

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

INJ

Support person present: No

1. My name is INJ. My date of birth is 1987. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. I was born in Rottenrow Hospital and raised in Glasgow. In the family home there was my mum, and my dad, . I have two older siblings and and two stepbrothers and .
3. When I grew up I was going to St John's Primary School and there were no issues when I was at the school. As we grew up, I was aware that my parents were both drinkers and for a lot of the time I was able to do what I wanted. Despite their drinking we were still washed and looked after and there was always food available.
4. When I was around ten or eleven I was getting into trouble, all for minor things. It got bad enough that the social work were involved with the family. It was around this time that mum and dad split up. While I stayed with mum, my brother went to stay with my gran and my sister went to stay with my uncle . Dad went on to have my stepbrothers and .
5. When I was old enough, I moved from St John's Primary to Holyrood High School. There was little help for the family during this time and all the social workers said to us, was that if my behaviour did not improve, then I would end up being placed in a home. I am not sure the name of the social worker who was involved with the family.

6. We would get visits to the house maybe each week or maybe every couple of weeks. They also took me occasionally to buy me some new clothes. There was one time when mum even took me to the social work office as she could not cope with my behaviour. I was then appearing at children's panels fairly regularly.

#### **Unknown foster care, Castlemilk**

7. I was around eleven or twelve when the social work decided that I should be taken from mum and placed into foster care in Castlemilk. I don't remember there being any Panel, I think it was the social work that made the decision for me to go there. When I arrived, I was introduced to the woman who was going to be looking after me. I had never met her before. I saw there were pictures of other kids who I presume she was looking after or had looked after. I am not sure if it was to save me getting into more trouble that I was placed with her. I did know I was gutted and nervous when I went there.
8. I was only there for about twenty minutes when I asked if it was okay to go outside the house to play. She said yes and as soon as I was outside, I ran off. I asked someone in the street for a pound and I took the first bus I could that took me back to the Gorbals. I was staying rough or with people I knew. A few days later I was found by the police. After being taken to the station I was allowed to go back home.

#### **██████████ Day Centre**

9. I was now twelve years old and in secondary school at Holyrood High School, but it was not long before I stopped going. The social work then arranged for me to go to ██████████ Day care. The social work arranged for me to go there by taxi each day. I was picked up in the morning, taken to the day centre and then a taxi back home at the end of the day.

10. There was probably seven of us in the class at [REDACTED]. It was a more personal style of teaching. I was going there for a few months in total. It was not long after I started that sometimes when I was in the taxi, and we were at a set of traffic lights that I decided to run off. Running away from there became a habit for me. The social work then decided that this place was not working, and they decided to try a different placement.

### **St John's Approved School, Springboig, Glasgow**

11. I was sent to St John's Approved School in Springboig, Glasgow and ended up being there for around six months. When I was there the education was different from what I had experienced as they taught bricklaying, woodwork, and some other skills you need in later life. I liked those practical things better than putting pen to paper in the usual classes. When I was at the school I was there as a day pupil. When I was at the school the teachers were constantly telling me that my behaviour had to improve, or I could end up being placed into care as a resident and not a day pupil.
12. It was not long before I was staying away for some days. The staff were still threatening me that I would have to be kept at a residential home if I did not behave. I thought it was just threats. Being so young I did not know they would eventually follow through with the threats. It was also around this time that I was issued with an ASBO for my worsening behaviour.
13. One day, when I was about thirteen, I was sitting in the house when three guys from the social work department appeared at my door. This was not the result of any panel, they just appeared at the house. They told me that I was leaving and that I should grab everything I needed from my room. I had never met any of those workers and I don't know any of their names. They were also standing to ensure I was barred from leaving the house. I grabbed my clothes, hi-fi, and some tapes. They had to wait ages while I packed everything up.

## **Kerelaw Residential Unit, Stevenston**

14. The social workers took me in their car, but they did not tell me where I was going. I just kept looking out of the window to see if I could work out where I was heading to.

## **Routine at Kerelaw Residential Unit, Stevenston**

### *First day*

15. When I arrived at Kerelaw there were lots of boys and girls standing outside the unit. I started grabbing some of my bags out of the boot. One of the social workers helped me with the bags. At that time, I did think everything was going to be okay. I was not told how long I would be in Kerelaw for, but I ended up being moved from the residential and into the secure unit and was there until I was sixteen.
16. When you went in the front door, to the right was the staff office and to the left was the main leisure area. In the leisure area there was a computer, pool table and a TV room with couches. There was also the kitchen, dining room, and school, all on the ground floor. As part of the school area there was a classroom, a room for joinery work and a science room. When you went up the stairs there were the bedrooms and showers. There was a separate smoking area on the outside of the house.
17. When I went into the home I was spoken to by the staff and given an introduction as to what was expected of me when I was in the home. I was then strip searched and taken to my room. It was just me in the room, I did not have to share with anyone. I was able to unpack my clothes into some drawers and put the hi-fi on the unit. After blasting it at full volume I then went outside to join the other kids.
18. I do remember some of the staff that were there. I think the place was run by a woman called Shona. There was one male member of staff we knew as EUL there was IDE an older member of staff, who supposed to be my key worker and zFSY.

