

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

ILE

Support person present: No

1. My name is ILE. My date of birth is 1972. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. Until the age of two I was brought up in the Linwood area of Glasgow. At that time there was my mum, Dad, and my older brother, older sister and my younger sister.
3. I don't have a great memory of being in the house as we moved about a lot, and I don't know the exact dates or order. When I was about two my mum and dad separated and later divorced, and my mum took us to a new house at in Fife. My aunt and uncle on mum's side stayed nearby. It was around this time that mum says I was playing up and there were initial dealings with the social work. We moved for a short time and stayed in Blairgowrie. When we were in Blairgowrie we stayed in a bedsit and I was going to the local school, Rattray Primary. Around this time mum met my stepfather. was always going out and getting drunk. Mum never touched alcohol but is a very strong-willed woman.
4. We moved again and then back to, and mum and were working on a local farm. A couple of years later something happened, I don't know what, but we had to move again. This time we moved to near Brechin. I went to the local school Primary, and I had to walk there, and it would have been about a mile and a half away. I would have been about five or six at that time.

5. We stayed there until I was in either primary 5 or primary 6 and we moved to Old Meldrum, near Aberdeen. I think it may have been Meldrum Primary school that I went to.
6. My brother [REDACTED] stayed more with my dad and his new partner [REDACTED]. My sisters and I stayed with mum.
7. When I was at Meldrum Primary I was getting myself into trouble at the school. I am not sure if it was through my lack of interest or that I had dyslexia. I can remember one day when I was trying to get in the dining room, Mr [REDACTED] [REDACTED] hit me for something he believed I did wrong. When he hit me I headbutted him in the groin and ran off. There was an investigation into the incident and they blamed me for assaulting him, but they never made any mention of him hitting me first.
8. Because of the issues at the school the social work became involved. I met Les Valentine who was from the Inverurie social work office. Sometimes Les would come to the house and take me out to give my mum some respite.
9. We were at a panel and Les was recommending that I be sent to an assessment centre. I think mum and [REDACTED] were at that panel. The panel had discussions with everyone there, except me. They decided that because of the family issues and all the moving around that it would be better for me to go to an assessment centre.
10. I think I was about eleven or twelve at this time and was sent to Andrew Thomson Assessment Centre in Elgin. I was told I would be going there for a six-week assessment but ended up spending six months there.

### **Andrew Thomson Assessment Centre, Elgin**

11. I was taken to the Andrew Thomson Centre by Les Valentine, my social worker, in his car. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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## Leaving Andrew Thomson Assessment Centre, Elgin

28. At the end of the six months there was another panel to decide what was to happen with my care. At this panel mum and [REDACTED] were there along with dad and [REDACTED]. At the panel, the social work wanted to send me into another care home. My dad objected and I can remember him saying that he would take me to stay with him at Linwood.
29. I went to stay with dad and [REDACTED] and attended Linwood High School. [REDACTED] was old enough to move out and was now living with his girlfriend. When I went there [REDACTED] was already born. Dad was working as a long-distance lorry driver and was away from the house a lot. I can also occasionally remember staying with my gran. She had a one bedroomed retirement home.
30. I was being used to look after [REDACTED] on many days. One day I can remember, while I was at a girlfriend's house, watching [REDACTED] and she was standing very close to the fire and her clothes got burnt. I got in a lot of trouble with dad for that.
31. [REDACTED] had an issue with drinking, usually in the house. Dad would give her money to buy me some clothes. She would take me to the local thrift shop and buy clothes that I never liked. She kept the rest of the money to pay for her drink.
32. [REDACTED] made me wear those thrift shop clothes to school, but I was not happy. I would leave the house for school wearing those clothes. I would go to the garages and change into my own clothes. On the way home I would be back at the garage and change back into the thrift clothes. That worked for a while until one day when I came back and my clothes had been stolen.
33. I had been with dad for about four months and there had been no contact with Les Valentine during this time. That could have been because he only covered the North of Scotland. There was no contact with any local social work office during this time.

