

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

EJN

Support person present: No

1. My name is EJN My date of birth is 1967. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in Glasgow. My mother's maiden name was She married who was already married and was an alcoholic. He was convicted of bigamy and spent time in custody. He's not on my birth certificate as my father and he never acknowledged me as his son but I believe he was my father.
3. I had two older sisters, who was born on 1960 and EWX who was born on 1965. My younger siblings were who was born on 1968 and who was born on 1969. Finally, who was born on in 1973 or 1974. She had a twin who died at birth.
4. I went into care, I think it was foster care , when my youngest sister was born. It was some time later that my mum told me that and I had been put into foster care and then the memory came back. I don't know what happened to my sisters when I was put into foster care with my brother but they must have been put somewhere else.

5. The foster carers lived in Newarthill, Lanarkshire. They had a massive house which had an upstairs and a long balcony. They were a couple. I don't know if there were other children there. My brother wet the bed and they made him walk around in a big towel wrapped around him like a nappy all day. He had to carry his mattress and put it outside the bedroom. These were punishments because he had wet himself. The man made a big deal of it. They didn't hit me or my brother but they humiliated him because of the bed wetting. The foster carers didn't seem too bad to me.

6. After I left foster care I went home to our three bedroomed flat in Newarthill. My dad was working as a taxi driver in New Stevenson which was about a mile and a half away. My mum went out to work and my sister, [REDACTED] basically took over as a mother. [REDACTED] was bad to me and she used to beat me up. She hit me with a plastic golf club on the back. I attended Keir Hardie Primary School. I was bullied there and I was sent home for smelling of urine. I got asked a lot of times at school by the teachers if I had been hit at home.

7. My dad was very bad to me. It was just me he was bad to. He never hit my mother. I believe he thought I wasn't his son as he wasn't on my birth certificate. He would hit me but sometimes he would just pretend to hit me, to scare me. I used to hide under the stairs to get away from him. I used to hear him coming home singing when he was drunk and I would hide under the bed. He would pull me out by the hair. He once broke his big toe against the bed when he was trying to kick me. He used to lock me in wardrobes and take the handles off the doors so that I couldn't get out and he could get away to drink. I was left with my younger brother and sister and I once ate excrement because I was so hungry. I was stuck upstairs and I didn't know any better.

8. My dad used to give me a box of chocolates on [REDACTED] and this made me believe that was my birthday but it was actually my younger sisters birthday. I was confused and thought my birthday was on that date instead of [REDACTED] When I was twelve or thirteen he beat me up in front of my girlfriend. She ran out of the house and that was the end of the relationship.

9. We had a fear of getting evicted so my mother moved house to Bellshill which was a couple of miles away from Newarthill. My mum had learned the neighbours at Newarthill had signed a petition to get rid of us. My dad was attacked by a guy called [REDACTED] who hit him over the head with a hammer for wearing a pair of union jack socks. My mum went up and put the [REDACTED] window in. The house we were living in belonged to [REDACTED] sister and it was horrendous. We got electric shocks every time we tried to make toast. I was really badly bullied at the school there. We weren't there long before my mother ended up selling what she could, which wasn't much, and we fled to Perth without my dad. We went there on the bus.
10. We moved to be close to my grandfather, [REDACTED], who was working as a janitor at a school. The flat we moved to was [REDACTED] from the police station which was under construction. My grandfather only had a bedsit so we squatted in the flat upstairs. When this was discovered, we were put into care. In my records the social work department say we were put into care because of stealing and that hurts me.

Colonsay House, Colonsay Street, North Muirton

11. My brother and I were put into Colonsay when I was in primary four or five. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] went to another home in Nimmo Avenue. [REDACTED] and my other sister went to live with my auntie.

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Leaving Colonsay

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Secondary Instit They wanted to move me as far away from home as possible. They moved me and [redacted] to Lochvale, which was in Georgetown in Dumfries. I think Jessie Young, my social worker, took us there. I used to roll down the windows in the car and run away sometimes when I was being taken to a new home.