19. I think there were four or five units at Kerelaw residential unit, there were more in the secure unit where I ended up when I was fourteen. There were two girls' rooms in a separate unit. The names of the boys' units were Baird, Fleming and one other that I am not sure the name of. I was in Millerston.
  
20. All the residents were high school aged, twelve to about sixteen. I don't remember there being anyone younger than me, but there might have been. I think there were maybe eight or nine in each unit and the rooms were on either side of each unit. In the residential section and going by the number of units I think there might have been as much as eight people staying there. I had a room to myself, and I presume the others were the same.

*Mornings and bedtime*

21. We were woken by the staff in the morning. After getting washed and dressed we would head in for breakfast. Those of us that did smoke were allocated the first of our six a day and we would head outside to smoke it. It was then in for school about 9:00 am, back for lunch and in school for the afternoon.

*Mealtimes/Food*

22. We ate breakfast at the table in our respective units. When we went for lunch and dinner, and we were in the main dining room. The dining room was split into different sections for each unit. There was a partition separating each area. We sat at the tables along with the others from our own units. We would queue up at the hot area to get our food. I don't remember much about the food itself. I think I ate the food and if there was something I didn't like then if I did not eat it then I would just be hungry until the next meal.

*Washing/bathing*

23. The showers were on the same floor as the bedrooms, and I don't remember there being any issues there. I think there must have been set times for showering as there were so many in the unit. I think the showers were in cubicles.

*Clothing/uniform*

24. There was no uniform at Kerelaw and we all wore our own clothes.

*Leisure time*

25. Sometimes we were taken out of the home in the minibus. It might just be for a run in the van, but I can also remember going to the amusement park, walks along the beach and a park. These were all fun as it was good to get out of the home for a while.
26. When I was in the residential unit I had a girlfriend [REDACTED], also in the home. To see each other in the unit we had to sign a contract. This was to ensure that while we could see each other we would not break any rules. We could spend time in either her unit or she was allowed to spend time in my unit. We were not allowed in our individual rooms but spent most of the time in the living rooms. Whenever we finished seeing each other I was stripped searched and made to part my bum cheeks, by John Muldoon, staff member, to ensure I was not bringing in drugs. Not sure where he thought I was getting drugs as I had been locked up in the home and had not had any visits.

*School*

27. There was classwork we all had to attend, and we just sat and listened to whatever they were teaching.

### *Healthcare*

28. One of times when I was away from the unit, I was hit by someone with a padlock and chain and was quite badly injured. I made my way back to the home, but the staff did not help with any treatment. At no time when in was in the home did I see a doctor or dentist. One of the times I got restrained that bad I am sure my hand was broken. The only treatment I got was I was handed an ice pack. There was no trip to the hospital.

### *Birthdays and Christmas*

29. I had been running away in the run up to Christmas and as a result I was going to be stopped from seeing my family. I did not like that and managed to run away again. I was able to see my mum and my gran. I could not stay with them in case the police came looking for me.
30. There was one time I was out at Christmas I had a girlfriend, [REDACTED], who had also been in care with us at Kerelaw. She had been allowed out for a while and when she came to the house she was really surprised as mum had spent a lot of money on presents for her.

### *Visits/Inspections*

31. There were no visits from the social work or any other people to check on my welfare or provide any update on my time in care.
32. I can remember that once a year the unit was visited by Inspectors. We had to make sure the unit was cleaned up for the visit. None of them ever spoke with me and I cannot remember then speaking to any of other kids in my unit. When the inspectors came that was the only time the unit was cleaned up.

### *Family contact*

33. I was allowed to telephone my mum. I would be allowed to call her from the office phone and would be given about ten minutes to speak to her.
34. In the beginning I did not have many family visits as I was constantly running away. Eventually near the end of my time at Kerelaw I had built up enough trust that I was granted overnight stays at mums, sometimes it could also be for a weekend.