34. My dad did a lot of side car racing and for transport he converted a single decker bus into accommodation for all the travel. I got annoyed with dad not being there and the way [REDACTED] was behaving.
35. Life was not great with [REDACTED] I decided that I was going to take dad's bus and drive up to see my gran. I knew how to get in the bus, through one of the windows. When I got in the bus my feet hit the power button. The guy who owned the yard knew that I had previously got the bus ready for dad, in the yard, and when he saw me he asked if dad was taking the bus out. I told him he was, and the guy opened the gate. I then drove it towards gran's house. I drove it from Glasgow to Perth and at one point there was a police car sitting beside me at a set of lights. I got as far as Scone when a car pulled out and I swerved and hit a parked car. I ran off but when I was climbing out of a field to hitch a lift the first car that stopped was the police. The authorities did not know what to do with me and I ended up spending the night in Perth Prison in the women's section. I knew from what was said [REDACTED] that I was only thirteen at that time.
36. As a result of the incident with the bus I was arrested, and I was sent to Perth Prison overnight. The next thing I can recall was I was at the court and once more Les Valentine was involved. The panel decided I was to be sent to Coblehaugh.

### **Coblehaugh Children's Home, Inverurie**

37. I think it was Les Valentine that took me to Coblehaugh, but I am not certain. When I

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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### **Leaving Coblehaugh Children's Home, Inverurie**

47. I had only been at Coblehaugh for a month but with all the running away the social work decided I had to be moved somewhere else. There was no panel, I was just moved as I was part of the system. The decision made was I was being sent to Brimmond Assessment Centre.

### **Brimmond Assessment Centre, Bucksburn, Aberdeen**

48. My time at Brimmond was very short as it turned out I was only there for about a week.

### **Routine at Brimmond Assessment Centre, Bucksburn, Aberdeen**

#### *School*

49. We did have some schooling which was held within the house. Not everyone went to the classes and there were no punishments if you did not go.

#### *Family contact*

50. I did not see my family when I was here. I never saw my dad at any time I was in care. He did deliver by hand some things when I was in Brimmond, but he did not come up the hill to see me.

## **Abuse at Brimmond Assessment Centre, Bucksburn, Aberdeen**

51. One time I had an issue with the staff, and it may have been because I had been caught by staff, in a cupboard, and I was kissing a girl. I was having a tantrum as a result. They decided to teach me a lesson and I was locked into a dark cupboard. I was kicking at the door trying to get out but there were two male members of staff, I don't know their names, were leaning against the door stopping me getting it open. I had to stay there for a while until I had calmed down.
52. Later that day the same staff were still upset with me, and they decided they would lock me in the weight's room. This was a big room and had lots of windows and there were other rooms at the side of this gym area. I was angry with the staff and grabbed one of the weight bars and used it to smash some of the windows. As I was doing this I saw there were two boys locked in one of the other rooms. When I saw them they were looking scared and crying. I smashed the window to the room and got them out of the room.
53. I was aware that another boy had stolen a motorcycle and he had hidden it in the woods nearby. I got the two boys onto the bike, and I drove us to my mum's house. When we arrived at the house mum was not in. We all went up to my room. When mum came home she was initially upset and told me she would have to phone the police again. I told her there was something wrong and I thought something bad was happening to them. She told me that she was going to speak to someone about it and she told us none of us would be going back there.
54. I know one of the boys was called [REDACTED] because later in life my son was working in Aberdeen and the van [REDACTED] on the side. [REDACTED] approached my son and asked if we were related. When he told them we were, [REDACTED] told them he was grateful for rescuing them that day, as the staff were sexually abusing him. My son told me that [REDACTED] was still in a bad way, as he was addicted to drugs at that time. My son also knew [REDACTED]'s daughter and she too talked about how the sexual abuse affected [REDACTED] throughout his life.

### **Reporting of abuse at Brimmond Assessment Centre, Bucksburn, Aberdeen**

55. I obviously told the police about the circumstances of me running away from Brimmond, but I am not aware what, if anything, was ever done about it. I was not there long enough, probably just a week, to get to know anyone and did not know the names of anyone that was abusing those boys.

### **Leaving Brimmond Assessment Centre, Bucksburn, Aberdeen**

56. After the police came to my house I was back in front of a panel and it was agreed that I should not go back to Brimmond House and was taken straight to Oakbank. I don't know where the two boys went to, but I did find out it was not back to Brimmond. I remember the date as being [REDACTED] 1985. I think Oakbank was chosen because I had ran away so often and that was a secure place. I think that it was the police that took me there.

