

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

LXK

Support person present: No

1. My name is LXK. My date of birth is 1958. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. My father was called and my mother was called. My father was a miner and my mother was a housewife. I have two brothers and one sister. was two years older than me, is about two and a half years younger than me and is ten years younger than me. My mother had another daughter from another relationship but I don't have any relationship with her.
3. We lived on in Dalkeith until I was five or six years old. We then moved to a brand new house on, also in Dalkeith. I went to Kings Park Primary School. Things were fine at home until I was about eight or nine. That was when my parents started to argue constantly. My mother left the family home when I was ten and a half years old. By that time was about twelve and a half, was about eight and was about eighteen months. After my mother left our neighbours looked after my younger brother when my father was at work.
4. I started staying out all the time and getting into trouble. I was breaking into cars and stealing loose change. That's what resulted in social workers and the police getting involved with me. I was ultimately placed in Liberton for the first time in about 1968.

Liberton Assessment Centre, Dalkeith Edinburgh

5. I was in Liberton at least three or four times over my time in care between the ages of ten and a half and fourteen and a half. The first time I was there was in about 1969. On each occasion I was there for two or three weeks. Liberton was a place that was used so that you could be assessed before further decisions were made.
6. I got a couple of slaps and kicks at Liberton but it was no worse than I got at school. There were two members of staff that everyone avoided but I can't remember their names. They would slap you for no reason around the back of the head or around your ears. If you just got on with things they left you alone. I remember that the mantra was to never say you were a Catholic so that you weren't sent to St Joseph's in Tranent. Back then St Joseph's had a bad reputation regarding the monks being violent.
7. I was sent from Liberton to Dr Guthrie's by a juvenile court. The juvenile court was part of the Sheriff Court. Over the course of my time in care they changed from juvenile courts to children's hearings. Children's hearings were more informal. One morning, after attending a hearing, the staff in Liberton told me to get my stuff ready because I was leaving to go to an approved school. I remember that a social worker took me in a car even though I could have walked there. Dr Guthrie's was just up the road.

Dr Guthrie's List D School, Edinburgh

8. I was in Dr Guthrie's on two separate occasions. The first occasion was between the ages of ten and a half and about thirteen or fourteen. That would have been approximately between 1969 and 1971 or 1972. The second occasion I was there I was there between the ages of fourteen and about fourteen and a half. That would have been between approximately 1972 and 1973. Dr Guthrie's was run by the council.

The children at Dr Guthrie's

9. The boys ranged in age from eight to sixteen. I didn't know any of the other boys when I was there. They were all from East Lothian, Fife and Edinburgh and there was no one from Midlothian.

Layout

10. Dr Guthrie's had a big square parade ground located in the centre of the school. The dormitories were called Argyll, Belhaven, Jeffrey and Stair. I believe they were named after hills. Argyll and Belhaven were in one wing and Jeffrey and Stair were in another. Between the two wings was a room where a member of staff would stay overnight. There were two small dormitories at the bottom of each wing which housed the boys who worked in the kitchens. SNR room was next to Belhaven. It overlooked the parade ground. The matron's room was right next to SNR office. Right opposite were the shower rooms. The dining hall was downstairs. There was a swimming pool on site and playing fields to the back.

Staff

11. I think SNR was called Mr zGFC during my times there. He was a nasty piece of work with the belt. He always seemed to be watching you. Mr GVI was SNR during my times there. He was also handy with the belt.
12. There were staff members who were teachers. LXT was the teacher I was allocated to speak to if I had any problems. He was a maths teacher. Mr Thorne was a science teacher. He was a nice man. Mr LYI was an art teacher. He was a good artist and he showed you how to paint. He was also in charge of the dining room. He could be handy with his fists if you didn't speak to him the right way but he was alright. Miss Jack was a teacher but I didn't have a lot to do with her. She was a nasty piece of work.

13. There were other staff members who didn't have a teaching role. There was a male cook and two female cooks. There was a seamstress and a matron.