### *Running away*

35. The first time I ran away was after a few days of being at Kerelaw. Whenever I did run away some of the staff might try and chase you and others would just stand and wave for you to come back. I usually ran over the fields to Stevenston where I would jump on a train. One of the stops for that journey was Paisley Gilmour Street and quite often that was where the police were waiting to catch me.
36. When I was brought back to Kerelaw I was stripped naked and made to have a cold shower. Initially I was not allowed the towel, as whoever the staff member was, they had it beside them, and they made me go to them to get the towel. It wasn't every time that I ran away that I was stripped naked. One of the times I was caught I was with another resident [REDACTED], and he might have seen what happened. It was all the staff that would do this.

### *Discipline*

37. One of the punishments for me running away was that I would have any visits to the home or me going to mum removed.



### **Abuse at Kerelaw Residential Unit, Stevenston**

38. At night it was quite often that the staff would be upset with me, and I would end up with them bending my arms up my back and my wrists being twisted. It would be different members of the night staff and sometimes if the day staff were covering then they would do the same.
39. In the day, there were times and for some reason **EUL** staff member was upset with me. He would take it out on me, and he would restrain me and then batter me.
40. **IDE** my key worker, would put me in a headlock, squeeze your neck, rub his knuckles into my head, or bend my wrists into a lock. He was doing this because he thought it was fun.
41. One of the times I had ran away I had been jumping on bales of hay. I got back about one in the morning, and I was asking for something to eat. The staff refused and I was then pushed to the floor and dragged along the floor, giving me carpet burns on my knees. I would be forced through some doors, up the stairs and again stripped naked and put into the cold showers. I don't know what happened with people in the other units.
42. There was a teacher, Matt George, who taught art. When we were in his class there were times he would stand right behind me and be rubbing himself against my back. When he was rubbing himself against my back there were others in the class. They might have seen it happening to me and I certainly saw it happening to some others. No one ever spoke out about it.
43. Matt George would also hold some of the kids back at the end of the lesson, but I am not sure what happened to them. There was a time when some pens went missing from the class and he was blaming me. He made me stay behind and I was told to strip my clothes off. When I was naked, he also made me spread my bum cheeks. When this happened there was no one else in the classroom.

44. I have since asked staff about this kind of incident and been told that should never happen. Any time they had reason to strip search anyone there must be two members of staff present, to prevent this sort of abuse.
45. I don't know why he picked on certain people, perhaps it was because the people he did pick on were vulnerable. One of those people that it was happening to was a girl [REDACTED] and she was definitely someone I thought was extremely vulnerable. I am not sure if she was searched the same as me.
46. I saw him a couple of days ago, as he was now detained in the prison on a sentence. I would never be able to take any retribution as he was working in a different hall. When I saw him, it brought back lots of the memories of what he did to me in Kerelaw.

#### **Reporting of abuse at Kerelaw Residential Unit, Stevenston**

47. I don't know if there would have been anyone I could have reported the abuse to. [REDACTED] IDE was involved and he and other members of staff were fully aware of what was happening. They just sat in their office smoking cigarettes and ignoring what was happening. I thought this was just normal.

#### **Leaving Kerelaw Residential Unit, Stevenston**

48. Because I was not behaving, and I was constantly running away it was decided that I had to be transferred to the secure unit. I would have been about fourteen or fifteen at the time.

## **Kerelaw Secure Unit, Stevenston**

### **Routine at Kerelaw Secure Unit, Stevenston**

49. When I was sent to the secure unit I found that the regime there was much more strict. It was all different staff who worked in that unit. The doors in and out of the unit were all locked. In my unit I think there were eight people there.

#### *Mornings and bedtime*

50. The daily regime was much the same as it was in the residential unit. At night if you wanted to use the toilet, the staff would unlock your door, allow you to go to the bathroom and then lock it again when you were back in.

#### *Mealtimes/Food*

51. All our meals were eaten within our own units. The food was the same standard we had in the residential unit.

#### *Clothing/uniform*

52. I do remember that mum would send me some new clothes. I think I was also given a grant by the staff for clothes. If I had a grant one of the staff would take me to the shops in Ayr where I could choose the clothes I wanted.

#### *Leisure time*

53. I was taken out for a day by **LEF**, my keyworker there. He took me out to the beach at Ayr. I think this was to build up trust.
54. We did get pocket money when we were in the secure unit, which was about £11 or £12 a week. There was a vending machine available which had juice, chocolate, and sweets. Mum might also have sent me some money and cigarettes as well. If mum did

send any money or fags the staff held onto it. Some of the people there did not spend their money and saved it for when they left.

