

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

[REDACTED]
LBP

Support person present: No

1. My name is [REDACTED] LBP [REDACTED] My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1957. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I lived in Aberdeen with my mum and dad and two of my sisters. There are five children in the family in total; one boy and four girls. [REDACTED] was the oldest child, next was [REDACTED] then [REDACTED] and then [REDACTED] and I am the youngest. There are two years of age between each of us. My sister [REDACTED] had special needs. My older sister [REDACTED] went to live with my granny in Aberdeen when my mum was ill. My granny was my mum's mother. [REDACTED] had left home and gone into the army.
3. My mum died suddenly on [REDACTED] 1964 at the age of 36. She was a 'beaten wife'. My dad abused his children too. Three weeks after my mum died we were evicted from our home as my dad did not pay the rent, and all our belongings were put out on the street. We went to live with an auntie nearby but that didn't work out. Then my dad told us we were going on a holiday and took me, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to Nazareth House in Aberdeen. My granny was Catholic, but my family weren't Catholic. I was made Catholic in Nazareth House and I was baptised in there.

Nazareth House, Claremont Street, Aberdeen

4. It was a great big house. There was a playground outside the home where we were allowed to play on the swings. There were lots of children in there when I arrived and they were all different ages. There was a canteen on the ground floor and the children in my dorm had a sitting room with a TV in it. The laundry room was next to the sitting room.

Routine at Nazareth House

First day

5. My dad had told us three that we were going on holiday and I thought this was an adventure. I had just a doll and a case with me. The doll was special to me as it was the last present my mum gave to me. We were taken to the front room of Nazareth House, this was like a parlour. I remember the Mother Superior came to meet us, I cannot remember her name, and introduced us to Sister [REDACTED] LTX [REDACTED]. My father disappeared. My case and my doll were taken off me, as well as the clothes I was wearing. I was taken into another room and put into clothes given to me by the nuns. I was crying because my doll was taken away and Sister [REDACTED] LTX [REDACTED] told me 'You shut up. You're in here because your mother died and nobody wants you'. I was never able to grieve for my mum and could never show any emotion.

Mornings and bedtime

6. I was put in a dorm room with other children and there were six or eight of us in the room. My older sister [REDACTED] was not put in the same dorm as me. At the start I remember there were young twins called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and a young girl called [REDACTED]. I don't know what happened to the twins as they disappeared suddenly. [REDACTED] used to scream and I don't know what happened to her either. I

couldn't have asked what happened to them. I would have just been thumped by the nuns.

7. We had a metal bed each with a really thin mattress on it. I don't remember us having anywhere to put our clothes at night. The floors were made of a shiny stone. Across from our room, at the end of the corridor there was a bathroom with baths and toilets. Downstairs there were sinks and a foot bath. I was too scared to use the toilets because there were mice running around. I used to wet the bed at night as I was too scared to go to the toilet.
8. We were woken up at 5.30 in the morning and had to make our bed and fold our counterpanes to the bottom of the bed. Then we had to clean the bedroom before we went to church. There was a buffer to polish the floor. It was a big piece of metal with pads on the bottom. I was so small I couldn't do it properly. If you'd wet the bed in the night, you got put in a cold bath before church. After church, we went back to Nazareth House for breakfast before we went to school. We had to fast before church. This was the routine and I was always tired, cold and hungry.
9. At eight o' clock it was bed time and we had to say our prayers before going to bed. We washed our faces and brushed our teeth, but no-one checked if we'd done it. The nuns were good at checking our underwear and the sheets for urine. We were made to sleep in a certain position with our hands crossed. They'd check, and if you didn't sleep in that position you'd get thumped.

Mealtimes/Food

10. The food was served in the canteen on the ground floor. Breakfast was always porridge. If you didn't eat it all it would be waiting for you at night time for your evening meal. There wasn't time in the mornings before the school bus for the nuns to force us to eat the porridge at breakfast time. There were six tables and a hatch where we got the food from. There was porridge and toast on a Sunday. Sister [REDACTED] LTX gave out the food along with [REDACTED] FAJ Two groups of children

ate their food together. There were boys at one side of the room and girls were on the other.

