

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

HCL

Support person present: Yes

1. My full name is HCL This was my name at birth and whilst in care. My date of birth is 1955. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before care

2. I was born in in Edinburgh. My dad was My mother was called They were married before I was born. My mother later remarried after splitting up with my dad and her name became .
3. My oldest sibling was my sister, , who was about seven years older than me. Then it was , who was about five years older than me, and , who was three years older than me.
4. My family moved to when I was a baby.
5. When I was eleven months old, my sister, , came along. Then my brother, GRC , who was three years younger than me, and , who was about four years younger than me. The baby of the family was , who was five or six years younger than me.

6. I went to Drylaw Primary School. It was ok to a certain point and I was good at school. One of the teachers didn't like me because I was from a poor family. She wanted to give me the belt once because I was a faster reader than everyone else in the class.
7. My childhood was abysmal. We were a big family and my mum used to hide food from us. She was a mean, cruel woman. Once, I knocked her cigarettes and lighter off the mantelpiece and into the fire by accident, and she hit me with a poker and was going to beat me even more, but my sister [REDACTED] stopped her by hitting her with a shovel.
8. My mum went off with another man and left us when I was about ten years old.
9. There was no social work or welfare involved with the family. My dad was very independent and a pure gentleman. He didn't take any help from anyone. He worked as a porter at the Western General Hospital, then went to work at Duncan's Chocolate Factory doing night shift. He then went back to being a chef at the [REDACTED] Hotel in Edinburgh.
10. My oldest sister, [REDACTED], then started working day shifts at the chocolate factory and took over the maternal role in the house. We were a happy family after my mother left even though we didn't have a lot. I shared a room with two of my brothers.

### **Going into care**

11. A year and a half after she left, my mum decided she wanted to take just me. There was a lot of toing and froing between her and my dad about it. I wanted to stay with my dad and my siblings.
12. I was about ten years old and really stressed out about it all so I ran away to South Queensferry. I was sleeping in the cabin of an old lorry and doing odd jobs for pensioners there in their gardens for money. I was there for a week while the police were looking for me [REDACTED].

13. The police found me and took me to South Queensferry Police Station. I was then taken back to Edinburgh and appeared before a children's panel the following day. I can vaguely remember it. My mum and dad were both there.
14. The panel told me I was being sent to some place until things were sorted out. I don't know what they meant by that and nobody told me anything. I wanted to go back home and be with my siblings and my dad, but I didn't get to go home and I have no idea why.
15. The panel decided to send me to some remand home and I was taken straight there. I think I was taken by a social worker and I think it was in Gilmerton.
16. I was there for a few weeks. It was an old house with walls and a high fence around it. I can't remember any of the staff there or other kids in there.
17. I don't remember much about being there or the sleeping arrangements. I remember making baskets but that is only because a year later, a piece of the basket making stuff was removed from my ear.
18. I also remember my mum coming to visit me with some guy and a video projector. They showed all the kids videos of scenery and things like that.
19. I missed my brothers and sisters while I was in there and I just wanted to be at home with them.
20. I was then taken to another children's panel. My mother and father were there again, as well as some woman who may have been a social worker. I hadn't seen her before.
21. I remember telling the panel that I wanted to be home with my siblings and my dad. They obviously didn't listen to me because they decided to send me to Dr Guthrie's Approved School and I was taken straight there. Nobody explained why or how long I would be there.

22. I don't remember who took me or the journey. I think I was in shock and distraught about not being able to be with my family.

### **Dr Guthrie's Approved School, Edinburgh**

23. I went in to Guthrie's on [REDACTED] 1967 when I was twelve years old. I was small and looked young for my age. I was there for two years, until I was fourteen years old.
24. All I remember of my first day is being shown around and being taken to a clothing store and being given a uniform and set of clothes to wear
25. There was a main building, which was in a square. As you walked in the main door, there was a long corridor. On the left hand side of that corridor, there was the matron's sick room. Opposite that, on the left, there were stairs going up to the dormitories. Further along the corridor, there was a door that went to the headmaster's house, and opposite that door was the headmaster's office.
26. Next to the headmaster's office was the matron's room. Further along there was another set of stairs going up to more dormitories.
27. The kitchen was at the end of the corridor, and the dining room was opposite the kitchen.
28. In the square, from what I remember, there was an entrance. On one side of the entrance, behind it, there was the rear of the kitchen. On the other side, on the left of the entrance, there was the boiler room.
29. On the opposite side of the square, on the right hand side, was the headmaster's office. Opposite that, on the left hand side of the square, was the old gym. Next to that, right in the corner on the left hand side of the square, was the woodwork room. The art room was beside that, and then were stairs going up to the science room.

