

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

KDQ

Support person present: No

1. My name is KDQ. My name as a child in care was KDQ. My date of birth is 1959. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care


2. I lived at Clydebank with my parents and my brothers and sisters. My dad was called and my mum was called. My mum was brought up in a convent. I had ten brothers and sisters. The oldest is who is nine years older than me. Then there's, who we call, who we call and myself. There was about a year between each of us. After me were and is ten years younger than me.
3. There was fighting all the time in the house. There isn't a time that I can remember having a good time, when I was young. When my younger sisters came along I was their carer. Anywhere I went, one or two of them had to come with me. My mum used to tell me to come home from school at dinnertime to watch the kids so that she could go to the bingo.
4. My mum worked all the time. My dad was a carpenter but I can't remember him working. We were always well-fed and well-dressed. We were spotless going to school. I went to Garscadden Primary. Me and my brother would get the bus to

Yoker and collect glass ginger, fizzy drink bottles from the doors if my mum needed bread or milk. You got tuppence for a bottle when you returned it to a shop. We went round the gardens stealing vegetables as well.

### **Southpark Residential School, Rothesay, Isle of Bute**

5. I went to Southpark for respite care because my mum had a stillborn baby. I went for six weeks when I was five years old. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] went with me. Secondary Institutions - to

Secondary Institutions - to be published later



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### **Leaving Southpark Residential School**

13. I don't remember the journey home from Southpark or getting home.

## Life back at home

14. When I was nine years old, we were evacuated from [REDACTED] after the hurricane that hit Clydebank in January 1968. We moved to Strathclyde House in Dumbarton and then to [REDACTED] in Clydebank. Me and my five wee sisters slept in the same double bed. My brothers were in the jail quite a lot. I went to Kilbowie Primary School. Then I went to Dalmuir Secondary School. The school changed its name to Clydebank High School Annexe. I loved school. It was escapism for me and I was good at school.
15. I was escaping from my mum and dad, and my brother [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was terrible. He hit me all the time. I didn't live a life. I wasn't allowed a pal. I wasn't allowed to do anything and most of my time was spent in the house. When I was thirteen or fourteen, if I went out then I had to take my younger siblings with me. The neighbours called me the Pied Piper. I had a woman as my social worker and then a man.
16. My first memory is my dad making me touch him. He didn't touch me. I was about four years old and I hadn't even started school. My dad abused me every chance he got after that, when my mum was at work or in hospital having my younger sisters. I tried to tell my mum when I was eight years old but she didn't believe me.
17. The abuse came out when I was fifteen years old. [REDACTED] caught my dad abusing me in the living-room. The police were called and I was taken for a medical. My dad was taken to prison. The social workers and police knew all about the abuse that had happened.
18. Right after the abuse came out, I was taken to a children's panel. It was [REDACTED] [REDACTED] 1975. I'd had a couple of children's panels before then. My sisters and I had gone to Helensburgh. They had gone into a shop and I was standing outside. I was handling stolen goods. We all got caught. I hadn't been in trouble with police before then.
19. I can't remember if I went to the panel for handling stolen goods or because my dad was abusing me. After the panel, I was let home for the weekend and then picked up

and taken to Doctor Guthrie's School. I don't understand why I was let home for weekend.