Lochvale, Georgetown, Dumfries.

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Leaving Lochvale

59. Secondary Institutions - to be published later I was first year in high school and I was Secondary Ins football team. Secondary Ins social worker asked me whether I wanted to stay on in the home or go home to my mother. By this time my mother had got back with my dad and they were living in Perth. My dad had been badly beaten up and nearly died so my mother took him back. I made the decision to go home and go to school there. Secondary Ins stayed at Lochvale when I went home.
60. We lived Secondary Ins the school. I used to wait until the bell went at 9am. and then run into school. My dad started to send me to get cigarettes and bread which made me late. He phoned up the school to say I was sniffing glue when I wasn't. I was also bullied by older boys who were making me steal things and I was missing school because I was scared of them.
61. I attended secondary school in Dumfries for a couple of weeks. I was home for about three months and then I had a panel and was put into Waverley. My mother never spoke up at the Children's Panels and my father never attended them. Someone from the social work department always attended but I can't recall if it was always the same person. I used to get Supervision Orders. Initially they would be for a three week period but they ended up being for two years because I got into trouble.

Waverley House, Colinton, Edinburgh

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Leaving Waverley

77. I think I was in Waverley for just under a year. [Redacted: Secondary Institutions - to be published later]
- [Redacted: Secondary Institutions - to be published later]
- I didn't know that I was being sent to an approved school. I was put in under a Residential Order. It may have been a two year Order. [Redacted: Secondary Institutions - to be published later]
- [Redacted: Secondary Institutions - to be published later]

Oakbank List D School, Aberdeen

78. I was sent to Oakbank List D School when I was thirteen or fourteen. Oakbank was halfway along Midstocket Road on the left. There was a driveway and a park on the left as you drove up. Oakbank was a big, grand, semi-circular building and it had large entrance doors. On the left was the hall which had opaque glass windows. There was a matron's room off this hall. There was a small office on the right and next to that was the boardroom. Beyond the boardroom was the dining hall and the kitchen. There was a table tennis room and there was a full size snooker table and two pool tables. There was a television room off to the right. We stayed in this area during our leisure time.
79. There were different houses within Oakbank. They were called Kelvin and Lister and I was in Kelvin House. Oakbank housed boys from aged twelve up to seventeen. There were at least forty boys in Oakbank. There were violent boys in Oakbank and boys who had committed sexual offences. There was a boy called [Redacted] who had murdered a woman and he kept talking about it.
80. The regime at Oakbank was fairly relaxed. You had to get permission to go out and you weren't allowed any further than the back. We were allowed six cigarettes a day. My mother had to sign a consent form to allow this. They put you into a smoking room. You got a cigarette in the morning and at various other times. I would also steal cigarettes when I was doing my paper round.

81. [REDACTED] was [REDACTED]. He drove a jaguar car and he came from Edinburgh. He had been in a famous running group called Powderhall Harriers. I remember one time I asked him if he liked Al Jolson and he swore at me telling me he was nothing but a Jewish bastard. There was a staff member called Jim Shand who was brilliant. The building was locked all the time so we never got outside except when we went to see Mr ^{EJW}[REDACTED], who we called ^{EJW}[REDACTED] at the joiners way up at the top of the grounds. Mr ^{ILG}[REDACTED] also worked there. As you got older they trusted you to go there and work.
82. They were building a swimming pool in the grounds at the time and I helped out with that because I was nearly sixteen. There was a man who had a shop in Aberdeen and he worked in Oakbank as well. He drove a pickup truck and I used to go along with him to collect things. We completed the pool before I left and it was beautiful. There was a man called Mr Patterson who was a painter. They were tradesmen who were employed by Oakbank. Mr ^{KZD}[REDACTED] was the gardener. Ma Finley and Ma Christie were the matrons. They were both on duty at the same time.
83. When we were in the recreation area we weren't always supervised. Boys were battering each other and smashing the television. The majority of the time someone would sit in the snooker area and supervise. I once managed to escape from there. Although the windows had mesh outside them I put the window in and kicked the mesh off.