30. On the first floor in the main house were two houses called Argyle and Belhaven. There were more rooms at the end of that corridor, which were smaller and had just two or three beds in them. There was also a television room there.
31. At the other end of the corridor were the other two houses called Jeffrey and Stair.
32. The boys were split into the four houses but they were just names for different dormitories that slept on the same floor. There were about twenty or so beds in each dormitory.
33. I was in Belhaven House and I was given the number [REDACTED]. There were about twelve beds on each side of the dormitory, and my bed was up the far end on the right hand side.
34. There were shared cabinets with curtains along the whole wall, where we hung our clothes up, next to our beds.
35. Within the grounds, there was also a school block, a newly built gym, swimming pool, a woodwork class and an art class.
36. Behind the school block, there were pig bins where we put the slops. At the side of the school, there were steps going over a wall, into a big playing field for playing sports in.
37. It was a place for boys and I think there were about one hundred boys in the home. They aged from my age, which was ten years old, up to fifteen or sixteen years old.
38. I can't remember any of my fellow pupils there.

*Staff*

39. SNR [REDACTED] when I first went in was Mr GZP [REDACTED] who was a good guy. He died [REDACTED]  
GFC [REDACTED] [REDACTED] who was a cruel bastard.

40. The staff I remember are a guy who called <sup>GIC</sup> [REDACTED]. We called him that because his first name was <sup>GIC</sup> [REDACTED], and one time he fell over and landed on his bum with a quarter bottle of whisky in his back pocket, which smashed. I don't know what his real surname was. He used to take us for gym classes and swimming.
41. Mr <sup>HCM</sup> [REDACTED] was the science teacher. There was a Mr <sup>GVI</sup> [REDACTED], who took some gym classes. There was Mr <sup>LYI</sup> [REDACTED] who was the art teacher. We called him <sup>LYI</sup> [REDACTED] because he would fall asleep all the time.
42. All the teaching staff were also the care staff. The ones I remember are only the ones I really have bad memories of. They were all ex-military.
43. We had a matron and she had a deputy. They were the only females in the place. I can't remember their names.

#### **Routine at Dr Guthrie's**

44. It was like a military regime in there. You were told what you were going to do and you had no choices. You just had to do it.
45. The night staff woke us up in the morning by ringing a hand bell. They slept in a room between the dormitories. It was just the normal members of staff who took it in turns to do the night shift.
46. We got up and had a cold shower, dressed in our uniforms and then went downstairs to the dining room for breakfast.
47. We collected our breakfast from the cooks and then sat according to our houses, and there were set tables for each house.

48. After breakfast, we went out into the square and we stood in groups according to our house. We were allowed to just hang out in the square for a while and play. We were there even in the winter with short trousers and no proper jackets or warm clothing.
49. The teachers would come into the square and tell everybody what they were going to do that day. There didn't seem to be a timetable for what you did every day. They just told you in the morning and you did it.
50. About two or three days out the week it was going to school. You would be told where you were going and allocated woodwork, art or science. Other days it would be maths or English. We then stood in a military parade style, stood to attention and marched in time to our classes.
51. Some days, you would be told you were doing something else instead of school. As an example, they could say "HCL [REDACTED], you are going tattie picking today." Then the farmer would arrive with a tractor and trailer attached to it and some of the boys would get in the trailer and go tattie picking for the day.
52. You got five bob a day for tattie picking. That was like getting about 25p when the school was getting paid £1.50 for the work you were doing for the day. We got a small percentage of the money that the school made for our work.
53. Other things we did during the day instead of school would be going for a five mile run, even if it was raining, which was a nightmare, or cleaning the pig bins and hosing them down. Some days we were taken to a bit of land owned by the school, and made to dig up ground around the trees to plant vegetables.
54. Sometimes the headmaster would come out in the morning if he had anything to say.
55. You would have your lunch either in the school if you were there, or out, if you were out for the day.

