

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

HHD
[REDACTED]

Support person present: No

1. My name is HHD [REDACTED]. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1963. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. Before going into care I stayed at [REDACTED], Edinburgh with the rest of my family. My father was [REDACTED] and my mother [REDACTED]. I had six brothers, I was the second youngest. My older brothers are [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] is my younger brother.
3. In 1972 my father had a heart attack and died. My mum started to struggle looking after the family. She was a single woman with seven kids. The social work became involved. The social worker my mum had was Kenny Waugh. He wasn't my social worker. I started to go to Lizmore School and I was doing well. As far as I was aware everything was going okay.
4. When I was about twelve I was caught stealing. I went to the golf course and there was an open barn with tools in it. I was looking for a hammer to build a tree house. All I took was two brush handles and a sickle. The total value was about a pound.
5. I went to a children's panel. I don't know if this panel was because I was caught stealing. When I was young I must have been to the children's panel about ten times.

I was told to go to Dr Guthrie's for a visit. My mum came with me. I think it was Kenny Waugh who took me there.

Dr Guthrie's, Lasswade Road, Edinburgh (1975 to 1976)

6. The first time I was at Dr Guthrie's I was there about a year. I never had any issues.
7. Dr Guthrie's was a big building with lots of different bits to it. There was a swimming pool and a gym. I would say that there were about sixty to seventy boys there. Each dormitory had about sixteen boys in it all different ages. The dormitories were called Belhaven, Geoffrey and Argyll. There were eight beds on each side of the dormitory.
8. All the doors and gates were locked behind you by the officers. The officers were staff members. That's just what I called them. They never wore uniforms. You could go about inside the building but usually an officer would be with you.

Staff

9. SNR [REDACTED] Mr GFC [REDACTED] had a house on the premises. [REDACTED] stayed on the premises. They all worked shifts. I can remember Mr GBD [REDACTED]. I had a lot of issues with Mr GBD [REDACTED] the second time I was there.
10. The other staff I remember who were okay were Mr Keddie and Mr KMI [REDACTED]. Mr KMI [REDACTED] had a lot of expensive bikes and rolling skates that he let us use. I also got on fine with HWG [REDACTED] and Bob Horn.

Routine at Dr Guthrie's

First day

11. I can't remember if anyone met me when I arrived. I was taken to the stores round the back of the building. You were given clothes and shoes. I can't remember if everyone wore the same. I think everyone might have worn grey jumpers. At this time I still didn't realise I would be staying there.

Mornings and bedtime

12. Every morning I got up at six thirty. You would go and get washed then make your bed. After this you went for breakfast.
13. After the activities at night you would have supper before getting ready for bed. I was normally in bed for about nine.

Mealtimes / Food

14. There was a woman called Betty who did the cooking. She was very good. The food was good and all the meals were fine. When she retired in 1978 a new guy came in. Everyone started complaining because he wasn't as good as Betty. Eventually Betty came back for a while.

Washing / bathing

15. There were showers that we used. The officers would supervise you. They wouldn't watch you. It was just to make sure there was no carry on. You would have a shower at different times it depended on what you had been doing.

School

16. The school was a block of four rooms. There was also a changing room. I don't think any of the staff were trained as teachers. There were two old women who taught us arts and crafts.

17. If you were a 'good guy' you were allowed to do metalwork or joinery. I couldn't have been a 'good guy' as I never got to do any of these things. In the afternoon you did nothing. It was really boring. I had no education between 1975 and 1976 when I was first in Dr Guthrie's.

Trips / Holidays

18. The staff would sometimes take you out in a Land Rover. I'm not sure where we went. It might have been the Peebles area. There was usually seven of us and we had to kill rabbits that had myxomatosis.
19. There was a summer camp near to Dunbar that we would go to. I remember me and two of my pals walked out to sea when the tide was out. We got stuck and a motor boat had to come and rescue us.

Birthdays and Christmas

20. You were allowed to go home for Christmas. I can't remember my birthday being celebrated either of the times I was there. I didn't get a cake or a present.

Visits / Inspections/ Review of Detention

21. I never had any visits from my mother when I was in the home. If I had ran away no one from the social work came to see me to find out what had happened.
22. I think Kenny Waugh visited me a couple of times. I didn't like the man, I hated him with a passion.
23. I don't remember any official visits to the school or inspections.

