

50. When I was fifteen I was told that I was to be moved from Linwood. I am not sure if it was because I had made the improvements or because there was not going to a place for me. I am still not sure, but not long after I moved out Linwood closed down. I was transferred to Geilsland School in Beith.

#### **Geilsland House School, Beith**

51. When I moved to Geilsland School I was placed into the flat for older boys. I had my own room and during this time staff were supposed to help me getting ready for being in the adult world.
52. The staff also showed us how to complete different forms. This was so when we left we were able to apply for housing and any benefits. I was taken to a career office but that did not help me.

53. I am not sure how many kids were in the home but they were all boys and of High school age.

### **Routine at Geilsland House School, Beith**

#### *Mealtimes/Food*

54. I don't remember a lot about the food other than it was okay. In the unit we all sat in a small dining room and had our meals together. The staff cooked all our meals.

#### *Leisure time*

55. There was plenty of grounds outside for us to play when we had some free time. I liked to play football there. There was one member of staff, John Traynor, who was really good to me. He was an ex professional footballer, who had been a goalkeeper for Ayr United. He would let me practice taking shots against him while he kept goal.
56. When I had been at Geilsland for a little while I was given a day pass. This meant I was able to go to Glasgow for the day and had to be back at the home at night.

#### *School*

57. The school lessons were held within Geisland and were normal class work. They did offer additional education for pupils to learn some trades such as being an electrician.

#### *Healthcare*

58. For my issue with wetting myself, I was given an appointment with the local doctor in Beith. I don't know his name but he prescribed me a nasal spray, I am not sure of the name of that medication, but it did help me.

### *Family contact*

59. When I was at Geilsland for a few months and trust had been built up, I was allowed weekend leave to stay with my dad. If I misbehaved one of the punishments would be that my weekend pass would be cancelled.

### *Running away*

60. I did run away, not long after I had been assaulted when my nose was broken. Me and another boy from Glasgow ran away together. He made his way to Paisley, while I made my way to Fife. I was away about eight days. I knew I couldn't go any longer as I had no money. I went to the social work at Cowdenbeath and asked if Helen Cameron would help me and give some sort of grant. Instead she phoned the local police station which was situated across the road from their office and I was taken back to Geilsland. I don't remember if anything happened but I probably had a loss of privileges,

### *Bed Wetting*

61. I was still having issues with wetting myself, at night and during the day. There were different members of staff who would call me names like "Pishie". It wasn't just the staff but some of the other children in the home.
62. If I did wet the bed I washed my own sheets. The problem was if one of the other children in the flat found out they would make sure to tell everyone else in the home.
63. If I did wet myself I was allowed to have a shower or a bath to get myself cleaned up. The only problem was I didn't have enough clothes and the staff would not help me and it meant I had to sit the rest of the day in the wet clothes.

### **Abuse at Geilsland House School, Beith**

64. One of the staff, <sup>GHS</sup> [REDACTED], was a bully. There was one occasion when he assaulted me and punched me in the face and I sustained a broken nose. He was one of the staff who called me "Pishie".
65. There was another member of staff, <sup>GLR</sup> [REDACTED], who assaulted me. One night he came to the room but I never heard him arriving. He said he was shouting on me, but I tried saying I never heard him. He then came right up to me and punched me in the ribs. He told me that I better keep my mouth shut.
66. After the <sup>GHS</sup> [REDACTED] incident happened, when I had been at Geilsland for nearly a year. I was not taking any more of the staff hitting me and demanded to make a phone call. I phoned my dad and told him what happened. He told me he would come through and sort the staff out. I was persuaded that this might not be the best answer and could cause more problems. I decided to tell dad not to come. The staff just swept it all under the carpet.

### **Leaving Geilsland House School, Beith**

67. As soon as I was sixteen I was allowed to leave Geilsland. I think it was on my birthday that I was told I was leaving

### **Life after being in care**

68. Some time ago, perhaps eight years ago, I was contacted by the police in Glasgow. They told me they were making enquiries about incidents at Geilsland. At that time I was not ready to speak to anyone and refused to give any statement. I wish now that I had talked to them because it might have helped someone else.

69. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

70. During my time in care there was very little formal education and as a result I left care with no school qualifications. That put me in an impossible situation trying to get any job. I just felt like the authorities did not help me and I started rebelling against all types of authority.

71. When I left my time in care I was an angry young man. I found it really difficult to cope with the memories of the abuse and turned to drink and alcohol. Instead of being able to go out into the adult and have some sort of working life, as I would have done if I was not in care, my life turned upside down. I turned to drink and drugs and for the next many years, until I was about thirty, I spent most of that period in and out of the prison system.

72. I have a fourteen year old daughter. I was involved in a short term relationship with her mother, but that relationship did not work out.

73. In the last ten years I have been with my partner, [REDACTED]. She has helped support me through all my issues. Since we have been together, apart from a short spell in prison for breaching a drug rehabilitation order, I have been out of trouble.

74. Since about 2013/14 I have no longer been getting involved with the wrong company and I am currently on a rehabilitation programme, being prescribed Methadone. I am also prescribed strong anti-psychotic drugs. I am working to be strong enough to wean off the Methadone and begin my life drug free. I will have to continue with the anti-psychotic medication for some time yet.

## Impact

75. I remember very early in my time in care that my dad spoke with social workers and asked them to provide proper help for me. He warned them at that time that he could see that if I did not get that help that I would spend my life in and out of prison. Due to them not providing proper support that is exactly what happened.
76. I have no self-respect or dignity. I believe that if I had been given proper education and been looked after properly when I was in care I would be in a much better position in life. I am always asking [REDACTED] if I am smelling in anyway. I know in reality I am not because I spend so much time scrubbing myself. That is just me reacting to when I was young.
77. My memory is really bad and has been for many years. There are times I can't find my medication and get into a bad sweat worrying about it. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

## Reporting of Abuse

78. Since leaving the care system I have never reported any of the abuse to the police or any other authority. The main reason is I did not think anyone would believe what happened to me.

## Records

79. I do not have any of my records from my time in care. It is something I have wanted but did not know how to go about this. Some of the places still exist or have moved to new premises or been rebranded. I will again speak with Future Pathways for some advice about getting those records.



**Lessons to be learned**

80. I just want the abuse of children in care to stop and the social work to provide proper help. Perhaps if the social work had listened to me when I did try to report some of the abuse, they could have made me a different person. I don't want what happened to me to happen to any children currently in care.

**Other information**

81. My partner, [REDACTED] saw a newspaper article saying that investigations were being carried out into abuse at Ovenstone. As a result I made contact the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry. They provided some help by putting me in touch with Future Pathways. They too have already helped with some finances and are still helping me with some other matters.

82. At this time I have never had any counselling or spoken with any psychiatrist. I am hoping Future Pathways may be able to help me there.

83. Secondary Institutions - to be published later  
[REDACTED]

84. I hope by coming forward I can now move on with my life and put a lot of the abuse behind me. It has been good for me to come to the Inquiry and have someone listen to me.

85. 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.

GLP  
[REDACTED]  
Signed.....

Dated 28/9/2021.....