56. If you were at school, then you stood in the square again after lunch. We then stood to attention and marched to classes again for the afternoon.
57. After school, or whenever you got back from doing what you were doing, you would be made to hang about the square before tea time. This happened even if it was raining and bad weather.
58. You then had your tea, which was your evening meal. After that, the younger kids would be sent upstairs to their dormitories, and the rest of us were doing an activity like the gym or going swimming. Sometimes I would read a book on my bed. We didn't have a lounge area so if you weren't doing an activity, you were outside or in your dormitory.
59. You would get ready for bed at about 8pm. Mr **GZP**, when he was **SNR**, used to read out a book over the tannoy from 8.45pm to 9pm and you could lie on or in your bed and listen to it. I enjoyed that.
60. Lights out were at 9pm.
61. The dormitory wasn't locked at night, so you could get up and go to the toilet if you needed to.
62. Some kids wet their bed and had rubber sheets on their bed. I don't know how it was dealt with because I didn't wet the bed.
63. One night, there was a hurricane and the whole window frame came in and landed on the bed next to me, which was empty at the time. I was covered in rain and broken glass as well.
64. I went to wake up the night staff, who I think was Mr **GVI**, and he took me to the television room and told me to sleep there on the floor. I never had any covers or anything to sleep on, and even my night clothes were soaking wet and covered in glass.



65. I thought that was strange and unfair that I had to sleep like that, while Mr <sup>GVI</sup> went back to his bed. I remember it took me a while to get back to sleep.

*Mealtimes / Food*

66. The dining room was opposite the kitchen on the ground floor. All the boys in the home ate together.
67. There were female staff who did the cooking in the kitchen, but we had nothing to do with them, unless any of us were put in the kitchen to help out, which occasionally happened.
68. Breakfast was always either cereal or porridge, which caused me problems when I first went in.
69. On my second day in the home, I went for breakfast and was given porridge which I wouldn't eat because I was lactose intolerant. I had known that I was allergic to milk since I was a kid. My mother had told me that I was brought up on glucose water as a baby, until I could eat solids.
70. I said to the teacher that was supervising that day, that I couldn't eat it because I was allergic to milk and it would make me ill. I can't remember who it was, but he took me up to the matron's office, and she gave me a tablespoon of cod liver oil, as a punishment.
71. She told me she was giving me it because I had to eat what I was given in there. I told her I couldn't take milk because it made me ill. She wasn't really bothered.
72. My mother had told the school that I couldn't take milk. I now know it was recorded in my records that I was lactose intolerant and milk made me ill.

73. This carried on for about a month. I kept refusing to eat it and was sent to the matron to get cod liver oil about twelve times, until they confirmed that I was lactose intolerant and I didn't have to have milk any more.
74. After that, I ate dry cereal or porridge, which I didn't mind because I was used to it. I would just put some sugar on it and eat it.
75. Lunch was the main meal of the day, and it was mainly ok. I couldn't eat custard or cheese or anything with dairy in it and I didn't have to eat it once they found out about my intolerance.
76. The other thing I couldn't eat was liver because the first time I ate it in the home, I puked up. I wasn't punished that time because they thought I was ill. We got it again a week later and I refused to eat it. I was taken back up to the matron and was given cod liver oil again as a punishment.
77. The evening meal was usually just sandwiches.
78. The food was worse than what I got at home, and if you didn't eat it then you just went hungry.

*Washing / bathing*

79. We showered in the communal showers in the morning, which were about ten shower heads along a wall in the shower room. The water was always cold.
80. We had soap to wash with and towels to dry with.
81. There was no privacy or partitions between the showers. The night member of staff would still be around to supervise.

*Leisure time*

82. After the evening meal, you had a choice about what activity you could do. You could choose going to the gym or going swimming.
83. I usually picked the gym because I liked to keep fit. I would do circuit training, boxing or trampolining.
84. There was always staff there to supervise the gym and swimming. It was usually GIC [REDACTED], who also took the boxing training.
85. You got points if you went tattie picking or for doing anything else a teacher considered good and if you got enough points, you earned the privilege to go into the television room. I got that privilege a few times but didn't spend much time in there. Not many people got to watch television. I do remember watching the moon landing.
86. There were also books you could get in the classroom to read if you wanted to. I would sometimes go and lie on my bed and read a book. I read books that were quite advanced for my age.
87. I never saw any board games or anything in there. Some of the kids had playing cards they would play with.

*Weekends*

88. I used to be away home most weekends. Some weekends I was at my dad's house and sometimes I had to endure spending some weekends at my mother's house.
89. I had to return on a Sunday evening by bus. You got punished if you didn't return on time. That happened to me once, because the bus had broken down, and I got the belt.
90. Some boys stayed at the school all the time and never got home.

91. If I stayed at Dr Guthrie's at the weekend, we had to go to church on a Sunday. There was no choice if you were told to go.
92. We had to dress smart for church and march in twos to an outside church, which was about five minutes away. It was a Church of Scotland church. There were no Catholics in the school.
93. We would sit in a segregated area in the church and everyone would look at us because we were bad boys.
94. If you didn't go to church on a Sunday, it was because you were told to do chores in the school. One time I remember scrubbing floors and another time, I had to clean out the slop buckets after the pig man had emptied them.