Routine at Oakbank

First day

84. I ran away as soon as I arrived and I got a train from Aberdeen. I sat in the toilet all the way. I changed at Dundee and got a train home. They caught me and took me back. I remember them showing me around the place.

Mornings and bedtime

85. There was a dormitory shaped like a T and in the middle was the night watchman. Before you went into the dormitory there was a toilet on the left and on the right was a TV room. I slept in the first bed on the left. I was in a single room but there were doubles and bigger rooms. There were partitions between the beds. There were about fifteen to twenty in my sleeping area. Ma Sievewright woke us up in the morning. She wore a blue tunic like a nurse.
86. The drug takers slept closest to the night watchman. There were two night watchmen called Uncle ^{ILF} and Uncle Amos. Uncle Amos used to let us sit up at night and smoke. You had a tin with your number on it and this contained your tobacco. He would bring these up at night. About eight of us would steal tobacco from other boys' tins and cigarette papers and hide them.
87. We went to bed at 8pm but before that we had to line up and hand in all our clothes including your underwear. We did this in the downstairs shower room. You gave them your number and it was put into a box and you were given pyjamas to put on. We stood naked in a line while we were waiting to be given our pyjamas.

Mealtimes / Food

88. Oakbank employed cooks and the food was fine. I can remember a cook called Alison.

Washing / bathing

89. There was a shower room downstairs. There were five showers in a row, then three more, then five more. They were separated by partitions. We were supervised by Mr ^{EJP} and Mr ^{EJQ} Mr ^{EJP} used to stand in the showers staring at us. There was no need for him to do this. Eventually both of these men just disappeared. They were bad men and they both hit us. We heard there was an enquiry and they lost their jobs. We were given a black comb to groom ourselves and other boys used to

swipe it across your naked buttocks when you were in the shower. It was really sore. Boys got bullied all the time. One of the boys who had a brother in the Falklands war tried to take his own life in this shower room and I found him. I heard he survived but I'm not sure what happened to him.

Clothing / uniform

90. We wore jeans and a jumper.

School

91. We went to school within the building. Mr ^{EJR} was our teacher. He hurt me one time when a boy called said that I had hit him. This wasn't true and he had been bullying me. Mr ^{EJR} hit me with his hand across the side of my head. I liked him before that. I never spoke to him again after he did this and I didn't participate in class any more.

Trips / Holidays

92. I hardly ever got home. There was a panel of six made up of boys and staff and they would all vote for the number of weekends you had to stay in. They used to line us up and shout our names out on a Friday if we were getting home and then we would go on an old bus. One weekend I was due to go home and Mrs Wallace, the typist, had her purse stolen. They told us nobody was getting home until they found out who had stolen it and it turned out it was the janitor. He admitted it because he felt guilty that we weren't getting home. The janitor had black curly hair.

Visits / Inspections

93. My mum came up once and they gave her dinner. They gave her carrots and white sauce which she had never had before and she thought it was lovely. There was always a member of staff present when I was talking to her. You couldn't say

anything because of the person that was present and they always had a warning look.

94. I don't remember any formal inspections. My social worker visited now and again. I think there was always someone from the home present during the visits. I had to attend panels. The Supervision Order was for two years but if I got into trouble I was taken to a panel and put back to Oakbank. By this time I had turned into a thief. Just before I left Oakbank we used heroin a couple of times. My friend [REDACTED] from Dundee was addicted to heroin and he brought it in. He took it every day. We took it in the toilets or the showers or at the back of the TV room. Boys also sniffed glue downstairs.

Healthcare

95. We went to Ma Finley or Ma Christie with health issues. One time I had been on the run for several weeks and I caught scabies. They put a white lotion on it and it burnt my groin. I was screaming. I had to take my clothes off and run around the hall.