### Doctor Guthrie's Girl's School, Edinburgh

20. I thought I was in Guthrie's for care and protection and I didn't find out it was a List D School, for people who'd done wrong, until I was in there. It was all girls at Guthrie's. There was nobody older than sixteen years old and the youngest in my house was fourteen years old. The school was a big building. When you went in the front door, the headmaster's office was on the right. The medical room was on your left. There was a sewing room. You go on and it split two ways. One way was the library and the other way was upstairs to the first dorm, where I was.
21. There were three houses. I was in the one called 'Brechin'. Mrs Montgomery was the housemother and there was another woman whose name I can't remember. In my house, we had our own sitting room and dining-room. There were two toilets on the landing. The staff had a bedroom next door to the dorm and an office in the house.
22. Down the stair there were two single rooms and a toilet, the baths and the classrooms. There were locked doors through to another house. You couldn't leave your house because the doors were locked. Outside there was a tennis court to the right hand side as you went in the building. At the back of the building was the kitchen and you went through it to the laundry.
23. Mr <sup>MTA</sup> was <sup>SNR</sup>. He was tall and bald with a Hitler style moustache. He was about forty years old. Mr <sup>HSB</sup> was <sup>SNR</sup>. <sup>KDR</sup> the teacher was an older woman in her mid-fifties. She had short hair and was big built. Guthrie's wasn't all bad. Mrs Montgomery, the housemother, was really nice. She was beautiful. We called her Gumgums. The cook was called Winnie and she was really nice. <sup>EQL</sup> drove the mini-bus. He had blond hair and was chubby. He leered at you and looked you up and down. He never touched anybody.

## **Routine at Doctor Guthrie's Girl's School**

### *First day*

24. The male social worker took me to Guthrie's in a car. I had shut down and accepted I'd to go there. Nobody told me how long I was going to be there for. We arrived late in the afternoon and went in the front door. I went in for a medical.
25. I was showed into the living-room and met the girls who were in my house. I was taken up to the dorm and showed what bed I was going to be in. We were taken for something to eat and went for a bath. Then we were taken up the stair to our rooms. We got to watch a bit of telly and then went to bed.

### *Mornings and bedtime*

26. If you imagine a square with one side taken away, that was the dorms. There was me and another two girls in the dorm. They were the same age as me. You had a bed and a wee cupboard and set of drawers beside your bed. They were for your clothes and were yours to use. I didn't have much to put in them. Every dorm was connected. At night-time the doors connecting the dorms were locked but the door into the dorm wasn't locked.
27. There were two staff on at night in each house and one always stayed the night. Once you were in the dorm, you didn't go back out unless it was to go to the toilet. Before you went to bed, you had a wash and brushed your teeth. We went to bed at 9:00 pm most nights and 10:00 pm on a Thursday. You could read a book or talk until your lights went out at 11:00 pm. Whatever member of staff was on at night was supposed to patrol the corridor to make sure nothing was going on but they never did that. You got up at 7:00 am. In the morning, the staff opened the door and said, "Right girls."

### *General Routine*

28. I was never out of the kitchen. When everyone was away on leave and I wasn't, I'd be in the kitchen helping the cook. Meals were in the dining-room in your house. The food was fine and we had plenty to eat. We had breakfast, lunch, tea and supper. You were never forced to eat but, if you didn't like the food, you didn't get anything else.
29. I'll never forget the baths. There were five or six big baths and they were all in a line. Some had curtains around them and some didn't. All the girls in my house were in there having a bath. The baths were at set times and were every second day. The baths were taken house by house. There were no showers. There was a row of sinks. You had all your toiletries. There were always two female members of staff in supervising.
30. After school and when you'd done your chores, your time was yours. You could go into the library or sit in the living-room and chat. You could play games, draw or read books. You could get records in and play them at night in the sitting room. You had everything you needed for entertainment.
31. We could watch TV at night in the TV room. The housemother or the other woman who worked in our house would be there. We looked forward to a Thursday night and watching the actress Googie Withers in the programme 'Within These Walls'. We were allowed to sit up until 10:00 pm and watch it. That's when you got your last cigarette and a cup of tea.
32. You got four cigarettes a day. I was only fifteen years old and had to get permission from a parent to smoke. There was no chance I was getting permission from my parents and so [REDACTED] wrote the letter of permission for me. All your cigarette ends were counted to make sure nobody had hid any to keep for later on.
33. There were good times as well. The staff took us out a lot. They had a mini-bus. The staff took us swimming to the Commonwealth Pool. We went to the beach and to an open air pool. Guthrie's have videos of all that because they showed them to us. The

staff took us into Edinburgh. I was friends with [REDACTED] and another girl whose mum sent me parcels.