*Clothing / uniform*

95. I was given a uniform when I went in, which was shorts, a jumper, socks and shoes. Everybody wore the same and we wore that all week.
96. We also had short trousers, a shirt and a jacket, which was to be worn for church on a Sunday.
97. We wore short trousers all the time, even when it was cold. If anyone was caught walking around with their hands in their pockets because they were cold, their pockets were sewn up. Luckily that never happened to me. I used to walk around with my hands under my arm pits to keep them warm.
98. Clothes got laundered once a week in the laundry, which was near Argyle House. You would wear your Sunday shorts to take your dirty clothes to get laundered. They would give you a clean set of clothes with your number on them for the next week.

99. You had two sets of clothes with labels on them with your number on them, so you got your own clothes back from the laundry.
100. Sometimes the boys would steal other boys' clothes if their own got dirty through the week. I was lucky that didn't happen to me because I was smaller than most of the boys so my clothes wouldn't have fit them.

### *Schooling*

101. School wasn't a regular thing. I think I only went to school about two or three times a week. I don't really remember much about the education specifically, but I do think it was severely lacking. I don't remember sitting any exams or anything there.
102. I can remember going to the separate school block for English and maths, about twice. I was ahead of most people in class because I liked reading.
103. The classes were set up according to age, and we went to different classes for each subject.
104. I remember there was a woodwork class in the main square and next door to that was an art room.
105. The woodwork teacher was fantastic. I got on great with him. When I first went in there, I had to make a teapot stand. I was making bedside cabinets by the time I left there, and I took it with me when I left. I had to pay ten bob to take it. My sister, [REDACTED], kept it until she died.

### *Chores*

106. We had to make our own beds in the morning. The night staff checked to see if it was done properly. I saw boys get shouted at if it wasn't done properly, but I don't know what else happened because I never got in trouble for it. I always did mine properly.

107. I was put in the kitchen to help out about six times. I had to peel potatoes by putting them in a big machine. I didn't use a knife or anything.
108. Some weekends, I was made to go out after the pig man had put the slops away to clean the slop buckets with a hose.

*Trips / Holidays*

109. We went to school camp for two weeks at Thornton Loch. All the boys from the school went on those trips. I remember going twice.
110. When we were away camping, we would also go to the beach and catch crabs. I remember sleeping in army tents with about eight to ten boys in the tent.
111. Some of us also went in a mini bus to go rock climbing with Mr <sup>GVI</sup> just outside Edinburgh. I can't remember where it was.
112. I took to the climbing so <sup>GVI</sup> told me to climb up this forty or fifty foot high rock first with no equipment and wearing just normal school shoes. He went up a different way with a rope and had the rest of the boys climb up using a rope.
113. I was thirteen or fourteen years old at the time. Looking back, it was quite dangerous that he got me to do that.

*Birthdays and Christmas*

114. My mum would turn up with big bags of sweets on my birthdays to try and bribe me to like her. I would share them with other kids because I wasn't really a sweetie person.
115. I can't recall the staff ever wishing anyone a happy birthday or acknowledging anybody's birthday.

116. I never stayed in the school for Christmas, but some boys had to. I would usually go home for Christmas.
117. There were no Christmas decorations or presents for anybody in Christmas.

*Visits or inspections*

118. My mother used to visit every other week and she would bring me a bag of sweets of sweets.
119. My dad came to visit me a few times as well, with my younger brother, [REDACTED] GRC.
120. There weren't any scheduled visiting hours. Somebody would just come and get me and tell me I had a visitor and I would just hang about and see them in the main corridor. There was no privacy at all.
121. I don't remember the visits being timed.
122. I don't remember getting any visits from a social worker or anybody external. I don't think I even had a social worker. I never went to a panel again. I didn't even know how long I was going to be in there for.

*Healthcare*

123. A year after being there, I went to the sick bay because my ear was sore. The matron had a look and took something out of my ear. It was a bit of something I'd got lodged in my ear from when I had been basket weaving in the other home I had been in, a year earlier.
124. I am allergic to penicillin and this is mentioned in my records so the school knew that, yet I remember being given penicillin in school, which made me ill.