11. We went back to Nazareth House at lunchtime to eat and then went back to school for the afternoon. We had stew at lunchtime. It was full of fat and I hated it. Sometimes, there was fish boiled in milk and I hated it too. Again, we had to go up to the hatch to have the food put on our plates. The nuns did not have the time to force me to eat the food at lunch time.
12. When we came back to the home after school we were give bread and jam to eat. Then we had to do our homework. At night time the nuns had time to force us to eat the food we couldn't eat earlier on and it had been left lying on a plate. They would force it into our mouths and you'd be sick as a result and bring it back up and they'd force it back in. You'd be forced to put your hands behind your back. There are still some foods now that I cannot eat, like Dairylea cheese and fish.

Washing/bathing

13. We had a bath by ourselves every night, even if you'd had one in the morning. The baths were individual. The water was cold. We didn't have to share the bath water with other children. There were tubs of black stuff the nuns put in the bath water that changed the water cloudy and white, and it would stink. I later found out this was Jeyes fluid that you would clean drains with. They washed our hair with it too and checked for nits. We washed ourselves with red carbolic soap and no-one checked that we'd washed ourselves properly. I can't remember if we had our own towels or if we had to share. I could hear kids screaming because they were being dragged into a cold bath. We also had to wash our feet in the foot bath.

Clothing/uniform

14. The girls all wore the same uniform of big, wide drindle skirts and cardigans during the day. Under the cardigan we wore a liberty bodice, with rubber buttons. On a

feast day we wore a kilt. A new set of clothes was given out to us from the laundry room every two days.

15. We would go to the linen room to get our clothes stitched and pick up your clean uniform every two days. This was where we picked up our shoes from a big box in the morning. These were brown brogues and they were called 'eagles'. My shoes were too big for my tiny feet and they used to rub my feet and give me blisters. The kids at school made fun of these shoes and the noise they made when you walked.

School

16. My daily release was going to school. I went to a Catholic school called St Peters in Nelson Street in Aberdeen. We had to travel on our own school bus to get there as it was some distance away. If the girls even looked at their brothers on the bus they'd get in trouble. There was no interaction with siblings of the opposite sex allowed on the bus, or in school. Boys and girls were separated at school and we had different playing areas. They would only see each other if they were on the field as it was a big area. The other kids at St Peters called us the 'nazzie kids' or the 'homie kids'.
17. I used to see my two sisters at school. [REDACTED] had special needs and in those days she was considered to be 'backward'. I used to worry about her as she couldn't cope with normal school.
18. The head teacher was called Mr [REDACTED] LFA [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] I also remember Miss [REDACTED] LGL who was a teacher for remedial kids. I was dyslexic so I was in her class. If I got things wrong on the blackboard I got in trouble from Miss [REDACTED] LGL. She would hit you with a board duster. As bad as it was at school, I hated the thought of returning to Nazareth House. Thinking about it gave me stomach ache.

19. If you didn't do your homework right you'd get battered for it. Sister [LTX] and [FAJ] would check the spelling in our homework. I wasn't a clever kid and I was dyslexic and I got my homework wrong a lot. There was no encouragement to try to get it right. A friend from school let me copy her homework. Someone told the teacher and I got belted at school by the head as a result, and he told the nuns so I got punished at the home too.
20. The school teachers would report to the nuns on our behaviour, so if we were in trouble at school, we'd be in trouble at Nazareth House too. We had that thought hanging over us at school for when we went back.

Holidays and leisure time

21. There was a yard at Nazareth House. There were just two swings. We were allowed to play games in the yard when we'd done our homework. There was a play room inside, we could talk in there, but I don't remember any toys. We were allowed to watch a TV in the downstairs sitting room that was for the children in my dorm. We did our homework in the play room as it had long tables. We had to go into the sitting room to kneel on the carpet to say the rosary. We had to say a lot of prayers. The nuns controlled what we watched on TV and they wanted us to watch things like Val Doonican. Sister [FAF] went nuts when she caught us watching Top of the Pops.
22. We went to the beach in Aberdeen a couple of times in the summer holidays. The nuns had a little chalet there. We had to carry the white bread bins full of sandwiches to the beach, and it was a long walk. We were put in the water no matter what the weather was like. We didn't go away anywhere else for the holidays.

