

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

HMJ

Support person present: No.

1. My name is HMJ but I'm more commonly known as HMJ. My date of birth is 1951. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in Burnley in England where my father was living and we lived on a farm. My mum was born in 1910 and her name was and she always went by her maiden name. My father was , who was maybe five years younger than my mum and both have since died. I have a full brother whose name is and he was born in 1948.
3. I also have two half-brothers who are , born around 1941, and who was born around 1943. My half-sister is called and was born around 1942. and have the same parents while has a different father.
4. When we lived on the farm it was a happy time but then my mother and father split up and my mother moved back to Scotland to Johnstone's Land near Coatbridge. Myself and went with my mum while and were doing their national service.
5. When we moved to Coatbridge we lived in a tenement that had an outside toilet. Myself and used to play in a nearby model, a homeless unit, and the men there used to give us pennies.

6. We next moved to [REDACTED] in an area of Coatbridge called The Whifflet where I started at St Mary's Primary School before going to St Mary's Secondary School at the age of twelve. I had been late starting primary due to being in and out of hospital due to problems with my ears.

7. When I was six or seven years old my mother had to go into hospital and myself and [REDACTED] were sent to a place called Langbank. Up until then life had been good at home but I don't recall anybody explaining why we had to go to Langbank or why it was exactly that my mum had to go into hospital. I'm not sure what time of year it was that we went there but it was warm so possibly it was summer.

Langbank, Renfrewshire

8. Secondary Institutions - to be published later



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Leaving Langbank

17. I don't recall much about Langbank nor do I recall how we left or how we got home. When we did go home we went back to [REDACTED] and it was just me, [REDACTED] and mum staying at home. Mum was fine by then and things at home were good even though we didn't have much money.
18. A man we called Uncle [REDACTED] was with mum by this time but there was nothing sexual between them. He would sleep on a camp bed when he visited. He had his own family but would visit us, especially when he got a win when he was gambling.
19. I attended St Mary's High School and there were constant fights every day up at the football parks, especially involving one of the teachers. The school was a thousand times worse than St Trinian's. I hated the school as I was still trying to catch up with the other pupils and only attended things like metal work and wood work so I was skipping school a lot and eventually got caught.
20. One night I was playing football near [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] Factory was nearby and next to that was a wee hall and we used to play 5-a-side on a park beside it. One night we were playing there when we saw that two or three of the windows in the factory were open so some of us went into the factory and stole lots of sweets.
21. We were caught by the police who said we had actually broken into the factory. I had been on probation for breaking lots of windows at the school and for skipping school so when I went to The District Court in Coatbridge, I got a really bad report from the probation officer whose name I don't recall and I got sent to St Andrew's. This was a shock to me as I didn't expect to be going to an approved school. I was thirteen or fourteen years old.

22. I think before I appeared at court I had been on remand in Larchgrove for three weeks and went from there straight to court. I had also been in a place called Busheyhill in Kirkhill, Cambuslang for three weeks but I really have no memory of either of these two places

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St Andrew's Approved School, by Helensburgh

23. I don't recall how I got to St Andrew's but two of the masters, which is what we called the male staff, picked me up somewhere and we went through Helensburgh, Shandon and Rhu. We arrived at what looked like a castle, which I later learned was called Andrew House or the big house, beside which was Fruin House which we called the wee house. There was also other smaller houses where staff lived.
24. Andrew House had two levels. On the first level was the matron's room, the kitchens, the assembly hall and the shower rooms. On the second level, which you reached via two big staircases, were two dorms and the headmaster's room. There were fifteen to eighteen boys in Andrew House and eight in Fruin House so roughly twenty six boys in total all aged between twelve and sixteen. I was thirteen or fourteen.
25. There was no actual school but there were teachers in charge of the garden, the paint shop and the joiner shop. Mr Burns was in charge of the paint shop and he was hard but fair and the lads all looked up to him. Mr Richmond was in charge of the joiner shop but I don't now recall the name of the teacher in charge of gardening.
26. I was put in the Andrew House and for the first couple of nights was in a private room which was apparently to help me settle in and a few days later I was put up into the dorms. After a few days I was put to work and was told by staff to call them "Sir" or "Master". The first work I did was with the gardeners.