125. One time, when my dad and my brother <sup>GRC</sup> came to visit me. I had such a terrible headache that I could hardly see. My dad took me to see the matron, who took me to the sick bay and told me to get into bed. I was in bed for two days, but they never found out what caused the headache. I was just given painkillers.
126. I broke my hand in gym playing British Bulldog on Mr <sup>GVI</sup>'s watch. I was badly tackled and landed on my right hand. <sup>GVI</sup> looked at it and said I would be fine in a couple of days and that I had only sprained it. That was when I was about thirteen years old.
127. My hand was swollen and sore. I reported to the sick bay a couple of days later because the swelling wouldn't go down. She said that she had been told about it and that Mr <sup>GVI</sup> had said he'd already looked at it and it was just sprained. I never got any medical attention for it.
128. I had to have an operation on my hand when I was eighteen years old because of the damage done to my hand in that injury.
129. I didn't see a dentist when I was in there or going to hospital for anything. I only remember one boy going to hospital for appendicitis but I don't remember his name.

*Running away*

130. You weren't allowed to go out the front door, but you could run out the back door, where the new school block and gym was. You could get out there and onto a field.
131. I just ran away twice. I didn't get very far because the police were always on the lookout around that area, and if they saw your uniform, they took you back.
132. About two thirds of the boys ran away the day that <sup>GZP</sup> left <sup>GFC</sup>  
<sup>SNR</sup>.



133. The other time I ran away was when Mr **HCM**, the science teacher, sexually touched me.
134. Both times, I was brought back and got the belt from Mr **GFC**.

*Discipline*

135. If you didn't do something you were told to do, you got physically punished by being belted. A couple of the teachers belted you. **LYI** did that. He would belt you on the hand with a leather belt. I saw it happen to one kid because he threw his painting on the floor. I never got belted by him.
136. I saw **GIC** slapping kids around the back of the head for not keeping up in the gym when we were training in the gym, or if they ignored something they had been told to do. It was a hard slap because the kids he did it to would always cry. They could be any age from ten years old upwards.
137. If you were considered to do something really bad, you had to go to the headmaster's office.
138. The teachers were all very strict in there. I think they were ex-military.

**Abuse at Dr Guthrie's**

139. We went swimming quite often, about twice a week. We didn't have trunks or costumes. We swam naked and we had no option but to do it. We did as we were told. **GIC** took that class.
140. I did the naked swimming right up until I left Dr Guthrie's when I was fourteen years old

141. I remember somebody with an 8mm camera filming us once. It was a member of staff but I can't remember who it was. I just remember the boys were all trying to cover themselves up.
142. We had to do as we were told or we got belted for it. It was GFC [REDACTED] who would belt us.
143. The first time I got the belt from GFC [REDACTED] was when he [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED] and we ran away. About seventy percent of the boys ran away when we found out that he was [REDACTED]
144. We were all caught by the police and brought back.
145. We were taken by staff into GFC [REDACTED]'s office in groups of four or five of us at a time. We were lined up, told to take our shorts and pants down so they were round our ankles, and told to bend over, then given three of the belt on our bare bums. I can't remember how old I was when that happened.
146. We were told we were getting it because we ran away. I got the belt from GFC [REDACTED] a few times.
147. One Sunday when I was going back to the school, the bus never turned up on time. The bus stop was next to a police box so I told the police officer that I would be late back to Dr Guthrie's because the bus hadn't turned up. The officer called the school and told them I would be late because the bus hadn't turned up.
148. When I got back to school, I had to go to GFC [REDACTED]'s office and I got in trouble for getting the police involved and told that I was lying about the bus being late. I was made to pull my trousers and pants down, bent over and got ten of the belt on my bare bum as a punishment. I was about twelve or thirteen years old at the time.
149. The copper knew my mum and told her that I was late back to school. My mum's fancy man, [REDACTED], who worked as a bus mechanic for Edinburgh Corporation

Transport, phoned the school to tell them that the bus had broken down. I didn't even get an apology from GFC.

150. I remember doing an oil painting of a cottage, hills and a stream, in art class. It was really good because I liked art. The painting went missing and I asked the art teacher, LYI about where it went and he stabbed me in the forehead with a pencil. He did this in front of some other kids. I was about thirteen years old at the time. I still have a black dot where he stabbed me, to this day.
151. I don't know why he stabbed me but somebody else in the school had told me that Mr LYI was selling paintings that were good so I don't know if he sold my painting and then stabbed me when I asked about it.
152. When I went to camp, I was asleep in the tent and my head must have been pushing out from the inside, and somebody walked past and hit me in the head. When I woke up, I saw that my head had been bleeding from where I had been hit.
153. The only people that were walking about at night were staff members. GFC and LYI would have been there, but I can't remember who else.
154. I reported it to a staff member when I went for breakfast in the morning. I think it was GFC I told. He just told me to wash my hair and get the blood out because you could see it. GFC looked at it again and just said it was fine. Nothing happened about it and I never found out who did it.