Birthdays and Christmas

23. We went to midnight mass at church at Christmas, but there was no celebration and no presents or special food. On a feast day I might get given an apple or an

orange. You'd get a holy photograph and a little medal. My gran wasn't allowed to visit at Christmas or send presents because she made a fuss about my hair being cut short. The nuns had told her not to come back and they made excuses for me not going on a visit, such as me being ill. My gran told me this after I left care.

24. Our birthdays did not get celebrated. I didn't know when my birthday was. I just knew it was sometime in the month of May.

Visits/Inspections

25. At the start my granny used to visit me, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] on a Sunday. We were allowed two hours with her. She used to take us to her house and gave us chocolate to take back. I used to cry because I didn't want to go back to Nazareth House. I used get a battering when I went back for crying. My granny fell out with the nuns because I was so upset and because they cut my hair. She soon stopped visiting us. There weren't many visits before she stopped coming. My granny couldn't take us out of Nazareth House as it was my father who put us in there, and he was the only one who could take us out.

26. I never saw a social worker when I was at Nazareth House. The only visits I ever got were from my granny when I was first there.

27. I remember a woman called Janice who used to come in to see the children. She wasn't a nun and she wasn't a staff member. She was lovely and she used to brush my hair. I loved her. I think she might have had some learning difficulties. She stopped visiting us, and I was told she was killed by a motorbike. Sister [REDACTED] LTX used to make fun of her too.

Healthcare

28. There was someone called Dr Billy who came in to Nazareth House to see people who were ill. I never had to see him myself. I didn't want to be ill because that meant I'd have to stay home for the day. Sometimes, I had warts on my hands

and they were burned off by the nurse using some black stuff. The nurse was called Sister [REDACTED] LJP I have no memory of ever seeing a dentist.

Bed wetting

29. Sister [REDACTED] LTX had her own bedroom across the corridor from the dorm. She slept there overnight. During the night she would check our sheets to see if we had wet the bed. If you had wet the bed in the night, you had to stand by your bed with the wet sheet on your head for hours until it was time to get up. Then you would have to wash your own sheets. My sister [REDACTED] tried to swap sheets with me and wash my sheets for me, and she got battered for this. She was older than me and was stronger to take the punishments.

Abuse at Nazareth House

30. When I first went into Nazareth House, I was paired up with a buddy straight away and made to work. My buddy at the start was an older girl called [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and she got to show me the routine. I was told to help her fold the counterpanes for the beds and I couldn't do it right as they were so big, and I was tiny. I then realised this wasn't a holiday. I went in to the laundry room and I saw my doll. I went to grab it because it was mine and I got a slap from Sister [REDACTED] LTX. After that, it was one thing after another from her.
31. I was always called by my surname [REDACTED] and the nuns didn't use my first name. They referred to us as 'Tinks'. We all were given a number to identify us by and mine was [REDACTED]. The number was written into all of my clothes. You had to always remember to use that number and I had to get [REDACTED] to remember it for me.
32. My sister [REDACTED] took beatings for me. You got beatings for everything, even if you lost your socks you'd get a beating. If your tie went missing you'd try to steal someone else's so you wouldn't get a beating. I was just surviving. We had to

wash our ankle socks at night and dry them on the pipes and the radiator in the dorm. Sometimes I lost my socks, it was easy to lose them. It was easy to lose your tie as well.