#### *School*

55. I did go to the classes in the secure unit. I can remember Billy, the woodwork teacher. I did sit my exams, but I did not know I had passed them. It was not until I was in Polmont that one of the female staff spoke to me about them. She told me she was surprised that someone with my results was still in the prison system. I told her I did not know what she was talking about. She showed me that I had passed my Higher English and Higher Maths.
56. In the secure unit you either went to the classroom or you spent the time in your room. If you elected to be in your room, it was not the best as the power for the room was switched off by the staff. The staff had a key to turn the power off and on.

#### *Healthcare*

57. There were many kids in the secure unit that were not coping with their life there. When they were feeling really down, they would be feeling suicidal. I am not sure what, if any, help they received.

#### *Work*

58. We did carry out some chores in the secure unit which might have involved emptying the bins and cleaning the dishes in the kitchen.

#### *Birthdays and Christmas*

59. When I was in secure care at Kerelaw I was not allowed any home leave at Christmas.

*Family contact*

60. When I was in the secure unit, I don't think I had any home leave.

*Running away*

61. When I was in the secure unit I could not run away as we were always locked in.

*Discipline*

62. I can remember one night in my room and for whatever reason I was upset with staff. I put my mattress onto the floor and lay down and started kicking at the door. This was about midnight and the staff came into my room and I was placed in the quiet room for about two hours. When I had calmed down, I was put back into my room.

**Abuse at Kerelaw Secure Unit, Stevenston**

63. Sometimes when I had run away and brought back, I was stripped naked and placed into what was known as the punishment cell. Others who were placed in the punishment cell might have been placed in jackets like a karate suit. This was not a strait jacket but a paper suit to stop you being able to use it to hang yourself. There was nothing in the room except for a camera.
64. There was a member of staff, **INM**, who was issuing our cigarette allocation. On some days when he was doing this and before he would give you a cigarette, he would make you swirl some Tabasco sauce around your mouth for a minute. When you did that, he would hand over the cigarette.

**Reporting of abuse at Kerelaw Secure Unit, Stevenston**

65. I did not know who I would report any of the abuse to.

## **Leaving Kerelaw Secure Unit, Stevenston**

66. I was sixteen when my time came to an end at Kerelaw secure unit, and I was no longer under any social work care. When I got out of Kerelaw I was staying with my mum. I had no support from the social work department, and no one had shown me any life skills like being able to cook.
67. I was only out for a little while before I was back in custody for getting into more trouble and sent to Polmont YOI. From when I was between sixteen and twenty-one, I was in custody perhaps six separate times, the longest time being out would only be three months.

## **YOI Polmont**

68. I was in the allocation unit off and on for about a year, continually getting in trouble, in remand, out, then back in bother. I was in Lomond Hall which was for the under 18's. Polmont itself catered for all ages between sixteen and twenty-one. You might occasionally have someone who was twenty-two who may have been waiting for a space within places like Barlinnie.
69. I can remember some of staff from Polmont. The first one was Greaney who was in the allocation unit, Spey Hall, Roscoe was in Iona Hall, which was a new unit, North Wing, with toilets built into the cells and Jip who was in the under 18's in Lomond Hall.

## **Routine at YOI Polmont**

### *Mornings and bedtime*

70. We were woken up by staff each morning and then we had our cereal and milk in our cells. We were locked up continually for 23 hours per day, with one hour for exercise. In the cell I had a television for entertainment. There was a bed and a wooden framed

table. I shared my cell with another prisoner. The windows in the cell were often broken, this meant that when it rained hard our beds were soaked.

71. When I was in Lomond Hall, we could ask the staff to get out for the toilet. It was all automated as you pressed buttons and the door opened automatically. When you were finished at the toilet you pressed a code, and your cell door was locked again.
72. During my later time, after I was eighteen, we still had slopping out. We used a pail in the cell and emptied it twice a day. As you can imagine when you are first in jail it is really embarrassing when you need the toilet. You eventually became institutionalised, and it seemed natural. There were a few times during the day if you needed you might be able to press a bell and use the actual toilet. This was only if the good staff were on duty.

#### *Food*

73. When it came to our lunch and dinner, we were able to go to the pantry and then take our food back to our cells, where we had to eat it. There were other wings in the jail that the inmates were able to go to the dining room for their meals.

#### *Leisure time*

74. When we were having our one hour of exercise it could be a dangerous time for people in prison. At any time, you might be the victim of a slashing. If not outside it could also happen when you were in the showers. There were staff supervising the showers, but they stood outside and by the time anything happened in the showers it was too late.

#### *Healthcare*

75. The health care in the prison is almost non-existent. During my time I have lost my teeth and I have never been able to see a dentist.