#### *Sexual abuse*

155. One time, HCM, the science teacher, kept me back when the other kids left the class. He rubbed my private parts between my legs. I can't remember him saying anything when he did it.
156. I didn't like it so I kicked him and ran away, straight out the school. I think I was about twelve or thirteen years old at the time.

157. The police in the area knew our uniforms so when they saw me, they grabbed me and took me back to the school. I told the police what had happened and they said I needed to tell <sup>SNR</sup> [REDACTED] about it.
158. When I got back, I was in <sup>GFC</sup> [REDACTED]'s office, just the two of us. I told him about <sup>HCM</sup> [REDACTED] playing with my private parts and he said I was a liar and that <sup>HCM</sup> [REDACTED] didn't do things like that. He made me bend over with my trousers and pants around my ankles and gave me the belt about ten or twelve times
159. He hit me with a leather strap that was between about eighteen and twenty-four inches long, and maybe two or three inches wide, and it was split at the end.
160. My dad took me to see the matron during one of his visits because I had a really bad headache. The matron sent me to bed in the sick bay, which was on the ground floor of the main building. I was there for two days.
161. The matron came back later with some painkillers and while she was checking me over and started playing with my private parts. I was thirteen or fourteen years old and was sexually aware at the time. Things progressed and I had sex with her. She was about forty or fifty years old.
162. Later on that day, the matron's assistant came to check on me. She said that the matron had told her I liked having sex. I ended up having sex with her too. I think she was about thirty years old. She was younger than the matron anyway.
163. It might sound big headed but I felt good after it. My hormones were going and I felt relief after it. I felt like an adult and it made me much more sexually aware.
164. They both told me not to tell anybody about it after it happened. I had enjoyed it so I didn't tell anybody about it.

165. I felt pleasure and joy at the time but looking back, I know it was wrong that it happened and that I was just a child.
166. I can't remember either the matron or her assistant's name. It was an enjoyable experience at the time, but I have tried to block out everything that happened there.

*Peer abuse*

167. One time, a boy from Glasgow came up to me in the square, pushed me and took my sweets off me because he was a bully. I jumped up, smacked him in the mouth and took the sweets back off him. I handed the sweets out to the other kids because I wasn't a big fan of sweets.
168. I knew how to stick up for myself and soon everybody knew that in the school. If they antagonised me, I would smack them.
169. There were boys interfering with boys in the school. I was aware that it was going on.
170. In the square, there was a fire door that led inside to a space where there was a radiator. In the winter, boys would go in to warm their hands up. Quite often, you would see boys in there touching each other.
171. A couple of boys tried it with me, but a smack in the mouth chased them away.
172. I went in the television room one time thinking I could go and watch television because I had been allowed to use it after tattie picking. When I went in, there were five boys masturbating and having a competition to see who could ejaculate first and make it go the furthest. I was disgusted and walked back out. There was no staff there at the time.
173. I don't know if the staff were aware of any of the sexual activity between the boys. I kept away from it all and didn't want to know what was going in.

174. One boy told me that he used to go and see this old teacher from the school who lived near [REDACTED] in Edinburgh. The boy asked me to go with him and I said no because my mum lived there.
175. I knew he was one of the boys messing about with other boys. There were a few boys who would go with this boy to the old teacher's house. I knew something was going on between them and it just didn't interest me so I didn't go.
176. I can't remember the boy's name, but I think it was [REDACTED] and he was a year or two older than me. He lived up near Groathill in Edinburgh. I don't remember the teacher's name.

#### **Reporting of abuse at Dr Guthrie's**

177. After Mr [REDACTED]<sup>HCM</sup> sexually abused me and I ran away, I told the police about it when they caught me. They didn't do anything about it but told me to tell [REDACTED]<sup>SNR</sup> about it when I got back.
178. I told [REDACTED]<sup>GFC</sup>, who was [REDACTED]<sup>SNR</sup> about it and he just told me I was a liar and belted me.

#### **Leaving Dr Guthrie's**

179. I was told by a member of staff a few weeks before I was due to leave, that I was going home to stay with my dad. I was ecstatic about leaving.
180. I left Dr Guthrie's on [REDACTED] 1969, when I was fourteen years old. I was given a new set of clothes, bus fares and the money I had in savings there, which was about three pounds

181. None of the staff said bye to me. I left out the front door, just as I had come in through the front door when I had arrived. That was the only two times I used the front door.