27. The gang warfare between youths was rife at that time and in the "big house" were 18-20 guys from different gangs so there was a lot of fights and bullying. I was a small and cheeky wee bugger and was a target for bullying but I could tell jokes which tended to ease the problem. The others used to ask me what gang I was in and I just made up a pretend gang from Coatbridge.
28. After three or four months had gone by I got moved to work in the joiner shop which I enjoyed. About the same time I was also moved to Fruin House from Andrew House. There was only one master in Fruin House who was called Mr HMK or HMK or something like that. I settled in there and there were only between eight and ten boys in the dorm.

Routine at St Andrew's in both Andrew House and Fruin House

29. We would get up about 7:00 am but I would get up at 6:00 am at times because I had to help prepare the breakfasts. There were also times I had to get up before 5:00 am to have a shower because I had wet the bed. After breakfast we would clean the kitchen then go to the assembly hall. After that we went to the various workshops for most of the day after which we would have dinner then some free time and we would go to bed at 9:00 or 10:00 pm.

Mealtimes/Food

30. The food was varied and filled you up. Some boys wouldn't eat it and wanted their own food brought in which they sometimes did by way of parcels sent to them by family members. The only punishment if you didn't eat the food was that you went hungry.

Washing/Bathing

31. There were no baths, it was all showers, but they were hot and we were given soap.

Clothing/Uniform

32. The school gave us grey suits, working clothes and casual clothes of trousers and crew-necked jumpers with shirts. We were also provided with socks and underwear which were cleaned about twice a week.

Leisure time

33. There was a TV and games room which had a small billiard table and a table-tennis table and a selection of puzzles. The atmosphere was fairly relaxed. We also had boxing matches and I was usually the one people wanted to box because I was so small.

Trips and holidays

34. We did fifty mile walks for charity and also went to discos and dance halls. At the weekend we would sometimes go to MOD bothys which, in general, were good times. We were also shown on board some submarines which were smashing times and also went to the cinema in Helensburgh sometimes.

Schooling

35. We didn't have any of what you would call traditional classes. Instead it was all work based and we would spend our time in the joiner shop, the paint shop or working in the garden.

Healthcare

36. There was a matron who looked after our health care but I don't remember her name. I remember I once had a cleg bite that got infected and she dealt with it. I don't recall ever seeing a doctor or a dentist.

Religious Instruction

37. The school was officially a Catholic Institution and we would say prayers in the morning but I don't recall a chapel or ever having to go to mass.

Chores

38. You had to keep your dorm clean and I worked in the kitchen, the laundry and in the garden but I did extra housework to get pocket money. You got a wee bit of pocket money but if you smoked you had to earn extra money to afford them. Some boys would get extra money sent to them from home.

Birthdays and Christmas

39. Birthdays weren't celebrated and at Christmas they maybe put up a tree. Most boys went home for Christmas but I didn't. The only day that was actually celebrated was St Andrew's day when we probably just got a few extra sandwiches.

Personal Possessions

40. Sometimes we would receive a parcel from home, maybe with sweets or something in them. However, it was crazy how often they delivered the wrong parcel to the wrong boy. If you got a parcel meant for somebody else you tended to just tear it open and keep it for yourself.

Bed Wetting

41. I started wetting the bed after being sexually abused and would often have to get up at 5:00 am to shower after doing so. The first couple of times I had to just leave the wet sheets and would cover them with blankets to cover the smell. Eventually I would have to take the wet sheets off and put them in the laundry baskets which were dealt with by an outside firm. If other boys wet the bed then I wasn't aware of it.

Visitors

42. I only got about two visits from my brother [REDACTED] and some of his mates. My half-brother [REDACTED] also visited me but mum was never well enough to visit me. I did write home and also helped some of the other boys who couldn't spell. I don't know if the letters were vetted but there was probably no need to vet them as they were all fairly basic.