33. As well as Sister [LTX] I remember Sister [FAF] who was an older nun who was Irish. She was really, really horrible. You would know if Sister [LTX] was going to batter you as she'd rub her hands together. She was only ever good to you when there were important visitors or it was a feast day. The Bishop would come to visit us on feast days. Also, there was [FAJ] who was a staff member [REDACTED] She used to hit the children as well as the nuns. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Sister [LTX] s favourites would tell tales on us, so we had that fear hanging over us too.
34. My hair was really long when I first went to Nazareth House. A family came in called [REDACTED] Their hair was full of lice. I got lice in my hair from them. Sister [LTX] poured scalding hot water onto my hair and washed my hair with Jeyes fluid. Then [FAJ] cut all my hair off short. They told me 'You won't get lice again'. As a result of this treatment the rest of my hair fell out and never grew back. My dermatologist Dr [REDACTED] told me many years later that the hair follicles had died because of the scalding hot water and it will never grow back.
35. One time, Sister [LTX] punished me for using a swear word. I don't know what word I used, but she put a piece of red carbolic soap in my mouth as punishment.
36. One day I missed the bus from school back to Nazareth House and I had to walk from school. I tried to sneak into the building through the laundry room. Sister [LTX] caught me and shut me into the big wicker laundry basket where all the clothes went as a punishment. She closed the basket lid with the leather strap. I was shut inside the basket for a long time. I was very frightened. I still have a fear of enclosed spaces now.

37. We all had chores to do, and mine was to put the counterpanes onto all of the beds in the dorms in the evening. I did this task with [REDACTED]. We had to fold the counterpanes back from the bottom of each of the beds. I also had to sweep and polish the floors using the buffer. I was too small to be able to do it properly and get the wax polished off. That was a weekend task. I remember Sister [FAF] giving me a thump for not doing the floor properly. She used to check under the beds for fluff.
38. There was a regime of discipline. You would get thumped or got the belt that Sister [LTX] carried for anything she thought was wrong. I didn't get the belt, I just got thumped. Other kids got the belt. I was hit every day. She would hit you with her hands, with a shoe or a slipper or pull the girls by their hair. You would try to be nice to her and suck up to her to avoid being hit. Sister [LGN] treated other children badly too. She wasn't in charge of my group. She died when I was at Nazareth House. Sister [FAF] had a belt around her waist to hit us with and she used to pull you by the ear or the back of the neck or kick you. You could also get a smack on your head or your body from [FAJ] but her abuse was more verbal.
39. If we were in the yard when the Angelus bell went we had to kneel down and pray. It was a regular thing and the bell was a call to prayer. If you were on the swing when the bell went you'd get pulled off it by the nuns and made to kneel down to pray. There was a lot of religious instruction, and we said a lot of prayers. We had to do the Benediction and I quite liked that because it involved songs and singing.
40. I remember an older girl called [REDACTED]. She had epileptic seizures. Sister [LTX] would take her and put her into a cold bath when she had a fit. I can remember hearing [REDACTED] crying. When she had a fit in the dorm room she would be on the floor and Sister [LTX] thought she was putting it on. She would make fun of [REDACTED] and kept calling her 'Mickey'. She told us to 'look at Mickey' and said 'copy Mickey' and used to drag her by the hair to the bath.

41. I remember a girl called [REDACTED]. She always seemed to be smelly as she wet herself. Before tea time Sister [REDACTED] LTX could smell the urine and used to ask: 'who's smelling?' and 'who's wet themselves?'. Sister [REDACTED] LTX used to get us to line up and tell us to take our underwear off and she smelled them for urine. By the time she got to me I would have wet myself out of fear. If she could smell any urine you were made to put your pants on your head.
42. There was another girl called [REDACTED]. She was caught fighting with a boy called [REDACTED]. He was one of Sister [REDACTED] LTX's favourites as he had a metal plate inserted in his head. Sister [REDACTED] LTX dragged her away and dropped a sash window onto [REDACTED] fingers. I remember her screaming. I remember there was another girl called [REDACTED] and one morning she was on the roof threatening to jump off. We were on our way to school at the time and we were just put on the school bus and driven away. I have no idea what happened to [REDACTED], and I never saw her again.
43. I saw Sister [REDACTED] LTX punish a girl called [REDACTED] LBR when she was on the swing when the Angelus bell rang. She didn't come off the swing quickly enough to pray and she may have answered back to Sister [REDACTED] LTX. Sister [REDACTED] LTX pulled her and pushed her face into the gravel on the ground. She was going mental about it. She broke [REDACTED] LBR front teeth and her mouth was covered in blood. [REDACTED] FAJ tried to pull Sister [REDACTED] LTX away from [REDACTED] LBR and was shouting at her. Me and the other children were taken away from the yard and I don't know what happened next. The same night, I saw [REDACTED] LBR when we were praying at the statue of our lady and I could see her mouth and lips were all swollen. The next day I saw her at school and she had lost her front teeth.
44. At church there was a priest Father Ashworth. He was really old. He had heavy breathing. I laughed at him once when he gave a sermon. I was dragged out of church by Sister [REDACTED] LTX and I was given a right good smack for that.
45. When Sister [REDACTED] LGN died, there was a funeral mass at the church and we all had to walk past her coffin, and all the children had to kiss her forehead.