182. I have something called A Notice of Release from Dr Guthrie's from when I left. It states that:

"whereas you are by the provisions of the Children and Young Persons (Scotland) Act 1937, under the care of managers of the above named school, the managers of the school hereby release you from the school, you will be under the provision of the managers until [REDACTED] 1971, and whilst you are under their supervision, they will arrange for you to be visited, advised and befriended and will give you assistance in maintaining yourself and finding suitable employment"

183. This means I was on license until 1971, when I would have been sixteen years old.

184. I felt elated to be leaving and couldn't wait to get home. I got a bus to the West End and then onto a number [REDACTED] to [REDACTED], where my dad lived.

185. My dad was expecting me home. I remember going home and sitting talking to my dad and giving him the money I had in my pocket to help with the house because I was happy to be home.

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

186. I went home to stay with my dad after leaving Dr Guthrie's. I never saw a social worker once I got home. I was just back into normal life.

187. I went to Ainslie Park Comprehensive School. I was treated like a bad boy there because I had been at an approved school.

188. One of the teachers there tried to make an example of me and belt me for no reason, just because I had been in an approved school. He used to jump up and bring the belt down hard. I pulled my hand away and he ended up hitting himself between the legs.
189. I went home and told my dad, who visited the headmaster, who then asked the boys in the class what happened. They all said I hadn't done anything wrong and the teacher got in trouble.
190. I knew how to stick up for myself. I even smacked a bully at school who was hurting a girl at the school.
191. Before I was at Guthrie's, and when I was home for the weekends, I used to work with a guy called [REDACTED] who ran [REDACTED] ice cream. I used to work at his ice cream factory at [REDACTED] and also in his cash and carry.
192. I went to see him when I got out of Dr Guthrie's and started working with him again after school and at the weekends. I used to get boxes of sweets there and take them home to my siblings. [REDACTED] had five daughters and wanted me to marry one of his daughters.
193. I left school just before I turned fifteen years old. I was doing the work of older kids because I was doing my own reading. The headmaster told me they couldn't teach me much more at the school. I left school with two "O" levels there in technical drawing and woodwork, and also in English.
194. I started working as an apprentice butcher for [REDACTED] at [REDACTED]. I did a year there, as well as working at another butchers a couple of days a week for extra money and meat parcels to take home.
195. I spoke to some guys who came to put a television aerial up at my dad's house, and they told me to drop into their office at [REDACTED] which I did. They told me to come back when I was sixteen years old. I went back when I turned sixteen and got a job starting the following Monday.



196. I learned how to do rigging. I was also getting books out of the library and learning myself. I ended up being one of the best systems engineers in the UK with a government run company called [REDACTED] I did that until I was 23 years old.
197. During that time, I had been rebelling against the establishment and getting into trouble as a teenager. This was because the police used to stop me for no reason all the time. I was charged a few times and put in Glenochil detention centre as well as Polmont when I was about seventeen or eighteen years old.
198. I had a girlfriend and we had a son in [REDACTED] 1977, when I was about 22 years old. I was a long haired biker so my girlfriend's parents didn't like me. When I went to see my baby in hospital, my girlfriend told me that they were going to adopt out my son.
199. The register used to come round the wards then and they put my name down as the father. I then heard the nurse talking on phone to someone saying they could take me son.
200. I went out and bought all the baby stuff I needed and went back to the hospital. Two nuns came in to pick up my baby to adopt him out. I didn't let them take him and said I would bring him up on my own. I took my son home with me to my dad's house and raised him.
201. I stopped getting in trouble when my son was born, and completely changed my ways. I had to change then because I had responsibilities that I needed to face, and I did face them, just like my dad had.
202. I moved out of Edinburgh when my son was a few months old.
203. I got married two years later to my first wife, and we had two daughters together. The marriage lasted about five years.

204. I got remarried again about ten years later, and that marriage lasted about ten years.
205. I damaged my legs when I was 28 years old while I was doing aerial work with a company work called [REDACTED] I had operations on both of my legs.
206. I carried on working because I had kids to support. I used my own father as a role model and worked hard.
207. I then did steel erecting and rigging, which I stopped about ten years ago because it was just getting dangerous for me. The climbing wasn't safe for my legs because they had been damaged.
208. I also worked for a psychiatrist who had four areas of care homes for homeless persons with problems. I worked as a warden in one of the care homes, which turned into me running two, three and then all four of them as area manager. I did that for about a year and a half. It felt good helping people who were in need.
209. I went to Kenya eighteen years ago with my sister's ex-husband, who was my best mate. He then met a Kenyan woman and had the wedding in Kenya. I was best man at the wedding.
210. I fell in love with Kenya and met my third wife, [REDACTED] there, who was a lot younger than me and was in the process of leaving school. We got married seven years ago.
211. My wife got raped and had a daughter from that incident, and I have adopted the daughter and love her like she is my own.
212. My wife and daughter are still living in Kenya. They have been over to visit once.
213. My ex-wife and her daughter made false allegations against me, which led to me getting arrested in 2016, just as I returned from Kenya with my current wife and daughter. This meant that my wife and daughter had to go into immigration detention when I was arrested.