34. We went to the dentist and the doctor. Three or four of us would go for a check-up at the dentist at the same time or the staff took you if you had toothache. I hate dentists. My tooth had a hole in it and I had toothache. The dentist checked my mouth and the next minute he yanked the tooth out, with no painkillers. It was quite a big tooth. I didn't know what had happened until the tooth was out.
35. I don't think we went to church but a Bible School teacher, Christine, came to us. Bible School was optional and, if you didn't want to go, you didn't need to. We were all given Bibles at the end of it. Christine's daughter and husband came into the school sometimes too. Christine stayed in touch with me and came to visit me with her husband when I left Guthrie's and was working in Largs. She stayed in Edinburgh.
36. We had to do chores. You did them after school. I was given the chore of sanding and staining <sup>SNR</sup> [REDACTED] coffee table, in his office. We had to go down on our hands and knees and polish the stone floor.

*Clothing / uniform*

37. You wore your own clothes. Guthrie's were given money from social work every so often to get us the new clothes we needed. We got whatever we needed. I got a new duffle coat when I was leaving Guthrie's to go to work in Largs. I don't remember being taken to a shop to buy clothes. I think we wore what the staff picked.
38. We did our washing ourselves. You stuffed all your things into a big bag and so nobody saw what you were washing. You went outside the building and through the kitchen door to a laundry room. There were big sinks and wringers to wring out the clothes. There was a big flat iron that was really hot.



### *School*

39. We went into class at 9:00 am and finished at about 4:00 pm. We went back to our own houses for our dinner. There wasn't set subjects. We did a bit of everything like sewing and English. I don't think we did maths. We had one teacher and that was Mrs KDR
40. I wanted to be a nurse. Mrs KDR sent away for exam papers for me to be a nurse even though I was too young. You couldn't go for nursing until you were sixteen years old. It was probably to see how I got on. I filled it all in and sent it away. Mrs KDR said I had done well and I would have qualified. She said I should pursue that career when I got out. Mrs KDR had a bit of faith in me as an academic.

### *Birthdays and Christmas*

41. I had my sixteenth birthday in Guthrie's. I got a cake and a present from Guthrie's. My mum got me a Bay City Rollers hooded top and my friend sent me a wee swan ornament with water and coloured paper in it.
42. One Christmas we got taken to a disco in another boy's school. It wasn't Doctor Guthrie's Boy's School. The disco was good because you were enjoying yourself. I went home for Christmas dinner.

### *Visits / Inspections*

43. My mum told my siblings I was away working when I was in the school. I never got a visit or a letter from anybody, except my social worker. I had the same, male social worker all the time I was in Guthrie's. He was tall with dark hair and slim built. I wondered why my mum didn't visit me, when she visited my brothers in jail. I think my mum hated me.
44. I went home twice on home leaves. I never wanted to go home. The staff took us to Waverley train station in the mini-bus and we got the train home to Glasgow. Going

back to Guthrie's, we'd to be in Glasgow for 3:00 pm. The mini-bus picked us up and took us to Edinburgh. The first home leave was on [REDACTED] 1975. My dad got out of prison that day and I said to my mum I couldn't stay. My mum said I was to stay and she told my dad to leave me alone.

45. The second home leave was at Christmas. Christine offered me to go home to her house for Christmas. She knew I didn't want to go home. I wish I'd said yes. Christine even offered for me to go her house with her family for the weekend because I wasn't going on home leave. I didn't go.
46. Social work must have known that my dad was out of jail because they were involved with me then. The male social worker came to see me half a dozen times when I was in Guthrie's. I wasn't involved in any of the meetings that the social worker had with Guthrie's. The social worker was speaking to the staff about me and I was never included. He spoke to me for ten or fifteen minutes after the meeting. I should have been included in the meetings.
47. Once, the social worker took me for lunch in the town. He asked how I was doing. I told him about me attacking [REDACTED], a girl in Guthrie's, and that she'd been bullying me. Once, he took me to his house when he'd forgotten something. He never did anything.