Reporting of abuse at Nazareth House

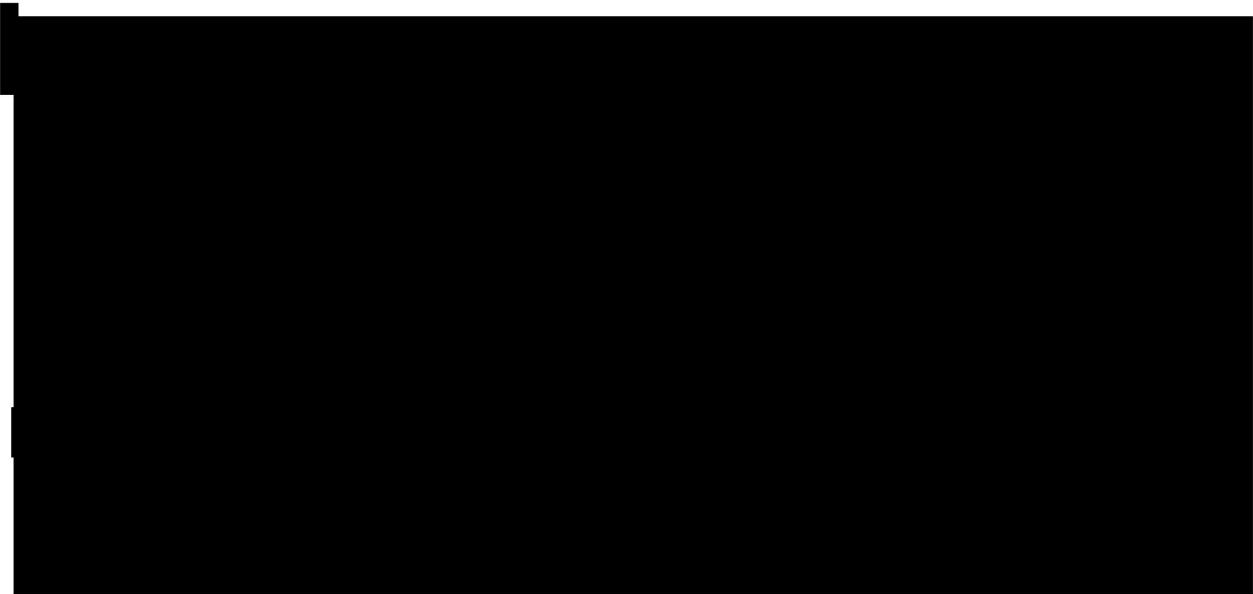
46. At the time it happened, I couldn't report the abuse to anyone as I was too scared. I told my gran and she couldn't help me. Only my dad could do something about it.

Leaving Nazareth House

47. I'm not sure when I left Nazareth House, but I think I was about 10 years old when I left. I think I might have gone back into Nazareth House for a second time, but I'm not sure. Me and my sisters left at the same time and went back to my dad. He had got married again and moved us all to Glasgow. We lived with my dad, my step-mum and my auntie. My dad and my step-mum kept fighting all the time. She was a good cook and at least she fed us. We got evicted from the flat and moved back to Aberdeen, and went to a flat on [REDACTED] Terrace. We soon got evicted again. My step-mum left my dad and we moved to a flat in [REDACTED] Street and got evicted again.