Routine at Dr Guthrie's List D School

First day

14. My first impression was that Dr Guthrie's was absolutely massive. One of my earliest memories surrounds having a big bag of sweets. I thought the staff would take them off me but they didn't. I was allowed to eat them any time I wanted. After arriving I had a conversation with someone about where to go and what to do. I was then showed to my bed. They then stuck me in a classroom and I started to get to meet people.

Sleeping arrangements

15. All the dormitories were mixed age. There were approximately thirty boys in each dormitory. I was in Argyll the first time I was in Dr Guthrie's and Belhaven the second time I was there. We got up early every morning at 6:30am or 6:45am before making our beds and having a wash. We went to bed at 8:30pm.

Mealtimes / food

16. Everyone sat together at mealtimes. There were ten to twelve boys at each table. Five boys would sit at each side with one at either end. There was a male cook and two female cooks but the majority of the food was prepared by the boys under their supervision. The food wasn't bad apart from the soup which was terrible. When some boys had visitors at the weekends they would be given gifts like fruit. Those boys would barter for cigarettes using their gifts so there was always plenty of food going around over and above mealtimes.

17. Mr LYI was in charge of the dining room. He walked around with a clipboard. He would use his clipboard to batter you on the top of your head if you misbehaved in the dining hall. There was a points system used to monitor our behaviour. The table that got the most points was treated to a big bowl of ice cream. If you had a tiny spot of gravy on your clothes that would be a mark against you. If you didn't finish your meal you were given it the next day for supper. Some boys put food in their pockets to get rid of it so that they would get the ice cream at the end of the week.

Washing / bathing

18. There was a large bathroom which was big enough for ten to twelve boys to shower in at any one time. There were also a couple of baths in there. You had to have a shower every day. You never had any privacy. There was always a member of staff standing at the door telling you how to wash yourself.

Clothing / uniform

19. You wore different clothes depending on whether you were going to school or working. We had a blue shirt, blue tie and shorts or long trousers. You wore shorts until you were thirteen or fourteen when they gave you long trousers. It was the seamstress who decided when this happened. We had boots for working in, shoes for drum marching and rubbers for the gym. You were allocated a locker to keep your uniform in. There were two big racks at the bottom of the dormitory where you kept your weekend clothes to wear for when you got out. I never really got out so I didn't have any weekend clothes.
20. If you damaged your clothes you had to go and see the seamstress. She hated giving you new clothes and would repair things wherever possible. She would give you a clout for damaging your clothes when you saw her. Everyone laughed about this because it didn't hurt.

School / chores

21. We didn't get much education because we were so busy doing chores during the day. School finished at 4:00pm. If you were bright enough you could go to classes at night like woodwork or art. I remember that we had to make our own beds in the woodwork house during the classes we had there. This saved the school buying beds in. There was a machinist and some boys were taught how to sew and repair clothing.
22. Chores included digging up slabs of concrete from the parade ground, making sure the showers were cleaned, making sure the landings were cleaned and making sure all the beds were made in each dorm. Sweeping up and mopping took a few hours every day. Some boys would work in the kitchen. I remember those boys got lots of treats because they were up very early in the mornings making breakfast.

Letter writing

23. You had to write letters to your parents. If you didn't do that you didn't get any weekend leave. LXT [REDACTED], who was a teacher there, showed me how to write a letter. I remember that I didn't get any replies to any of my letters. Years later I discovered that my father was semi-literate. That explained why I never received anything back.

Leave / weekends

24. You got weekend leave when you had been there for three or four months. Leave was dependant on your behaviour. In order to get leave you had to keep yourself clean and tidy with polished shoes and had to study. The teacher gave you a mark every week which determined whether and when you could go. Some boys got out on a Friday night at 5:00pm. They had to be back on a Sunday by 5:00pm. Others got out on Saturday morning or early afternoon and had to be back on a Sunday at 7:30pm.

25. When I was thirteen or fourteen I got out for the weekend to visit my father in Dalkeith. That was the first time I got out on leave for three or four years. The house was a tip. I couldn't stay there because I was so used to everything being prim and proper. I decided that I wanted to stay with my grandad who lived nearby. Sadly, social workers were keeping an eye on me and because I didn't stay at my father's house I wasn't allowed home leave again.
26. Looking back, I didn't really get out for weekend leave during my times in Dr Guthrie's. I wasn't that bothered because the weekends used to be alright because you had the run of the place. The staff weren't as strict as they were during the week. You got sympathy because you weren't getting out so you got to go and work in the staff room and make them tea. I would use the opportunity to pinch cigarettes.