#### *Running away*

48. Four of us escaped and ran away. One of the other girls was called [REDACTED]. I don't know why I ran away. I think I was going with the flow. We got round the corner before we were caught by the police. The police took us back to Guthrie's. They asked why we'd run away and I said I'd just gone with the flow.
49. There were two cells up the stair. When we got back to the school, we were manhandled to the cells and told that was our lodgings for the weekend. We were told that it was a punishment for absconding. Mr [REDACTED] MTA decided we were going to the cells and he and Mr [REDACTED] HSB took us to the cells.

## *Discipline*

50. There was a points system and you had to earn points for your home leave. I think it was about 200 points to get home. You earned points by doing your chores. I was home twice in the whole time I was there. Points were taken away for fighting, being cheeky to a member of staff or getting caught when somebody gave you cigarettes you were not supposed to have. You could lose points or privileges, if you were reprimanded. Privileges were things like going to the library, into the gardens or out on trips. Cigarettes could be taken from you as well.
51. I never intentionally stepped out of line. My records say I had three reprimands. I don't know if the reprimands I got were from Mr <sup>MTA</sup> or Mr <sup>HSB</sup>. One of the reprimands I got was for not turning up for the bus in Glasgow to take us back to school. It wasn't my fault. I phoned the school right away. My dad sent me from our house, in the snow and rain, up to his pal's at the top of Drumchapel to borrow money for him. I was late back. I told my dad I would miss my train to get to Glasgow to catch the bus and he said I'd to do what I was told. Margaret Jordan was sent all the way from Newton Stewart to Glasgow to pick me up and take me to Guthrie's. I only met Margaret when I went to Guthrie's. She used to take me places but I don't know if she worked at Guthrie's. Nothing else happened about that. The other reprimand was about the fight with [REDACTED]. I don't know what the third reprimand was for.
52. After we ran away, we were put in the cells all weekend. It was not very nice. There were two of us in each cell. I shared with [REDACTED]. The food was put through a wee hatch. There was a wee bit that opened and the staff looked through every now and again to make sure you weren't harming yourself. The staff gave you your breakfast in the morning and said they had a job for us, to paint the walls outside the cells. The four of us painted the walls for the whole weekend.
53. There was a toilet pan in the cell. There wasn't a bed but something like a slat on the wall. There were no blankets. You just wore your nightie and nothing else. I was fine because hot and cold don't bother me. There were no books to read. If other girls were in the corridor they would ask if you were alright or if you needed anything. If the girls



got caught they were in trouble and would be put in the cell next. You were taken out of the cell to get a bath.

54. If you didn't listen in class to Mrs <sup>KDR</sup> [REDACTED], the teacher, she rapped your knuckles with a ruler. She probably did that that to everyone at one point. It wasn't a hard hit and was just to get your attention. She said "Eyes forward, ears opened." Mrs <sup>KDR</sup> [REDACTED] only had to rap my knuckles twice. It probably was because I wasn't paying attention.

### **Abuse at Doctor Guthrie's Girl's School**

55. When you went in for a bath, <sup>SNR</sup> [REDACTED] Mr <sup>MTA</sup> [REDACTED] just walked in. You never knew when he was going to come in. There were no locks on the bathroom door. All the girls were there having their bath. Mr <sup>MTA</sup> [REDACTED] had a look and walked back out. I knew that wasn't right but I didn't say anything. A couple of the girls cracked up and said he shouldn't be in there. Nothing was done about it and Mr <sup>MTA</sup> [REDACTED] was allowed to do what he pleased.

56. [REDACTED] I didn't give myself a second thought. Mr <sup>MTA</sup> [REDACTED] knew my dad had abused me and so he could get away with anything. Mr <sup>MTA</sup> [REDACTED] walked behind you and nipped you on your back at your waist or on your arm.

