

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

GDQ

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is GDQ. My date of birth is 1969. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in Prestonpans and in the house at the time were my mum, and my sister who was two years older than me. My dad, had moved to Wales and I have no real memory of him.
3. We moved to when my mum married my step-father, who was in the Merchant Navy. I think I was nine or ten when they married. From then on my surname was changed to GDQ.
4. Neither me nor my sister could take to our step-father and always felt that he was breaking up the circle that was us and our mum. He would be away often on trips to sea but I hated it when he came back and as a result I kept running away from home.
5. I ended up appearing in front of the children's panel a few times though the only police involvement was when they took me back home when they caught me when I ran away. My first social worker was Maggie Dempster, then when I was thirteen or fourteen it was Ian Fowler. They worked for Fife Council and were alright.

6. I ended up in several children's homes as a result of this. The first was St Olafs in Kirkcaldy when I was nine or ten and I was in there for a few months before going back to my mum and step-dad. The reason I ended up there was because my mum had gone on holiday for a week leaving me and my sister alone in the house.
7. I ran away again and ended up in Ribleton House in Glenrothes when I was ten. I was there for six months before going back home again to see if we could work things out. I was sent to a day school at St Joseph's in Aberdour but when my step-dad came back from sea I ran away again.
8. That was when I was sent to Dr Guthrie's in Edinburgh. This is a List D school and is the only place I was ever in that I have a complaint about. I was eleven and it wrecked my life. The other places were actually better than my family home and I was keeping up with my schooling.
9. While I was in the various homes my sister was in Ribleton House, the long-term unit, as she couldn't get on with my step-dad either.

Dr Guthries, Edinburgh

10. I was taken to Dr Guthries by my social worker Ian Fowler but I can't recall who it was we met when we first arrived. He took me there from Ribleton House where I had been for a couple of days until, I think, a place was prepared for me at Dr Guthries.
11. I remember we were shown into an office then I was shown around and Ian Fowler left. I was given my number which was ■■■ They then took all my clothes and gave me a uniform of jeans, sweat shirt and a T shirt.
12. That night, while I was watching TV a member of staff came up to me and doused my hair with oil that is used to kill nits. They didn't even warn me they were going to do it and the stuff ended up in my eyes.

13. I was put in a dorm with between fourteen or sixteen boys who were all roughly the same age as me.
14. Dr Guthries was a very regimented place. Everything had to be done at a certain time and in a certain manner. It was almost run like the army.
15. Mr ^{GFC} [REDACTED] was the ^{SNR} [REDACTED] and stayed in the home. I rarely had any dealings with him. ^{GBD} [REDACTED] was a member of staff who I remember always smelled of aftershave. Another one I recall was ^{GUH} [REDACTED] the night-watchman who stayed outside the school but would come in at night time and walk around the dorms making sure everything was ok. I don't recall the names of other members of staff.

Routine at Dr Guthries

16. We got up at about 7:00 am which was done by a member of staff coming in and shouting at us to get up and would put the lights on. We then went to get showered before going back to the dorm to get dressed and air our beds.
17. After this we would have to sit on the stairs where we would be joined by boys from other dorms. There were four dorms in all, each holding about sixteen boys of varying ages.
18. We would then all go down for breakfast which was usually a breakfast roll with cereal and tea. When we finished we would tidy up after us taking our plates and cups to a hatch.
19. After breakfast we would have assembly which was when Mr ^{GFC} [REDACTED] would come in and, if anybody had gotten into trouble, he would ask for them to come and see him in his office.

20. We would then go to school which was on site. We would stay in school till lunchtime when we would return to the dining room before returning to school for afternoon lessons until 3:30 pm. There was maybe seven or eight in each class and the teachers mostly came from outside.
21. After school we would play in the big square or, as often as not, jump into the toilets for a quick smoke. You could play football or whatever in the square then you would go up to your dorm.
22. We would have tea at about 5:00 pm in the dining room. We didn't have any chores to do other than shining our shoes in the morning. I can't recall what time we went to bed at but just before we did we could watch TV or play pool during which time you would have your pyjamas and night-coat on.
23. Sometimes in the evening we would go to the nearby scouts which I only joined because it meant getting out of the home for a while. Also, now and again you would go away camping with them.
24. At the weekend a lot of the boys could go home but I didn't get home often as my mum was often away on a sea-trip with my step-dad.

Mealtimes / Food

25. The food was alright though nothing special. We were always well fed.

Washing / bathing

26. You had to take a shower every morning which was supervised.

Discipline

27. They didn't give anybody the belt at St Guthrie's. The main punishment for anybody that broke the rules was that you didn't get to go home at the weekend. GBD GBD would throw his keys at you or hit you with one of his clogs but other than that there was no physical punishment.

School

28. We had all the classes that you would have had in an outside school though I don't recall doing any exams during the two years that I was there.

Trips / Holidays

29. We did not go on any trips while I was at the school or go on holiday anywhere other than when I was taken on camping trips with the scouts.

Birthdays and Christmas

30. I have no recollection of anybody's birthday being celebrated and I was always home for Christmas.

Visits / Inspections/ Review of Detention

31. I never received any visits from anybody though I remember other boys did. I'm not aware of any official visits and if they happened I have no knowledge of them.

Healthcare

32. I once got a cut on my arm while climbing through a window and this was dealt with by the matron. If it had been serious I would have been taken to the hospital. There were two matrons, one who looked after the swimming pool and the other who was in charge.

Running away

33. I only ran away on the one occasion. I was walking to the school when I saw the fields and just ran for it. However I was caught after about five minutes. I don't recall being punished for this or being asked why I had run away.