214. My wife and daughter returned to Kenya and I am trying to get them over to the UK again, but the application was refused because I am disabled and the authorities don't think I could care for them. I go over to Kenya to visit them when I can.

### **Impact**

215. My education was impacted because I was only going to school about two or three days a week in Dr Guthrie's. The education was poor. I still managed to get two O levels after leaving there, even though they tried to say I was retarded in my records. I got them because I studied and read myself.
216. Soon after I got home, I remember going to Leith swimming pool and I went into the changing cubicle and ran out naked to get in the pool, then realised nobody else was naked, so went back into the cubicle to put something on. That is how much Guthrie's ingrained in us that we had to swim naked.
217. I was immediately labelled as a bad boy because I had been at Dr Guthrie's. This happened as soon as I started school when I got out and carried on into my teens with the police stopping me all the time. This caused me to rebel against the establishment and I ended up getting in trouble and spending time in Glenochil detention centre, as well as Polmont as a teenager. I have always had a problem with authority for that reason.
218. I never got into trouble or into fights before being sent to Dr Guthrie's. I had been a bit of a book worm. Being sent there changed all that.
219. When my ex-wife and daughter made false allegations about me, I was questioned by the police in 2016. During the questioning, the police brought up the fact that I had been in Dr Guthrie's. They always know I have been in an approved school always judge me for it.

220. When I was eighteen years old, my hand got so bad that the nerves on my hand would jump. I went to see my doctor, who sent me to Falkirk Infirmary hospital. It turned out I had actually broken my pinkie and my ring finger in the incident at Dr Guthrie's while playing British Bulldog.
221. It turned out that the nerves on my ring finger had got caught in the bone during the injury. I had to have an operation to get the nerves in my ring finger cut out.
222. I think about being in care every time I look in the mirror and see the black dot on my forehead from having a pencil stabbed into me for no reason. I see it and think it is a crying shame that me and other kids like me have had to go through that.
223. I used to help run a youth club years ago in Bedfordshire years ago because I understood what it was like for them. I helped the kids enter a public speaking competition when no other adult would help them do it. They ended up winning the competition.
224. I also helped them learn about badminton after reading up on it myself, and helped them train and enter a competition, which they came second in. I worked there for a couple of years and enjoyed it.
225. I worked in the youth club and in the care homes because it felt good helping kids and under privileged people because of the experiences I had as a child.
226. I've never been back to Dr Guthrie's for a visit, but have seen pictures of it. It doesn't look like the hell hole it was when I was there, and it was a hell hole.
227. I have hidden the impact that the place has had on me my whole life and have just kept busy so that I never needed any psychiatric help. I never even told my wife that I went to an approved school. I would just say that I went to a boarding school. I have only recently started telling people.

## **Records**

228. I started to look for my records about three or four years ago. It was like banging my head against a brick wall.
229. I asked Edinburgh Council for my social work records and they responded saying they had nothing.
230. I asked Dr Guthrie's for records and they sent me some files. In amongst them is paper work from the children's panel.
231. When I read the records, I didn't recognise them as relating to me at all. It all sounded rubbish.
232. It said that there was a lack of discipline at home with my dad. That was not true. They should have seen that it was my mother who was causing the problems.
233. My records said that I was retarded and not ready for release from the school. Reading them was the first time I was made aware that they thought that about me. Nobody discussed that with me at the time, or tried to get me any extra help.
234. I also don't think that is true because I did well in teaching myself things when I got out, after the school taught me nothing.

## **Lessons to be Learned**

235. I don't want to see other kids in care suffer the way I did. I was put in care because the social work thought there was a lack of discipline in my dad's home, which wasn't true. Even if they thought it, they should have offered support instead of just putting me in care.

- 236. There is evidence out there that social workers were getting paid for the children they were putting in care.
  
- 237. I think families with problems should get more help to alleviate the situation in the family, instead of just putting the kids in care. In my opinion, the care system in the UK is not beneficial to the development of children.
  
- 238. 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..... 06 March 2021 .....