57. When I was sanding down Mr <sup>MTA</sup> [REDACTED] coffee table, he was always standing over me with his hand on me in a sexual way. One day I said to him that I needed him to give me my space. Mr <sup>MTA</sup> [REDACTED] brought his face right up into my face and asked what I meant. I asked him to please get back or I could report him. Mr <sup>MTA</sup> [REDACTED] said, "Who's going to believe you? [REDACTED]" and slapped the back of my head.

*Peer abuse*

58. The first night I was at Guthrie's, I was in my bed trying to go to sleep. Two girls pasted my eyes shut with toothpaste, peed on me in the bed and slapped me across the face. I don't know if they were from my dorm or another dorm. The girls said I was under their control now. I said to myself, "I don't think so." I got myself cleaned up and turned the mattress round. I washed the sheets the next morning. A girl told me the next day that what happened wasn't malice but was my initiation to Doctor Guthrie's. I was told everybody got the same initiation. Nothing was done about the initiation.
59. [REDACTED] was my bully. She was a big, butch looking girl with long dark hair that she always wore in a ponytail. [REDACTED] got me every time at the swimming. She'd go under the water and grab my legs with her nails. My legs were bleeding and full of nail marks. The staff must have seen it and they never did anything. [REDACTED] nipped me and bumped into me as well.
60. The wee swan ornament I got for my birthday was on the window ledge in the dorm. I loved it. [REDACTED] came in and was looking at the swan. I told her to leave it and [REDACTED] swiped it off the window ledge. I dived on top of her. We were pulled apart by the staff. The only time I remember the staff getting involved is when I retaliated. After that [REDACTED] never touched me again. We became friends at the end. I don't think I was reprimanded for that incident.
61. The girl's sniffed Lady Esquire Shoe Polish and I wasn't into that. A couple of girls got a hold of me at the bottom of the stairs and made me sniff the polish. They left me there. I was high and a couple of staff found me. I denied taking substances. I was sent to the dorm and told to stay away from the other girls. Mrs Montgomery popped in and out to make sure I was okay. I didn't see a doctor and nobody asked me anything more about it. You wouldn't clipe on other girls for that or for hitting you because you would get worse.

## **Leaving Doctor Guthrie's Girl's School**

62. Leaving Guthrie's was discussed at a meeting with the headmaster, my social worker and two other people. The things discussed were where I was going, what was happening and having a follow up after a few weeks. Guthrie's got me a live-in job at a convalescent home for people coming out of hospital. I don't know if Mrs KDR recommended me for it because she knew I wanted to be a nurse. I was to be there as a waitress and not as a carer. I didn't have any choice about where I was going.
63. I was really excited the night before I left. The girls were all really nice and said I had to come back to see them. In the morning I had a bath and my breakfast. I put my own clothes on again to go out. The staff handed me the duffle coat when I was leaving. That felt nice. It felt good that I was leaving and going to employment, not back home.

## **Life after being in care**

64. I was taken to [REDACTED] Convalescent Home, [REDACTED] Largs by my social worker. He introduced me to the matron. The job was serving the patients their meals. The wages were £10.05 every week. They were mostly elderly patients and a few in their twenties. There was a follow-up to see if the job suited me and it did. That was the last time I heard from Guthrie's or my social worker. I was on my own then. I worked at the home for six months.
65. I had to leave because I had mumps and it was taking a long time for me to be cured. I was sixteen years old. I went to stay with a woman who worked in the convalescent home for a couple of months and didn't go back to work at the home.
66. I worked in different hotels in Largs. Then, me and my pal hitch hiked to London. After that I worked in Pontin's holiday camp. I wasn't well and had my appendix removed. I went back home to my mum's. I couldn't stay there and only stayed a week. I left my mum's and never returned. I was still sixteen years old.