### *Discipline*

76. The prison had a punishment system. One of them was a three-day rule and whatever you had done wrong you were given this punishment. You would then end up in front of the Governor and he might tell you were to lose privileges such as your tv for a set time. Rule 95 meant it could be for as long as a month or down to the digger for that period. That punishment was usually handed out for fighting.

### **Abuse at YOI Polmont**

77. Life in Polmont was really bad as the staff there were brutal in how they treated the inmates. I think the conditions I had in Polmont were the worst I stayed in. Even nowadays in Barlinnie, there are toilets in the cells.
78. One of the staff I had issues with was known as INL [REDACTED]. When you were lined up in single file, for whatever reason, if anyone was slightly out of line, INL [REDACTED] would threaten to use his baton to hit us to get us all back into line.
79. There were other staff who would overstep the mark when restraining you. They would have you on the floor and fold your legs up your back, and have your arms folded behind your back. While they had you like that they would then punch and kick you. Three or four of them would then carry you to the digger and as they were carrying you they were still hitting you. Each time we came to a door they placed me onto the ground and when the door was opened, I was lifted back up in the same position and then carried to the next door. I can even remember there was a supervisor watching and he would join in and start punching you in the ribs. When I was put into the room, I was told to get onto my knees first before being told to stand up.
80. The digger was a punishment cell where there was a 4" raised concrete base and on top of that there was a small 3" thin mattress. There was a table and a chair in the cell, but they were made of a paper mâché material.



81. In the morning you would be woken about 7:00 am and the staff would come in the remove your mattress. You would only have the table and chair left in the cell. You might be given a pen and some paper and if you were in there for a long period you might be able to ask for a book. You were allowed out for an hour each day for exercise. All your meals were eaten in the cell. Your mattress would be returned at 7:00 pm. I was in there a few times while I was in Polmont and one time I was in for about a month.
82. There was also a silent cell. That cell had insulation throughout which stopped any noise coming out. If you were in there you were always wary of the staff. Sometimes they would put a mattress over you and then start beating you. They use their steel toe capped boots to kick but with the mattress there it stopped a lot of the bruising. I can't remember why I was put in the silent cell. You might be in there for a couple of hours until you had calmed down.
83. I don't know the names of any of the staff that beat me in the silent cell or the digger.

#### **Reporting of abuse at YOI Polmont**

84. There was no one you could report anything to when even the supervisors were involved in the beatings.

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

85. Since I was placed in care at the age of thirteen, I think I have only spent about two years in total outside of the care or prison system. In 2017 my mum died. That was the day before I was attacked in the jail and had hot water and sugar poured over me.
86. Within a very short period of time after losing mum I also lost my sister, my niece, and my grandfather. Losing one was bad enough but losing so many within a short period

of time had a massive impact on my mental health. One of the periods I was out of jail, I also found my father dead in his bathroom.

87. When I have been out, I did have relationships and I have two daughters, one nearly seventeen and another who is six.
88. I am now due to be released from prison in [REDACTED] 2023. I am trying to get some help for somewhere to stay and any benefits I am due. I have plans to get myself straight as I want to renew my relationship with my six-year-old daughter. I want to set myself targets to make sure I stay out of jail and see her as much as possible. I need as much help as I can get when I am released to make sure I can meet my targets.

### **Impact**

89. I have just held all the memories in my head and the anger from the memories. That anger would build up until someone would say something stupid to me and I would break and end up in a fight.
90. The abuse I suffered in the different homes had a huge impact on my life. Recently, I managed to get some help from a prison psychologist. I built up trust with this person and was able to open up about the abuse. Maybe if I had access to the psychologist when I was younger it might have made a difference to me getting into trouble. It was only from seeing the psychologist that I was diagnosed with PTSD, depression, and anxiety issues. The treatment I received has taught me to talk things through with her and it is helping to release the memories. I am taking different medication for my mental health and some other physical issues.
91. I always felt that when I was out of the prison and care system that time on the outside slowed down. Ten months outside felt like a lifetime and yet ten months in the jail passed quickly.

**Reporting of Abuse**

- 92. I never reported any of the abuse I suffered as it was so common that I thought as a young boy that it was just a normal part of life. I now know as an adult about how wrong it is for anyone to hit children.

**Records**

- 93. I have never thought about getting hold of my records.

**Lessons to be learned**

- 94. I have not given any thoughts about lessons or hopes for the inquiry as I always thought I was just filling in a piece of paper and did not realise I was sitting with people to give a statement.

**Other information**

- 95. 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. INJ .....

Dated. 20:6:23 .....