Leisure time

27. If you weren't doing classes in the evenings you could sit in the TV room and watch television. They put on sports at Dr Guthrie's. Football teams would come at the weekend to play against us. We also played tennis and badminton. There was a small swimming pool which we would use for swimming. The boys always swam naked. There were female teachers supervising. One of them was called Miss Jack. She was always there.

Trips / holidays

28. Boys went on trips at the weekends regularly. Some staff members would get their favourite boy to go and work in their home and dig their garden. There was a minibus leaving every weekend to go somewhere like camping or canoeing. Every summer we went to Thorntonloch in Dunbar. About thirty or forty boys went and we slept in old army tents. There was a big field and a dining room come community room there. It was pretty good but every morning they got us up at 5:30am or 5:45am to go to the beach. I remember that when we got to the beach we had to strip naked and go into the water.

Visits

29. From aged eleven until aged twenty one I never had one visit from a family member at any of the places I stayed. Throughout my times at Dr Guthrie's social workers visited me regularly. I was able to talk to them privately but I didn't trust authority whatsoever. Looking back, I told them what they wanted to hear just to get them off my back. I got the impression that they weren't interested in what I had to say anyway.

Healthcare

30. There was a matron who showed you things like how to cut your toenails. She also looked after you if you were sick. If you were sick you were sent to bed. There were other healthcare people who came in to Dr Guthrie's. A dentist came into the home to see us occasionally. There was a psychologist who would come into Dr Guthrie's. I spoke to him a few times.
31. Dr Guthrie's took head lice really seriously. Whether you were out for the weekend or not, every Sunday you had to kneel at the end of your bed and have a cup of chemicals poured over your head to kill any head lice that might be there. I did get injured when I was at Dr Guthrie's. On one occasion we were using the swimming pool at Gracemount High School. Whilst there I slipped and cut my wrist badly. I had to attend hospital and have stitches placed in my arm. I remember that the staff accused me of slipping deliberately. Because of that I wasn't allowed to go swimming again.

Running away

32. Boys ran away regularly. At one stage I ran away every other week. I was never away for longer than a couple of hours. I always went back to my house in Dalkeith because I had nowhere else to go. The police would go there, get me and take me straight back again. You would get belted if you ran away. I remember receiving six of the best for running away from both Mr zGFC and Mr GVI.

Bed-wetting

33. If you wet the bed you had a thick rubber sheet put on your bed. The boys who wet the bed got a hard time for it from the staff. The boys would have to clean their sheets after themselves.

Discipline and punishment at Dr Guthrie's List D School

34. The belt was used at Dr Guthrie's by both Mr zGFC and Mr GVI. Mr zGFC always seemed to know when you had done something wrong. He was omnipresent. He would punish you for things you had done wrong maybe a week previously. If you had done something wrong you would be waiting to be woken at 2:00am. Mr zGFC would send one of his trusted boys to tell you to go down to his office at that time. When you were belted you were belted on your hands or on your bottom. The first time Mr zGFC belted me was when I told Mr GVI that I was being abused by Mr LXT. On other occasions he belted me because I had run away.

Abuse at Dr Guthrie's List D School

35. It was a strict place. It was like the army because we marched everywhere. It always felt that something was simmering and about to kick off. There was an incident every day and there were gang fights. You were walking on eggshells all the time.

Bullying amongst boys

36. I was bullied so I had to learn to stand up for myself. I got a hard time from the other boys at Dr Guthrie's because I came from a broken home. The other boys automatically assumed that my family were living on benefits. That was never the case because my father worked all his life. One of the things I was teased about

surrounded pocket money. The staff put a table up showing who had the most savings. I never had any because I didn't have any visitors to give me money. I was teased about this. The boys would say that my father was on the dole and this was why I didn't have any money.