Running away

96. As I got older I ran away from Oakbank for three or four months at a time. I stayed in [REDACTED] where Perth Grammar School and St Columbus was. [REDACTED] Secondary Institut
Secondary Institutions - to be published later
[REDACTED] Secondary Inst My feelings were really intense. Any chance I got I ran away. I picked two locks with a coat hanger and got out once. Mr ^{EJS} [REDACTED] gave me a beating one time because he caught me with a coat hanger which I used to pick locks in order to escape. He punched me in the face and kicked me. He went mad. I'll never forget it.
97. They took us in the bus to Dundee when we had home visits. There were boys who went to Fife and there were Dundonians and the boys from Perth got on the train. Anytime I got out for a visit I ran away. I ended up in a home called Burnside in Dundee one time. This was instead of taking me to the police station. They put me a shallow bath and this man with curly hair was staring at me. It gave me a horrible

feeling. My brother had run away too and he was with me. Steve Wauk the social worker came to get us and he gave me a half ounce of tobacco and papers and asked me if I was going to run away. I told him I wasn't but as we went out to get into the car I bolted right across the road next to Kirkton High school. I knew boys from Dundee and I stayed with them for three or four months. My brother wouldn't come with me.

98. I was there one Christmas and New Year because I had got caught on the run. One of the staff took me to the kitchen to prepare food, he left me alone to answer the phone and I smashed the window with a fire extinguisher and got out and away. I was only in pyjamas. One of my friends, whose surname was [REDACTED], lived in a place called Seaton and I stayed with him for a few weeks.
99. When I got caught and taken back I would be belted and then I would have the meeting in front of the panel. It was usually Mr [REDACTED] who gave me the belting. He was a big, hefty man. He used to stand and loosen up before he belted me. I know that other boys were also belted because they told me and showed me their bruises. I never saw other boys getting punished but I heard them screaming and crying.

Abuse at Oakbank

100. Mr [REDACTED] put me across a big boardroom table and gave me the belt. He was a big, fat man. When you were getting the belt they would allow you to put pyjamas on or else your pants and then they would hold you across the table. Mr [REDACTED] would hit you four or five times with a two thonged tawse. It left terrible bruises. Mr [REDACTED] and Mr [REDACTED] held me down. It was horrendous. I used to be bruised and sore for weeks.
101. [REDACTED] a member of staff whose surname I cannot remember, battered me one time. I was playing snooker and I started to fight with one of the other boys. [REDACTED] grabbed me by the hair and threw me into the shower room and beat me about. All I remember was he was the PT teacher.

102. I think older boys were doing things to younger boys but it was never done to me. I never saw anything it was just a suspicion.
103. ██████████ used to make us all do exercise before bed and we had to hold our legs up for ages. It was really sore. This was part of how he tried to keep us fit.

Reporting of abuse at Oakbank

104. Jessie Young was my female social worker after Alex Miller. I told her that I was getting battered in Oakbank and she didn't believe me. She later denied I had said it. My sister ^{EWX} ██████████ got four years for assaulting Jessie Young. She was fifteen at the time. I assaulted a police officer at this time and I got three months detention in HMP Glenochil. It was torture. I was battered every day.


Leaving Oakbank

105. I left Oakbank on my sixteenth birthday. I had to go to a panel and they said I could be released. A couple of months before that I was prepared for release by being taken into Aberdeen and I got a set of clothes. I was taken to Dundee. When I went home my mum was working in a Chinese restaurant. My dad came to the door and asked me what I wanted. I just decided to disappear and I went to London.