Review of care

43. At no time did anybody ever sit me down and tell me how long I would be in St Andrew's or when I would be getting out. I later spoke to a psychiatrist who told me that those in Fruin House were expected to be there for about six months before being released but I had been in there a lot longer than six months before I heard that. The housemaster of Fruin, Mr HMK [REDACTED], used to say that I would be going to borstal which terrified me.

Running Away

44. I did think about running away many a time but Mr HMK [REDACTED] had always threatened me by saying I could end up in borstal. I thought if I ran away I would get sent to borstal so I never did.

Discipline

45. Mr HML [REDACTED], SNR [REDACTED] was the only person who issued the belt which you got for swearing at the staff or fighting. Somebody would get the belt every day, including a Sunday, and it would happen after assembly. At assembly those who were to get the belt would have their name read out then they would have to go upstairs to SNR [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED] room and wait outside until it was their turn to get the belt. The belt was made of very hard leather and could stand up on its own.

46. I cried after the first two occasions he gave me the belt but I then felt that he got satisfaction from making us cry. After that I was determined never to cry again when belted by him.

Abuse at St Andrew's, Helensburgh

47. After we had our tea at night and got changed into casual clothes we would play table-tennis which I really enjoyed. After about seven months of me moving into Fruin House Mr HMK [REDACTED] was playing me at table tennis and was showing me how to spin the ball and I enjoyed this.
48. We had been doing this for a few weeks when he started getting his body too close to me while showing me the moves. He started putting his hand near my groin but I let that go. Later I would be the only boy there and he started getting me to touch his penis and he said he would look after me and that he would give me extra money and fags.
49. If you worked in the garden, laundry or kitchen you could earn extra points or money and I started helping out in the kitchen. Mr HMK [REDACTED] would come into the kitchen, close the door and make me masturbate him. This happened after breakfast for quite a while. He would always say "remember to wash your hands".
50. After a while I had to give him oral sex in a shower room. There were only four showers and he always made sure I was the last boy to shower. After I finished showering he would dry me and that's when I had to give him oral sex.
51. This continued but after a while masturbating him and giving him oral sex wasn't enough for him. I couldn't go to work one day and most of the lads had gone to Helensburgh. I was in the shower and HMK [REDACTED] came in. I thought I was just going to give him oral sex or masturbate him but that was the first time he stuck his penis up my bum. Thereafter this would then happen three or four times a week.

52. After this, and probably even before it, my behaviour had become what I suppose you would call disruptive. On one occasion I had taken a screwdriver out of the joiner's shop and when I went on to the school bus I wrecked the roof with the screwdriver. I also started pissing the bed and was throwing things about the joiner shop.
53. After that first time that he raped me I went to see the matron. I didn't know what to say but when she asked me what was wrong I pulled down my pants and showed her the blood. I was in a lot of pain and told her what HMK had done to me. I had to tell her because it was so painful. She put cream or gel on my bum and said "It'll go away".
54. The next morning I was at assembly when Mr HML, SNR called out my name to go upstairs. I was standing outside his room with some others and could hear what sounded like running feet followed by whacks and crying. I wasn't sure at that time what was going on and couldn't work out why I was there.
55. I went into Mr HML room and was told to bend over a chair. He then took a run and whacked me on the bum over my trousers four or six times. I was bawling and was thinking that after the pain of being raped this was making things worse. I couldn't work out why I was getting the belt but HML said that it was for telling lies and causing trouble. He told me to get out. I was shaking and wondering what had just happened.
56. After enduring the sexual abuse from HMK for several months my behaviour apparently became an issue of concern and a psychiatrist, or somebody like that, came to see me. I don't know his name. I would say the abuse had been going on for about eighteen months by then.
57. The psychiatrist said that most people had thought that I would only have been in St Andrew's for six months but that that had been extended because of my behaviour and he asked me if there was anything wrong that I wanted to talk about. I then told him what had been going on and what HMK had been doing to me and how long and how often it had been going on.