### **Oakbank Residential School, Aberdeen**

57. When I arrived at Oakbank I was introduced to [REDACTED] SNR who was called Mr [REDACTED] HMY. He told me that I would not be known by my name and that I would be referred to by a number. I was allocated the number [REDACTED] and that all my clothes and everything I did would be referred to by that number. He also told me that I would have to build up trust before I would be allowed any home leave. It would be at least six weeks before I would be considered for the home leave.
58. All the staff at the home had houses near to the home. Along with Mr [REDACTED] HMY I can remember [REDACTED] EJT, [REDACTED] SNR, Mr [REDACTED] ILG head of education, Mrs Weddell, [REDACTED] LIL Jane, a trainee, [REDACTED] LIM teacher, "Jelly" Rae, Mr [REDACTED], teacher, Miss [REDACTED] LIY and Miss Sivewright, Mr [REDACTED] EJV Mr [REDACTED] EJW joinery teacher who was a drinker but he never hit me, [REDACTED] IAB, teacher, Mr [REDACTED] EJP staff.

## **Routine at Oakbank Residential School, Aberdeen**

### *First day*

59. As soon as I arrived at Oakbank some of the boys saw me as an easy target for bullying. After all that had happened to me I was not going to let that happen and ended up fighting with one boy because of it. Another boy I met while I was there was called [REDACTED]. We remained good friends throughout our life, right up until he recently passed away.
60. There was a boy who arrived at Oakbank called [REDACTED] and he became friends with [REDACTED] and I. He never got any bother while we were there, but some of his friends who arrived at the home did.
61. There were three houses in Oakbank, Scott House, Lister, and Kelvin. I was allocated to Scott House. There was an office next to our dormitory where the night watchman, [REDACTED] would be based. I think in our dorm there were maybe sixty-five in there. There was always movement as some would be released, transferred, and others would be brought in. You were always meeting new boys.
62. The beds in the rooms were divided with a wooden partition that did not reach all the way to the ceiling. At night we could climb on top of the partition and make our way around our room and also the rooms next door. Because the rooms were basically open you could hear some of the boys crying at night.

### *Mornings and bedtime*

63. Between 7 am and 7:30 am the staff would switch on the lights to waken us up. There were other staff who would bang on the walls to waken us. We would then have to strip our beds and fold everything into a bed pack. We would then head to the showers and then go to our coat hooks where we would get dressed at our allocated number.

64. We would have our breakfast which usually consisted of a cup of milk for the cereal and toast. Each of the items would be on a tray and you just took it off and went to the table. After breakfast we were told to head back to our rooms. Others like me, who were smokers, would head to the smoke room where we would be allocated one of our six cigarettes.
65. Each morning the regime held parades where we were told what we were to be doing for the day. We would all have to head to the Play Ward where we had to sit on the floor crossed legged. We would be sat in separate rows, one for the education and the other one for activities. They did a register check of all who should be there. Each of the teachers would then take the residents in their group to their respective classes/work groups.
66. In the evening we would have our night bun about 8 pm and our last cigarette about 8:30 pm. After that we might have been allowed into the TV room. Sometimes the staff might have recorded a film and bring in the video for us to watch. Lights out would be about 9:30 pm.
67. During my time there the status of the place changed from List D to residential and they opened up a new building. I was allowed to go into what they called the Unit. When I went there I found there were some girls also staying in the Unit. The other boys in the Unit were all people who were being prepared for leaving. I was behaving by this time and getting regular home leave. The whole place was restructured, which included some of the staff changing or moving. I think I was in there from the [REDACTED] until I had my accident in the [REDACTED]

*Mealtimes/Food*

68. There were two cooks who also covered as matrons. They were Miss LIY [REDACTED] and Miss Sivewright. Sometimes I got to help them with the cooking, and I really enjoyed that. I was also away from the other side of the house where all the carnage was taking place.

*Washing/bathing*

69. We would have a shower each morning and there would be maybe twelve or fourteen of us able to shower at one time. The rest would still be standing in a queue waiting for someone to finish. Staff would be standing observing us while we were in the showers and walking around naked. <sup>EJS</sup> [REDACTED], whose father was a member of staff, would hang around the showers watching us. He had no reason that I knew of to be there.

*Clothing/uniform*

70. There was a hatch for a storage room where the staff would hand out your clothes each day. Each morning we would hand in our pyjamas and be handed our clothes for the day. While we waited on the clean clothes being issued you would stand naked in front of everyone. We would only get our clothes when we told the staff our allocated number. One of the staff that worked there was the partner of <sup>EJT</sup> [REDACTED], and she was really helpful. I often asked her for some more clean underwear and she usually gave me some. She was a really nice woman.
71. One time I was at the hatch to collect fresh clothing and Mr [REDACTED] was doing that job. He asked for my number before he would issue my clothing. I knew my docket was right next to where he was standing. I was just worn out with all the abuse, and I refused to give my number and asked for my clothes. Because I was refusing Mr <sup>ILG</sup> [REDACTED] and Mr <sup>EJT</sup> [REDACTED] came from behind and started hitting me. It was all body blows.