Life after being in care

106. At that time you could sign on in Scotland and in London so I went back and forward between the two places. I got caught shoplifting when I was sixteen and a bit and Sheriff John Weatley in Perth Sheriff Court put me in Murray Royal in Perth. I was sectioned under the Mental Health Act for being addicted to drugs because at that time they didn't know what else to do. That was 1983. I was in for five or six months.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later



107. When I was in London I stayed in Centrepoint in Soho. There was a big queue to get in and there were Arabs offering boys money for sex. I hung about Trafalgar Square and stole tourists' wallets and purses. There were coachloads of Japanese tourists feeding the pigeons and I stole their money. I also pickpocketed people on the tube. By that time I was injecting heroin two or three times a day. I also stayed in a hotel across from Euston Station. I was in London on and off for two or three years. I had no further involvement with the social work department.
108. I ended up in a relationship where both of us were using drugs. We had two daughters called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I stopped injecting heroin just before my first daughter was born. I was working in a hotel at that time. I was a tree planter when I was in my twenties in the [REDACTED] I worked there for years and I lived in a caravan. I still got my drugs from the doctor.
109. In 1999 I went up on [REDACTED] and I was going to jump. They took me to Perth Royal Infirmary and they wanted to keep me in but the police wouldn't allow it. They took me to the police station and gave me a cup of tea every half hour. I had been sleeping rough for years and nobody wanted me because who wants a drug addict? I was remanded in custody and got a sentence.
110. From the day I got out of prison I went to Liverpool. I sought help and I was put in touch with Tayside Misuse services. A nice woman, Meg Ross, supported me and I went into rehabilitation in England because the rehabilitation unit in Scotland wasn't suitable for me. I was in rehabilitation for eighteen months the first time. I relapsed when I got out and I was back in within three months. When I was in rehabilitation in

2000 I found out I had hepatitis C. I was treated and I got rid of it. When I was in rehabilitation a lot of stuff I thought was normal was because of the life I've had.

111. When I was in rehabilitation I started learning how to use a computer. I typed up my life story but I lost it. I would have liked it to be published.
112. I was drug free for five years. I worked at Sahir House with people who had HIV and AIDS. I would [REDACTED] for them. This was while I attended college in Birkenhead where I did pre-access to humanities, which was the equivalent of nine O'levels and access to humanities which was the equivalent to three A'levels in sociology, psychology and law. I was about to go to university in Liverpool and I had a conditional offer to do social studies. They said they would give me a year of social studies then a diploma in social work. That would have been me qualified as a social worker because I wanted to help people like me.
113. At the time I was travelling back and forth to Scotland to see my children and my mum. My brother told me he had been raped [REDACTED] in Oakbank. [REDACTED] I was shocked because I always thought I could protect him but as I got older I kept running away from the homes and he wouldn't come with me. If I had been aware he was being abused I would have told someone but we were only children and we had nowhere to go. My mum died of cancer the day before his birthday and nine months after that my brother committed suicide [REDACTED] in Glasgow. I stayed clean until 2006 when I lost my mother, grandad, and my brother and I ended up back on heroin. I had a relationship with a girl and she ended up pregnant. My son, [REDACTED], was born.

Impact

114. I have been a registered drug addict from the age of sixteen but I was using solvents from the age of nine. They reckon that was my way of coping with things. The doctor told me that I have Barrett's oesophagus and a hiatus hernia now because of my

drug abuse. I always felt what happened to me was my fault but it wasn't because I was only a wee boy. Now when I look at it, I started using the glue to escape and then I started using cannabis.