Mr GVI

37. Mr GVI was called GVI because of the way he walked. as a result of an accident. That's what resulted in his funny way of walking. He would belt the boys. I remember him physically beating me up and punching me when I tried to report things to him.

LXT

38. LXT was the maths teacher in Dr Guthrie's. He told me that he was a pilot in the Second World War. He was in his mid-fifties and was tall and quite thin. He started being nice to me because I didn't have weekend leave. He would ask me about my family and start telling me things.
39. After every one of his classes one or two boys stayed behind to sweep up, put the chairs on the table, tidy up, clean the blackboard and put everything away. I was picked for that role by LXT after one of the boys left. He picked me to replace the boy who had left. I remember that LXT would stand very close to me and would touch me whilst I was tidying up. When I was cleaning the blackboard he would come up behind me and push into me.
40. Over time LXT started giving me cigarettes and telling me that he would get me out for the weekend. The school every so often used to get tickets for the ABC cinema on the Lothian Road. On one occasion LXT took me to see "Paint Your Wagon." After the film he took me back to his flat on . I think the flat belonged to Dr Guthrie's. It was a bedsit and the bed was folded up against the wall. Inside the flat LXT asked me if I liked apple juice. I said I did and he gave me some. In reality it was actually cider. He gave me a cigarette

too. I think he gave me those things so that I would feel relaxed. He then said that if I did things for him then he would do things for me. He told me that I was too hot and that he would make me take my clothes off. He then did what he wanted to do with me. Afterwards he took me back to Dr Guthrie's. I was left wondering what had just happened. As time went on LXT started taking me away for longer periods over the weekends. He had a static caravan at Caravan Park in . He would take me there and abuse me.

41. I remember that LXT always talked about the Isle of Tiree. He said it was the most beautiful place on earth. Sometimes he would drive towards Tiree and stop in very remote places and abuse me. He would give me a couple of cans of cider before he did that. When I started fighting back he started giving me a small blue tablet. The next thing I knew I was there but I wasn't there. I had a constant cloud in my head.
42. I remember one weekend when I was fourteen he drove me to Dalkeith, had a conversation with my dad and came back with a piece of paper in his hand. The piece of paper was obviously something my dad had signed. I remember that my dad couldn't look at me after he signed that piece of paper. I don't know what it was.
43. Although LXT was sexually abusive towards me he was never violent towards me. The abuse took place throughout my time at Dr Guthrie's over both occasions I was there. It took only a matter of months for LXT abuse to start after going back the second time.

Reporting of abuse at Dr Guthrie's

44. Mr GVI noticed a change in me after LXT abuse started. I decided to tell him what had happened at the flat. I remember that when I told Mr GVI what had happened he went white and said that he would look into it. He then smacked me for telling lies. Later on I was dragged down to see Mr zGFC. I was in front of Mr zGFC at about 2:00am. Mr zGFC interrogated me about what

had happened. He told me that the school didn't take kindly to people lying. He refused to believe what I had reported as having happened. Mr **zGFC** then gave me the belt.

45. After trying to report what happened to Mr **GVI** I decided to keep my mouth shut. I started getting into more and more trouble. I remember Mr Thorne was always trying to get me to tell him what was happening. I wouldn't though because of the doing I received when I told Mr **GVI**. You learned very quickly to keep your mouth shut.

The circumstances surrounding leaving Dr Guthrie's (on both occasions)

46. Everyone was given a target date when they would be released if they behaved themselves. Over my times at Dr Guthrie's I did behave. However, even with that I just kept going to children's panels and wasn't released. I eventually got to leave Dr Guthrie's the first time when I was about thirteen or fourteen. That would have been at some point between 1971 and 1972. On that occasion I went back to Dalkeith to stay with my father. I went to Dalkeith High for about three weeks during this period. Things happened with a few boys after I was released. I ended up needing to go back to Liberton before being released. I was back in there a couple of times more. I think they were deciding what to do with me. I remember that on one occasion Liberton couldn't accommodate me so I was put into Wellington Farm for a week or ten days instead. After going to Wellington Farm I was sent back to Dr Guthrie's.
47. I was fourteen the second time I arrived at Dr Guthrie's. That would have been in about 1972. About seven or eight months before my fifteenth birthday I tried to attack **LXT** with a stool in the classroom. The panic button was activated and I was dragged downstairs. There followed an enquiry into what happened. During the enquiry I admitted that I tried to hit **LXT**. I told Mr **GVI** why I had done what I had done. I then requested to see my social worker.