*Leisure time*

72. We were allocated an allowance of six cigarettes per day. You could only smoke the cigarettes in the smoke room. The room just had benches in there where you sit while you smoked the cigarette.

73. My mum had to sign an authorising letter for me to have cigarettes. The cigarettes were either paid for by your parents or were paid from some chores you carried out. They had a tuck shop in the home, and we were able to buy cigarettes from there. If we had any pocket money left over from the cigarettes we could buy sweets and juice.
74. There was a large room known as the Play Ward. This was the size of two tennis courts. The glass on the windows were the old glass tiles, the same as you got in old buildings, where light was allowed in, but you could not see out. In a room to the side there was a snooker table and two pool tables. There was also a separate TV Room. When you were in the Play Ward the staff locked the doors. There would only be a skeleton number of staff looking after you, and they would be in the room with you.

#### *Trips and holidays*

75. We did get to go to Tomintoul and we stayed in an old cabin. When we stayed in the cabin we would have to carry out running repairs on it and cleaning up the grounds. When we went here there would be maybe six of us boys there and a couple of staff.
76. When some of the restructuring was taking place some of the boys from the Unit went on a holiday to Bulgaria for skiing. We took a bus from the airport to the mountains. It was so bad there were bits of planes lying near the runway at the airport. This was quite a frightening experience as it was still behind the Iron Curtain. When we were skiing there were soldiers on the slopes all armed. When we were there we were all allocated snow suits, walking boots and jumpers all to help with the cold. When we left lots of us sold off everything we could to the locals and most of us went home with empty cases.

#### *School*

77. All the education was held within the home. One of the teachers was Mrs Waddell who was a science teacher. When we were in her class I can only remember we set fire to things.

78. There was one day Mr Ross, teacher, I called him Rosco, was aware that I was refusing to go into classes. He took me into his class, and he said he would teach me to play chess. I really enjoyed that. He told me that I just need to come to his class, and that would count as attending school, and we would play chess.

#### *Healthcare*

79. I did have a couple of appointments with a psychologist, but he never helped. Others went to see him for multiple sessions. It might be that I told him I was not wanting his help. For minor injuries or illnesses, you would see the matrons. There was a hatch at one of the doors and she would hand out some of the medication.
80. I was seeing a barmaid for a little while. When I was out for leave I would get to see her. It was on Christmas day when my sister's man was driving to pick her up he lost control of the car at high speed, after losing it on black ice. I was knocked out and when I came round I was in hospital. I think I spent about eight weeks in the hospital after the accident. I was using a wheelchair as my legs had to be kept raised all the time. Only when I got used to the crutches was I allowed to return to Oakbank.

#### *Work*

81. If you were not in a teaching class you were involved in learning some life skills. I worked a lot with a teacher we called "Jelly" Rae. He was a mechanic and helped fix things around the home. He would show me how to fix lots of different things. If he was not at work on a day then I would have to go back into a class.
82. Although we got paid for doing some of the work we were carrying out it was not in cash. The teachers just marked on a sheet how much you had earned and whoever was doing the tuck shop would be given the sheets and know how much you could spend.

83. We still had to do other chores in the home such as cleaning and mopping the floors, including the gym. We also cleared up the dining room after a meal and help clean up the kitchen. There were no outside cleaners coming in, we did it all.
84. The boys were also used to build a swimming pool at the home, but I was not there at that time. They were just used as cheap labour.

*Birthdays and Christmas*

85. The first Christmas I was in the home I had ran away so much I was not allowed home for the holiday and ended up having to stay in the home. It was just the same routine for the day, but there might have been a different meal. You never got any presents from the staff.

*Visits/Inspections*

86. There were no visits from any organisation to carry out an inspection of the home or to check on how I was getting on in there.

*Family contact*

87. After the first six weeks I was there mum was allowed to visit me. She had to come after her work, which finished about 6 pm, and get buses to see me. She arrived that night and stayed from about 730 pm until 8 pm. She then had to leave to get the buses back home again. When she got off the bus she had to walk about a mile and a half back to the house.
88. There was a member of staff called Mr <sup>EJP</sup> [REDACTED] and mum did not like him. Sometimes he would tell her not to come to visit me and forget about me while I was in there. That was not something she was going to do.