115. I was assaulted with a bottle about twenty years ago and the vision in one of my eyes has been affected. If somebody attacked me my automatic reaction was to fight back. I became immune to violence after being in care.
116. I got involved in crime as a result of what happened to me in care. I have walked around for years, homeless, talking to cars, shouting and keeping people away. That was my way of protecting myself. I have done years in prison for breaching the peace, a police assault and shoplifting to fund my drug problem. Until I got to my thirties I didn't realise a lot of the stuff I thought was normal wasn't. I got my birth certificate for the first time when I was in my thirties in order to get my driving licence. Under the space for Father's name, it said unknown so I just ripped it up.
117. I have tried to take my own life a couple of times. I have blocked out a lot of things because I don't know if I can handle them. I have been on methadone for twenty five years. I'm on 90 milligrams of methadone at the moment. I take it twice a week but I have had periods where I crash. I have been clean of illegal drugs for the last four or five years. About three weeks ago my doctor started prescribing me diazepam to take for a few months to help me through a difficult period because I get paranoid when I am going out. I am on 15 mg a day. It also helps with my epilepsy.
118. Five years ago I was in and out of prison. My life hasn't been good except for the last four or five years. I have been out of prison and I have stayed out. This is the longest I have been out of prison in my life. I haven't stolen anything for ten or fifteen years. I do voluntary work now. I have been consistent since I got out of prison for the last five and a half years and I have contact with my son. He is ten years old. Social services oversee this although they are unsupportive of my relationship with my son. Through the court I get him on a Friday, a Monday and every second Tuesday. I also go to his school to help him out because he has toileting issues. I have a difficult relationship with his mother.

119. I never knew what Christmas was until I had my own children. Part of my life was taken away by being in care. I can't recall ever getting a birthday cake.
120. I would love to complete my education but my health isn't good and I am suffering mentally. I am on medication for depression because I had another suicide attempt a couple of years ago. I have a hiatus hernia. I do voluntary work now. Sometimes I can't leave my house for months. I haven't been able to hold down a relationship. I am a loner. I don't like people around me. I just can't handle things sometimes. I still distrust social workers because of what happened. I told my social worker what had happened to me and she didn't do anything.
121. I have three children and six grandchildren. I am so happy about that but I feel that I have wasted my life. There are things I need to say but I have blocked them out for so long.

Reporting of Abuse

122. I told a drug worker when I was sixteen some of the stuff that had happened and we made an appointment with Jessie Young and told her that I was being abused. As far as I am aware she didn't do anything about it and nothing changed. She later denied it. By this time she was head of the social work department.
123. I went to the police in Perth in 2000 and a girl interviewed me in relation to the abuse. She was plain clothes and had blond hair. She told me to go to Liverpool and report it there. I couldn't understand why she wanted me to go to England to report the abuse because it had happened in Scotland and I didn't do anything further. I have spoken to drug workers about what happened to me. They should have reported this to the social work department. I also told social workers when the sheriff requested reports prior to sentencing. I told Dr Hopwood who was a psychiatrist who worked in Dundee drugs problem centre. She said I had inadequate psychopathic tendencies.

Treatment and Support

124. I haven't had any treatment dealing specifically with the abuse which I suffered while in care. There are things which I haven't addressed Secondary Institutions - to be published later
Secondary I I have blocked them out and there are other things which have happened to me which I am not able to talk about. I have blocked things out but that's what helped me survive.

Records

125. My medical records prior to 1992 have gone missing. I have seen my social work records but there was somebody supervising me. This was about 25 years ago. I didn't feel they portrayed me accurately. They made me out to be worse than I was.

Lessons to be Learned

126. People working with children in care should be rigorously checked. Sex offenders manage to get jobs working with children because there is a breakdown in communication between agencies. Children were put into care to get looked after and they weren't. They were mentally, sexually and physically abused. I am still suffering to this day. I don't want what happened to me and my brother to happen to anyone else. There are things I have told you that I haven't ever told anyone. When I saw the advert about the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry on television, I just wanted to help. I am aware that these people could still be working.

Other information

127.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

128. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

129. I know some boys who were in St Ninian's Falkland. My best pal, 'wee man' they called him was one of them. He was made to sleep in a room with the Brothers and they were raping him. He ended up killing himself with a drugs overdose. This is what a lot of boys did because of the guilt.

130. Triazolam was taken off the market in October 1999 because of its severe side effects. I was on it for a long time. I used to con the doctors. I used different names at different surgeries and they were supplying me with diazepam, codeine phosphate and triazolam.

131. 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. EJN

Dated... 11-10-19