58. I also told him that HMK had told me he would look after me but that if I told anybody he would get me sent to Borstal. HMK had said he could make reports that would get me sent straight to borstal from St Andrew's. I also told him that HMK told me that what he was doing to me was to be kept between the two of us that it was "our wee secret".
59. About three days later I was again at assembly and my name was again read out to go to SNR room. Once again I got the belt from him because of what I had told the psychiatrist. At that point I was in despair and thought I was never getting out of the situation. The abuse continued.
60. The police attended St Andrew's on a regular basis because of all the fighting. I assume they were from Helensburgh police office. On one occasion I told them what HMK had been doing to me. I spoke to a big cop and took him to Fruin House where I pointed out HMK to him and told him it was HMK who had been abusing me. The cop put me into the games room and told me to wait while he spoke to HMK.
61. I assumed that HMK would then be taken away but nothing happened so I went back to the joiner's shop. When I went back to Fruin House HMK was still there and, yet again, I got called up to SNR room and was belted for telling lies. I had told the police what had happened and yet they did nothing about it nor ever came back to speak to me about it.
62. There was an occasion when we all went on a fifty mile walk for charity. We were taken to Helensburgh then some place fifty miles away and every couple of miles there were what you would call check-points where we would get water or something to eat if we needed it.
63. At one of these check-points HMK pulled up in the school bus which could hold about eight of us. I don't know how many miles I had done by then but I had blood blisters on my feet. HMK then let the others walk on and started looking at the

blisters on my feet. I then had to travel in the bus and he pulled into a layby and I had to masturbate him. That was the only time he abused me outside of Fruin House.

64. The shower was the only place he actually raped me, which he did countless times, but because I had started to wet the bed I had to take a shower in the middle of the night and HMK thrived on this. The rest of the lads would be asleep in their bed and he would come into the shower and rape me. I would say he raped me two or three times a week over the best part of a year and it was more regular in the latter period of my time in St Andrew's.
65. Throughout this time I was convinced that HMK would have me sent to borstal which terrified me.
66. Not long before I was due to leave St Andrew's I was allowed home for a week. Nobody had told me that this was actually preparation for me leaving the place. I didn't know I was being prepared for leaving and still believed I would be going to borstal after St Andrew's. When I returned from the weekend leave I got off at Helensburgh train station and who was waiting for me but HMK in the school mini-van.
67. As soon as I got into the van he asked me how my weekend had been and said "I hope you haven't been telling anybody our secret". I looked at him and said "See you ya bastard, if I had told anybody you would have been in hospital, literally for the rest of your life"
68. When I said this he drew back a bit. He asked me what I meant by that and I said "You would have been dead by now". When I look back to that weekend I remember I more or less just shut myself in my room and that was probably for the best. If I had told our or either of my other brothers then God knows what they would have done.
69. HMK said "You know they're thinking about sending you to borstal". By this time we were near either Rhu or Shandon and he pulled into a lay-by and told me to get into the back of the van. I had to give him oral sex and he was trying to get me to have an erection. He then penetrated my bum with his penis.

70. I had enjoyed my first weekend home in years and here I was, not even half an hour back and not even back at the school, and he was again abusing me. This turned out to be only a couple of weeks or a month before they eventually let me out of the school.
71. That however wasn't the last time HMK [REDACTED] abused me. The boys were all doing a run round the massive grounds and I was last. HMK [REDACTED] stopped me in the woods and I had to give him oral sex. I was out of breath and knackered but he still made me do it.
72. Not long before I left I faced up to HMK [REDACTED] and told him I would be back and that I would kill him. To my shame I said "I'll kill you and I'll kill your children". I was in a murderous mood and I told him this before I even knew I was getting out. I still had this awful fear of being sent to borstal but I didn't care anymore.
73. I had taken enough abuse from him and told him that he could send me to borstal but that I would eventually get out and I would come back and get him. I actually felt rotten about saying those things to him, especially about his kids but I had had enough.
74. That was the last time I spoke to HMK [REDACTED] and I expected the police to arrive that night and take me to borstal. It didn't happen and it was just shortly after that I got transferred to Andrew House and I didn't see him again.
75. The nearest I came to being abused by anybody other than HMK [REDACTED] was by the gardener and I'm not sure you would describe it as abuse. When you were working in the greenhouse he would get quite close to you and maybe touch your leg. He did this to a few of the boys several times. We knew it wasn't right and the boys would tell each other to stay away from him. However, compared to HMK [REDACTED] that was nothing.