### *Running away*

89. It was hard to run away from Oakbank. It was secure and all the doors were kept locked. One time I can remember I had ran away and EJT made me strip naked in front of the other boys in the Play Ward, and then he beat me.
90. When we were in the Play Ward that was when I had the opportunity to get away. I would run away and when I was back the punishment was I was not allowed and leave for six weeks. When I did run away I might have been away for a couple of days at a time. I would sleep overnight in sheds. I would also sleep under a bridge at the side of a river. It showed how bad I had to be feeling wanting to run away in the middle of a cold winter.
91. When the police took me back to the home they never asked why I was running away. They just sent me back and treated me as a problem child. They just wanted to wait until I was sixteen and they could charge me with something.

### *Discipline*

92. LIM was a member of staff, who taught painting and decorating, and was Oakbank. If he was having trouble with you he sometimes grabbed hold of you but he would never hit you. He would try to get you to adhere to the rules.
93. Mr HMY would give you the belt sometimes. He would jump in the air to make sure he inflicted more pain.
94. Some of the discipline might also include a loss of privileges such as cigarettes or home leave.

### *Bed Wetting*

95. I did suffer for a little while with bed wetting. When the staff found anyone had wet the bed they would tell everyone, who in turn would be calling you names. The staff did nothing to help people. I learned not to drink as much late at night and control the stress, which all helped to stop the problem.
96. In the morning when we were all lined up at Assembly and we had wet the bed, the staff would shame us by telling everyone and then taking us out of the lines. We would then have to go back to our rooms and change the sheets and remake the bed parcel. Then whoever the staff were that were dealing with it, would give us a beating.

### **Abuse at Oakbank Residential School, Aberdeen**

97. EJT SNR was a really brutal man, he was an soldier. If we were in trouble with him he would hit us. He knew where to hurt you without it showing. On some occasions he would use pressure points and when he pressed them you bend over in pain and as you were bent over he would punch you. He was not afraid to hit you in front of the other residents or in front of other staff.
98. EJT would also take some of the swimming lessons and he would make me jump into the pool at the deep end, fully clothed and wearing a boiler suit over my clothes. I also had to wear steel toe capped shoes. He would then make me tread water for about an hour before he would let me out again. He only did it the once as I don't think he believed I could tread the water for that long.
99. Mr ILG was head of education. If you did not behave in class or work hard enough he would beat you about the body with his hands. He beat me on an almost weekly basis. He would knee me in the back and press his thumbs into your back.
100. LIL was a P.E. teacher and again if you were not working to his satisfaction he would punch you in the ribs, another one who would use his knees in your back. He

never hit you in the face, always body blows. He had a trainee called Jane and if she was in the class he would calm down and ease off from hitting you.

101. Mr <sup>EJV</sup> [REDACTED], we nicknamed <sup>EJV</sup> [REDACTED], which he loved, who taught bricklaying at the home, got upset with me one day. He threw a trowel at me. I managed to duck out the way, but it lodged into the door frame where I had been standing. He was also a [REDACTED] for football matches, and I can remember him running [REDACTED].
102. <sup>IAB</sup> [REDACTED] a member of staff, would be friendly with some of the older boys. He would give them extra fags and would send them to bring me back to him when I had ran away. He would tell them to beat me. There were other times he would hit me as well. During some of the restraining he would have your hands up your back and punch me.
103. <sup>ILF</sup> [REDACTED] the nightwatchman for our house, had been taught karate. He would often use those martial arts to beat kids during the night. If he caught you smoking at the window at night he would give you a doing.
104. There was a lot of sexual abuse carried out on boys at night. I don't know whether it was staff or other boys who were abusing the younger ones. There was a boy called [REDACTED], who was a former resident at Oakbank, and he committed suicide [REDACTED], all because of the sexual abuse he suffered.
105. One night a couple of us were crawling along the top of the partitions when we saw [REDACTED], a resident, sexually abusing another boy. [REDACTED] was using a Beano comic to abuse this boy. The next day we were all out in the grounds playing football. Most of the boys knew what [REDACTED] had been up to. At one point the ball was kicked towards [REDACTED], but no one went for the ball, and they all went for [REDACTED]. The young boy, I can't remember his name, but it could have been [REDACTED] who had been abused was transferred to another home, but I don't know where. [REDACTED] was also moved to a separate home.

### **Reporting of abuse at Oakbank Residential School, Aberdeen**

106. You could not report anything as most of the staff were involved. Some of the excuses we were given for hitting us was to stop us hitting them which was absolute nonsense.