Bed Wetting

34. I have no recollection of bedwetting being a problem for me or any of the other boys during my time in Dr Guthries.

Abuse at Dr Guthries

35. The school had both a swimming pool and a gymnasium. When you were swimming it was always under the supervision of one of the matrons. To this day I don't understand why it was we all had to swim naked in front of her. We were never issued with trunks. I don't recall her name.
36. GBD the teacher I mentioned earlier, used to get you to massage his shoulders. He wore clogs which he would hit you with whenever it took his fancy and carried a big set of keys that he would hit you with. That was really painful.

37. Within the school there was a hierarchy amongst the boys. Those in the top tier ruled the roost. In what I would call the second tier was a boy called [REDACTED] He was a couple of years older than me. He had ginger hair and freckles and he came from Gilmartin.
38. At the weekends most of the boys would go home though I rarely did. Often I was left alone in my dorm or sometimes there were just a few of us there. My bed was closest to the door.
39. One night at the start of my second year there, I believe it was a Saturday or Sunday night, [REDACTED] came into the dorm and over to my bed. He woke me, grabbed me and told me to be quiet.
40. [REDACTED] told me he would kill me if I said anything or didn't do as he said. He said that where he was from it was easy to have somebody killed. I was a quiet, mild-mannered boy and couldn't stick up for myself. I was terrified.
41. He then forced me to give him oral sex and then penetrated me. This lasted until he was finished. This abuse of me by [REDACTED] continued every weekend thereafter until I left the school which was about a year later.
42. There was never any problem during the week. It only happened at the weekend when most of the boys were away. However, both [REDACTED] ^{GBD} and the night watchman [REDACTED] ^{GUH} were there and saw him coming into my dorm. They saw what was happening through the window of the dorm.
43. I can't remember if there were any other boys in my dorm when this was happening but, if there were, they would have been at the other end of the dorm or would have been too scared to say anything. I don't know if he ever assaulted any of the other boys.

44. After two years in St Guthries, I was thirteen, I was told one day that I was leaving and was taken back to Rimbleton. However, after just two nights I was taken back to Dr Guthries by my social worker Ian Fowler.
45. We were taken into the visiting room and I just lost the plot. I just couldn't handle being put back in there knowing I would once more be abused by [REDACTED]. I smashed all the windows in the visiting room.
46. GBD [REDACTED] and GUH [REDACTED] came in to the room and restrained me. They then took me in to the medical room where they strapped me to a bed. There was a clock there and I'll always remember that I was strapped to the bed at 6:00 pm and wasn't released until twelve hours later at 6:00 am.
47. How on earth were they able to get away with doing that to a wee boy? I wasn't physically injured but I couldn't get up for a drink or get fed and ended up wetting myself. This went on for twelve hours and has stayed with me all my life.
48. Staff did come in and check on me from time to time but at no time did they offer me any help or assistance. I was terrified. When they untied me I was taken for a shower, got dressed and taken back to Rimbleton. They acted as if nothing had happened.
49. The irony is that by smashing the windows I got chucked out of Dr Guthries. If only I had known it was as easy as that I would have done it long before.

Reporting of abuse at Dr Guthries

50. When I had been taken out of Dr Guthries and then returned after just two days, I did try and tell my social worker Ian Fowler. I didn't give him all the details about what [REDACTED] had been doing to me but I tried to tell him I just couldn't go back there. He basically ignored me.

51. There was nobody in the school I could talk to about it. Also I was convinced my life was in danger if I said anything about what [REDACTED] was doing as I was sure he would kill me.
52. I did tell my nana about it one time when I stayed with her one weekend but she was too old to do anything about it. I loved staying with her. She was a great person. Talking to her was like getting things off my chest.

Leaving Dr Guthries

53. After the horrible experience of having been tied to a bed for twelve hours Ian Fowler took me back to Rimpleton. I had been there a few times before [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be [REDACTED]
54. I was only there for a short period before I was moved to Melville. I stayed there till I was sixteen [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED]
55. [REDACTED]
56. While at Melville I got a placement working at an old folk's home which I continued to do after I left Melville at sixteen. Once I left that was me no longer under the jurisdiction of the social work department and I changed my surname back to [REDACTED] GDQ [REDACTED]

Life after being in care

57. I worked in the old folk's home in [REDACTED] until I was eighteen. When I left there I moved to Dunfermline where I got married. The marriage only lasted a few months

though my son [REDACTED] was a result of it. I haven't had contact with my son and his daughter for some time now mainly because of my drug addiction

58. I also have two daughters from two other relationships.
59. I worked as a bouncer in a pub [REDACTED] and have worked in various capacities in security all over the country. I also obtained my licence to be a bodyguard.

Impact

60. At the time when I was getting abused I struggled to get to sleep. [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions -
Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED]
61. I was always trying to block out what happened to me at Dr Guthrie's and ended up on drugs though I have now been clean for a year though I still suffer from depression for which I take Diazepam. I've often thought about suicide.
62. My present GP is very good. She's not the sort that will simply hand out a prescription. She sits and listens to you.
63. I've always had difficulties with relationships as a result of what happened at Dr Guthries. I have never lifted my hand to a woman but I was always getting depressed when the relationships didn't work out and they tended not to work out because I always had this in the back of my mind.
64. I have spent my adult life being embarrassed by what happened and always felt that somehow, I allowed it to happen. However about five years back I got involved with a group who taught me that I was a survivor not a victim. They made me realise that what had happened wasn't something I should be embarrassed about.

Reporting of Abuse

65. I have never reported the abuse that I suffered to anybody.

Records

66. I have never tried to get my records.

Lessons to be Learned

67. Children shouldn't be frightened to talk about things. They should have somebody they can trust and talk to. They shouldn't have to live or suffer in silence.

68. 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.

GDQ 

Signed.....

Dated..... 29 JUNE 2018