67. My brother was in prison and asked me to be a pen pal to [REDACTED] who wasn't getting any letters or visits. Me, being stupid and knowing what that was like not getting any letters, said aye. [REDACTED] was charming in his letters but not charming in himself. I ended up staying with him for ten years and we had three kids.
68. When [REDACTED] came out of prison he asked if I had something to tell him about my dad. [REDACTED] said he knew all about the abuse [REDACTED]. I had sent my photo in and [REDACTED] had recognised me and told him all about it. I had a life of hell with [REDACTED]. He didn't batter the kids, just me. In 1985, [REDACTED] stabbed me right through the hand. I ended up in hospital and my kids ended up in care.
69. My oldest son was knocked down by a car and was in a coma for months. I fought social work through the court to get him back but it didn't work out. He was a different boy after the accident and I've not brought him up.
70. I took in two girls whose mum had died in a fire. One night, their boyfriends were around and there was an attempted murder in my house. I had to move out of that area.
71. I met [REDACTED]. He was so lovely and my life changed from then. He was brilliant with my kids and we went on holidays. [REDACTED] passed away at the age of 44, ten years ago. I've worked constantly in hotels and pubs.

## Impact

72. [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later  
[REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to [REDACTED] I told [REDACTED] I was in Doctor Guthrie's School last year. She didn't know before then.

73. I got so used to having bad times in my life that I didn't know what a good time was until I met [REDACTED]. My dad was the start of my life going wrong and Guthrie's set the pattern for the rest of my life. Guthrie's was a big part of my life going wrong. I didn't know if I was coming or going. I was just sixteen years old and I was put out to a job. My life when I got the job at Largs was not bad. I was doing what I wanted and nobody was telling me what to do.
74. I blanked out Guthrie's and never thought about it. I saw a post on Facebook about Doctor Guthrie's saying it was being looked into and I thought maybe this was the time to tell my story. I thought maybe somebody would listen. I was never listened to.
75. What I went through made me a stronger person. I'm everybody's counsellor and people come to me when they need help. I need to get rid of that part of my life. I can't be here for everybody else and not think of myself. I've never thought about myself.
76. I have a bit of faith in myself as an academic. I'm not stupid. I sat all my O' Levels but I never got the results. My mum must have got the results but never showed me them. I wish I knew how I got on at my exams. I tried to find out my O' Level results years ago but I couldn't get them.
77. Getting my kids taken from me was the worst thing that ever happened to me. Not one of my family stepped up to take my weans. My kids should never have been in care. I never did anything wrong.
78. I'm under the doctor for severe anxiety and depression and I don't leave the house. I have Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease.
79. If I was claiming compensation then I would go the whole road and have my day in court. I don't know what I want except that I want all this to go away and I want to be believed.



## **Treatment / support**

80. I didn't get counselling after what happened with my dad. I had twelve weeks counselling from Future Pathways before I spoke to the Inquiry. It was nice to talk to somebody but the counselling maybe should have been after speaking to the Inquiry. Future Pathways did say if I wanted more counselling I can have it. I don't know if I'll do that. I've survived this long.

## **Records**

81. I got my records from Doctor Guthrie's. They're absolutely terrible. There's nothing on them. There's my date of entry and a couple of reprimands where they say no action was taken. There's no mention of being stuck in a cell for the weekend and painting walls. The date I went to court is there and the date I left. There's one meeting I had with social work for Doctor Guthrie's to say whether I was keeping the job in Largs they'd applied for, for me. I said I was keeping the job. That was it.
82. There's nothing about the care I had or anything that happened in there. There's no background at all. Nine months of my life I spent in that place and there's not a thing. I'm still waiting for my social work reports.
83. Birthlink asked for the police records about [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] The police say they have no information about the allegations due to the passage of time. That makes me feel they're making me out to be a liar.

## **Lessons to be Learned**

84. There should be records kept of time in care. I was in Guthrie's for nine months and there's nothing. That should be looked into.

85. Children should be invited into the social work meetings, not kept to the side and having a five minute chat after the meeting. Children should be given a voice and should be listened to.

**Other information**

86. I hope I'll be heard and believed so that I can live the rest of my life in peace.

87. 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 *29.10.2021* .....