Healthcare

24. I never saw anyone getting medical treatment. I can't even remember anyone having a plaster on them.

Leaving Dr Guthrie's (first time)

25. I left Dr Guthrie's the first time in [REDACTED] 1976. I went back to Lizmore School to try and get into secondary school. I was taunted by the other kids.
26. At an assembly I was given the belt for talking so I ran out the school. I then started 'kipping' from school.
27. I eventually went to Portobello High School. I was in the education class, which was on the ground floor. Everyone could see you and knew why you were there.

Dr Guthrie's, Lasswade Road, Edinburgh (1977 to 1979)

28. In 1977 I was put into Dr Guthrie's for the second time. The routine was the same as the first time.

Punishment system

29. There was a points system for good behaviour. This depended on your attitude and how you presented yourself. If you had enough points you would be allowed home at the weekend.
30. I must have had a bad attitude because I never got any points. This meant I had to stay at the weekends.
31. Sometimes if Bob Horn was working at the weekend he would take me to his house. He was married and had children. Bob was a good guy but I think he did it to save him having to stay at the school as well.

Running away

32. I never ran away the first time I was at Dr Guthrie's. The second time I ran away a few times. It wasn't easy due to the locked door at the main entrance. If you saw a chance when someone came in and the door was left open you could go for it.
33. The officers weren't supposed to take you back. It was the police who were supposed to do this. If the police took you back they would sometimes give you a battering. Once you were returned they would see you getting another battering from the officers. If you ran away you were put on a FTR, failure to return.
34. I don't know why they kept taking me back when I was running away.
35. If someone ran away we were all woken about two in the morning. Mr ^{GBD} made us all stand outside in the square. This would happen even if it was raining. We had to stand there about three hours as a punishment for someone running away.

Abuse at Dr Guthrie's (1977 to 1979)

Mr ^{GBD}

36. Mr ^{GBD} made my life a misery. He was a vicious bully and would regularly shout me over and get me to put my hands out. He would then get a big bunch of keys and hit me over the fingers. My fingers are still bent now. I think this was as a result of being hit although I'm not certain.
37. Another time he took me into his office. I can't even remember what I had done wrong. I think he thought he was my dad. He put me over his knee and belted me with his hand on the backside over my trousers. He then stood me up.

38. I grabbed a wooden letter opener that was on his desk and threatened him with it. I know I shouldn't have done that. I ran out of his office and saw that the front door was open. I managed to get out. Mr ^{GBD} and two other staff members were chasing me. I managed to run away and hid in the woods at Ellens Glen Road. I then went to my brothers.
39. I was away for about a week. This was the first time that I had ran away. ^{HWG} ^{HWG} and another officer came and gave me a chance to go back. I handed myself over to him. When I got back I was given a slap.
40. Every night Mr ^{GBD} would force me to go swimming. My eyes were stinging with the chlorine. I had red rings around my eyes and stuff coming out my ears. I wasn't given any choice. I was never offered any other activities. Everyone else was allowed to choose. I absolutely hated him.

Staff

41. The punishments from the staff were always the same. A slap or a punch on the side of the head or the back. I was never given the strap when I was Dr Guthrie's.

Bullying

42. One night I was swimming and someone grabbed me by the balls and pulled me under the water to the bottom. I was in agony. I told an officer but nothing was done. I was told there had been about 25 boys in the pool and I couldn't say who was responsible.

Reporting of abuse

43. If I had ran away and the police were taking me back I would tell them that I was being bullied by the staff and Mr ^{GBD} They never did anything about this.

Leaving Dr Guthrie's

44. The last time I ran away from Dr Guthrie's I was taken to Howdenhall Assessment Centre and then an emergency children's panel. After this, I was released. No one prepared me for leaving.
45. I have seen official letters that said I was a delinquent and a bit thick. This was what was being said after I had left Dr Guthrie's where I had been given no education either of the times that I had been there.

Life after being in care

46. After leaving Dr Guthrie's I had no more contact with the social work.
47. I had started glue sniffing. I was stealing from garages. It was petty crime. Not long after this I was jailed for assaulting a police officer.

Impact

48. As a result of my time in care I hate social workers. I would never allow them to take my grandchildren from me.
49. Even now I'm still living my time at Dr Guthrie's every day.

Records

50. I have managed to get some of my records from the Dr Guthrie foundation after I wrote to them. I was given a letter from the foundation that let me go to Register

House and get photo copies of all my records from my time at Dr Guthries. I would like to know why I was incarcerated. No one has ever told me.

Other information

Counselling

- 51. I have been going to Future Pathways. Every time I go I'm crying when I have to talk about what happened to me.
- 52. 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.. HHD

Dated.. *20-A-18*