48. My social worker came up to see me after a couple of days. The upshot was that I was removed from Dr Guthrie's and put into Liberton for about three weeks. I attended a children's hearing and it was decided that I would be moved somewhere else. The next thing I knew I was sent to Oakbank in Aberdeen.

Oakbank, Aberdeen

49. I went to Oakbank in Aberdeen when I was fourteen and a half. That was in about 1972. Oakbank was a totally different place to Dr Guthrie's. It was much more relaxed. The staff there were actual teachers. I enjoyed Oakbank and I grew up a lot there. In Oakbank you were treated like an adult. They were trying to help you.
50. I got three meals a day and I could do as much sport as I wanted. That was a huge contrast to my time in care when I was younger. Every other Saturday, and sometimes during the week, I went to Pittodrie football ground to help sweep it up. We used to love it because we would find money which the supporters had lost. I really enjoyed myself.
51. I was on edge for a long time and a lot of the staff could see that. They tried to gain my confidence but I was wary because I didn't want to show any sign of weakness. I didn't witness or experience any physical or sexual abuse except the odd slap around the head. I got a couple of slaps and a couple of kicks but that was just what happened then.

Leaving Oakbank / life after care

52. When I was fifteen and a half, in about 1973, I was taken to a room in Oakbank by my social worker. My social worker told me that I could be released that day on condition that I went to live with my mother. I hadn't seen her since I was ten and a half but that was where I was going to go. I went to live with my mother in Jedburgh

and went to the local grammar school. I was totally out of my league at the school and couldn't settle. I eventually left school and got a job on a farm picking turnips.

53. I ended up returning back to Dalkeith. I left Dalkeith when I was sixteen and didn't come back until I was twenty one. During that time I was convicted for a lot of offences that I didn't commit resulting in me spending a lot of time in borstals in England. I was in Kirklevinton detention centre in Newcastle when I was seventeen. They offered me the opportunity to transfer to Polmont but I refused because it had the reputation of being one of the hardest places in Britain. Scotland was behind the times back then. In England they were trying to rehabilitate you. In Scotland they kept you in care until you were eighteen and then booted you out.
54. After borstal I returned back to Dalkeith. I have not been in trouble since I was twenty one. I got a job labouring on a building site. I did labouring until three years ago when I had a breakdown. Things started catching up on me and I had to stop working for my own safety.

Impact

55. **LXT** has destroyed my life. What he did has affected me in so many ways. I have a bit of an issue with authority but I recognise that they have a job to do. I regret missing out on my education. My son is hoping to go to university and both my daughter and my step daughter went. That's not something I got to experience because of my time in care.
56. I have been married twice and have a child from each of the marriages. Never once did I bathe my children, dry my children or put their clothes on. I had it in my head that I might be a danger to them because I read somewhere that someone who has been abused becomes an abuser. I never went into a room when they were naked or in their underwear because I never wanted to put myself in a situation where I could be accused of doing anything. Both of my marriages failed and I lost my

home. I married two beautiful women, and I am close to them now, but I feel guilty about what I did to them in the past.

57. I don't know how I will respond to gay members of my family if they ever ask me whether I have ever had a sexual relationship with a man. I don't want to lie, even though it wasn't consensual.

Treatment / support

58. My mental health problems are related to my time in care. I have ongoing psychiatric treatment because I have been diagnosed with chronic depression. I have been diagnosed as bi-polar and have been on anti-depressants for over twenty five years.

Reporting of abuse in adult life / records

59. I have never reported what happened to me to anyone in adult life. I haven't spoken to the police. Speaking to the Inquiry is the first time I have talked about what I experienced whilst in care. I have never tried to recover my records

Lessons to be learned / hopes for the Inquiry

60. I believe that children should be treated like adults and not like objects. I hope by sharing my evidence that I can give children some hope.
61. 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.. LXK

Dated... *6-1-22*