Reporting of abuse at St Andrew's

76. I reported the abuse on three separate occasions. I told the matron, a psychiatrist and a police officer. After each occasion I was belted by SNR [REDACTED] so I never told another person. What was the point?

Leaving St Andrew's

77. I wasn't given much notice about leaving St Andrew's but it was just such a sense of relief to actually be going home and I was getting away from HMK. I got my original suit back and couldn't wait to get out. They gave me a train ticket and I probably got a taxi to Helensburgh train station. The relief of knowing that I wasn't going to go on to borstal was incredible. That thought had been with me for so long.

Life after being in care

78. I went back home to in Coatbridge and was sixteen at the time. I didn't go back to school. When I got home my brother, who was like a father to me, tried to hug me and I hit him. I didn't tell him why I couldn't accept such affection but it was because of what HMK had done to me.
79. I shut myself away and while I eventually got a milk round I actually wanted to be a painter and decorator but, instead, went into the steelworks at seventeen. It was hard work but the money was good. I was there for over a year before I started work at Ravenscraig.
80. By that time I had money in my pocket and started to dress well. My confidence was coming back and I had a growth spurt. I found myself getting on well with women and met my wife when I was nineteen. We married two years later but I didn't realise how much I was drinking. At first it was social but I was really using it to forget flashbacks from my time at St Andrew's.
81. and I married when I was 21 and we were both working and making good money. Four years later our daughter was born. Because I was getting nightmares I started doing night-shifts in an attempt to avoid them. In fact I was trying to take on extra shifts to stop myself sleeping. I would even take the odd LSD tab to help me cope.

82. My drinking started to get worse and I was drinking during the night shift. I would then drink when I got home but it was no longer stopping the flashbacks and was probably making things worse. Everything became too much for me and one night I took a [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] knew I wasn't in bed and came downstairs. She saw the [REDACTED] and phoned an ambulance. To this day I thank God it wasn't my daughter [REDACTED] who found me.
83. By then I had cut myself off from my brothers, sister and their families. I just couldn't tell them what was wrong with me. I eventually lost my job through the drink. I drifted in and out of different jobs but couldn't hold any of them down. When I was 28 or 29 I took an engineering course but again took to the drink and had a nervous breakdown. I was arguing with [REDACTED] and shouting at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] thought it was something she had done and was blaming herself but I couldn't bring myself to tell her what the real roots of my problems were and just made up excuses.
84. I signed myself into Monkland's Hospital on a voluntary basis in a psychiatric unit and was there for about a week. It didn't help my marriage and myself and [REDACTED] split up about three years later. To this day I don't know how she managed to put up with me for as long as she did.
85. By the age of thirty I was an alcoholic though I didn't realise that until two years later and [REDACTED] and I were divorced. I still couldn't tell her what was wrong with me. I had got a job with the railway before we divorced but continued drinking while in the guard's van. I got caught and as a punishment was sent to the freight yards but it turned out that it was even easier to drink there so I asked for another move and was sent to [REDACTED].
86. When myself and [REDACTED] divorced she was pregnant with our son [REDACTED] I was able to keep up the alimony despite my drinking but was then sacked by the railway. I got a house in Coatbridge but then started moving about including to Burnley where I stayed with my father.