### **Leaving Oakbank Residential School, Aberdeen**

107. When I was back at the home for a few days, after being in the hospital, some boys decided they would take advantage of me being on crutches and started fighting with me. I could not fight them off but Mr [REDACTED], a teacher, saw what was happening and pulled them off. Mr <sup>HMY</sup> [REDACTED] decided it was not safe for me being there and I was allowed to recover for a while at home with mum. When I was at mum's I was released early from their care and there was no more involvement with social workers. It was just before I turned sixteen.
108. I was back with mum and there was not much I could do. I was stuck in the house in the wheelchair. After I had been in hospital for the other operations to fuse the bones I was just so bored. When I could get about I was just using drugs and getting into bother. I got compensation from the accident and this was where I was paying for it all.

### **YOI Polmont/HMP Castle Huntley**

109. Because I continued getting into trouble I ended up at court and was sent to YOI Polmont. I was only in the allocation unit for a short time, before I was moved to HMP Castle Huntley. I was there, again for a short time and when my sentence was finished I was no longer under the social work care system. At neither of those places was there any abuse, it was just the usual strict prison regime.

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

110. When I left the care system I started working with my brother-in-law in his roofing business. I also did some jobs working on lorries. I was just bouncing from job to job.
111. I met a girl, who was twice my age, and we had my son [REDACTED]. That relationship did not last, and I ended up getting messed up with drugs. I then spent a lot of time in and out of the prison system.
112. I went to stay in Ireland for a while when I was in my late 20's and I met someone there who I had my daughter with. I also started my own roofing business there.
113. My mum got in touch and one time we were speaking she told me there was some sort of Inquiry looking into abuse that had taken place at Oakbank. That brought all the memories flooding back and I once more went off the rails. I left Ireland and ended up back in Aberdeen.
114. I was back on the drugs and was sleeping in homeless accommodation. I was on a Methadone programme and spent years trying to break my drug habit. I went to a clinic in Dunoon, where part of the treatment involved electric shock treatment. I could not take that and knew I had to get out of there.
115. About nine or ten years ago, my son [REDACTED] was born by then, and through a clinic I was attending I was being prescribed a Methadone substitute. I then made lots of effort to reduce that medication as quick as possible. I had to also break away from people I felt were controlling me and being under the control of drugs. I have managed to control those habits ever since.
116. My partner and I are separated but we still live in the same house as a unit. We are doing this for the sake of my son. I will put up with whatever I need to for the sake of my son.

## **Impact**

117. Being in the care system controlled all aspects of my life with what they did, how they spoke to me. It all impacted on how my life turned out. It led to my life with drugs, trying to bury the memories. Now that I have things under control I don't want it affecting my life with my son. As I grew up I did not like myself, because of how I was reacting to the memories.
118. I am not good with relationships because I never had any growing up, other than my mum. She was always there.
119. I have even discussed it with my psychologist and explained how nearly forty years of my life were ruined because of the care system. I began seeing her after I was attacked by someone with a knife. When I was talking about the attack I opened up about my life in care. She diagnosed me as suffering from PTSD all my life, all as a result of being in care. She was the one that recommended I come and tell my story to the Inquiry.
120. One of the effects of being in care is I have a fear of dark cramped spaces after having been locked in the cupboard when I was at Brimmond House.
121. When my legs were still recovering from my accident my leg broke again and I was told they were still weak from the injury. I ended up having another operation to have the bones fused.
122. I have two sons of my own and I have never raised my hand to them. I would not treat them anything like the way I was treated in care. I always felt that I was never there for my eldest son growing up.

**Reporting of Abuse**

123. I have not reported any of the incidents of abuse to the Police or other agency. I have been seeing my psychologist for a year and I need to sort myself out before I consider talking to anyone else.

**Records**

124. I have never thought about getting my records from my time in care.

**Lessons to be learned**

125. The harshness of the places I was in was something that was so wrong. Some kids come from problem families, and they need to be looked after and given psychological help to try and break the downward cycle they are caught up in.

126. The social work are terrible. They come in and just take over without listening to the kids involved. They don't allow time for the kid's opinions to come out.

**Other information**

127. I am aware of compensation and have been put in touch with Digby Brown. Any money that I get from that will be looked after my oldest son on behalf of my youngest son.

128. 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.

ILE  
[Redacted Signature]  
Signed.....

Dated..... 2/6/2023 .....