87. In my time I have stayed in hostels all over Britain including Glasgow, England, Ireland and Wales trying to find work.
88. I was about forty when I ended up in prison because of drink. That was a shock to the system. I got four months for assault and that sobered me up for a while. When I got out of prison I was still homeless and wandered about Britain trying to find work. I ended up back in a hostel in Glasgow and people there got me a place in Castle Craigs near the Borders.
89. I was allocated a counsellor and wrote my background for him. I found that while I couldn't speak about what happened in St Andrew's I could write it down. That was the only time, other than in this statement, where I told somebody of my time there. That stopped me having headaches.
90. After Castle Craigs I ended up in Edinburgh and stayed in a few hostels there. I was in my late 40's by then and moved back down to England moving about there before moving back to Coatbridge. I tried to make things up with my mother but she was almost 80 by then. I helped her out with the cleaning and tidying up the yard and stayed with her for a while before being allocated a place for myself. It was a dump and the local junkies would break in if I left it for more than thirty minutes.
91. I had by then lost all contact with the family and I even fell out with my mother who died when she was 89. I was back drinking heavily and would black out for days at a time. For the last thirteen years or so I've been in Glasgow and, while, sometimes homeless, I would say I've been settled for the last thirteen years or so and have been in sheltered housing for the last eight years.

Impact

92. My wife [REDACTED], who I married at 21, was a beautiful and wonderful woman who could have had any man she wanted. She was a great cook, a hard worker and loyal to a fault. She was the sort of woman who would make Lassie look treacherous. Life with

her was fantastic but I was still having flashbacks to what HMK did to me. I had nightmares, night-terrors. There were times I honestly thought I could smell HMK in my sleep.

93. used to keep asking me what she had done that had made me have such nightmares and always be on edge. But I couldn't talk to her, I couldn't tell her the truth about what had happened to me as I felt that it would have destroyed her to hear that such things could have happened.
94. This caused immeasurable damage to our relationship which is why we separated which meant that HMK even destroyed my marriage. The fact that I took ten years out of s life while we she lived with me makes me feel guilty to this day. She didn't deserve that.
95. When I look back to what happened to me at St Andrew's I've often wondered if I could have done something to stop HMK. I have no doubt he abused others and I wonder if I had done something could I have prevented him from hurting others though I realise I was only a child at the time.
96. There's no doubt that it affected me on a personal note and I found it difficult to make friends throughout my life. The way St Andrew's was run, with there being absolutely no schooling, clearly affected my education and left me feeling worthless from an academic point of view.
97. There was an occasion when I was drinking heavily and I was getting really bad flashbacks that I even tried to cut my penis off. Fortunately I recovered from the injuries. Turning to drink was my way of trying to get rid of the flashbacks and it's what lead to me drinking so much throughout my life.
98. There is physical pain, and I've had plenty of it, but the mental pain is burned in to you and never seems to ever leave you. You wish it to go away and I would love to go some months without those thoughts.

Treatment/support

99. I saw that psychiatrist that came to see me in St Andrew's and also signed myself into Monkland's Hospital psychiatric unit for a week. Other than that the only other counsellor I saw was at Castle Craig's

Reporting of Abuse

100. I have never reported what happened to me to the police. I did on one occasion while I was at St Andrew's but he obviously reported back to the school or SNR what I had said and I got belted for what I told him. Since then my confidence in the police is zero and I would be reluctant to tell them anything.

Records

101. I've spoken to Future Pathways about getting my records but so far the authorities are finding it difficult to discover where it was that actually sent me to St Andrew's. They are also trying to get my records about Langbank, Larchgrove and Busheyhill.

Lessons to be Learned

102. The main lesson to be learned for me is that children have to be listened to. There are people who, like me, suffered abuse when they were children and it destroyed their lives to such an extent that they committed suicide. Their lives ended tragically without them ever having told what happened to them or been believed.
103. I tried to commit suicide twice but am lucky that I'm still alive to tell my story and be believed. It breaks my heart that so many felt they had to take their lives without ever having got to say what the world needed to hear. My hope is that this Inquiry will allow

so many such people to tell their story and that children will be better listened to in the future and I hope by telling my story it will help prevent children being abused in the future.

104. 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. HMJ

Dated. 26th Oct 2021