Craigielea, Aberdeen

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Life after being in care

74. I'm not sure how long I was at St Euphrasia's, but it was more than one year. I got sent home from care when I was coming up to 15. I went to live with my granny in Aberdeen. I don't know if there was a date set for me to leave care and go home. There was no discussion about me leaving care. My sister [REDACTED] was in Cornhill hospital by this time and I was the only one who went to visit her. My older sister [REDACTED], and her husband and son, were living with my granny at the time, and she got guardianship of me. This meant that she got paid for taking care of me after I left St Euphrasia's.

75. [REDACTED] and her husband got their own place and moved out. She was still my guardian and I lived with my granny. I was happy at home. My granny bought me clothes and she tried her best, but she favoured my sister. I never saw my brother [REDACTED]. He was away with the army in Northern Ireland. I tried drinking. I had no contact with my dad after I left care, and I was glad when the Salvation Army told me he died.

76. I met my husband at the skating. He was the best thing at the time. I got pregnant at 17 and had my son [REDACTED]. My husband used to beat me up if I didn't feed him right. I got just £15 each week to spend on me and my child. The marriage broke down and I met [REDACTED] and had my daughter [REDACTED] with him. Then I left him

and I met [REDACTED]. He helped me to bring up the children. He worked in the fish trade and he was a drinker. We decided to live separately and we got on better that way, and it was safer for the kids. He could be mentally abusive and I ended up taking an overdose and ended up in intensive care. I nearly died.

77. I exchanged homes with my gran when I had my son. I was living in a flat and she was in a house. I still live there now. I had a social worker called Nan Riddle when the kids were little because I was depressed and she was brilliant, but social work interaction never really helped me. She used to get us a break in a caravan. Later, somebody who had it in for me told the social work that my daughter was malnourished. It wasn't true. Someone came round to check and said my daughter was fine.
78. I never learned to read or write properly at school. I learned as an adult. Nan Riddle helped me find a community centre where they could teach me. I found work in a nursery for single parents, and used to baby-sit their kids, I still see some of them and they are in their late 40s now. I loved that job. I also looked after older people in a home. When I worked in the home for older people I spoke out about ill treatment of the residents. I couldn't imagine working in a shop. I also did child minding and used to baby-sit other people's children.

Impact

79. I was the strong one when we were all older. My sister [REDACTED] became an alcoholic in later life and she was anorexic. She died from breast cancer. [REDACTED] died too. [REDACTED] was put into an institution for more than 25 years. She was in a padded cell and had electric shock treatment. I used to be the one who visited her. My older sister [REDACTED] is still alive. The oldest in our family is my brother [REDACTED] and he is 70 years old. He had a family of his own. I didn't go to his birthday party as I find events like that too hard. I have not heard from him for a long time.

80. My family life was so unhappy as a child, and as my mum died when I was very young, I never knew what it was like to have a family unit. The best time for us when I was a kid was when my dad was in jail for two years.
81. Because of my behaviour, I saw a psychologist when I was at Seafield. I have had help and counselling from psychologists and psychiatrists over a number of years. A few years ago I opened up to a psychiatrist, Dr Palin, at Cornhill Hospital in Aberdeen and he offered me electric shock treatment to help me forget the past. I refused. Now I have a CPN allocated to me. I tell her little things about my history. I still get depressed and have panic attacks, and I think that is a result of the things that happened to me in the past. I never felt I was good enough.
82. I find it hard to trust people in authority because of what has happened to me and it is hard to trust social workers.
83. When my kids were small I found it hard to interact with them. When I had my son I hated him at first because he was a boy, and because of the sexual abuse I suffered from my father. My father was an animal. I also used to see my dad beating up my mum. I couldn't feel close to [REDACTED] and I couldn't tell him I loved him. It was easier with my daughter. I had to re-learn that with my grandchildren. I tried to give my children the best life that I could, but emotional interaction was difficult. I tried to give them a good time, but had very few material possessions. They were brought up the right way. My children don't know much about what happened to me, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
84. I can't go past Nazareth House even now. My granny was looked after there as an older person as it became a nursing home. She had Alzheimer's disease. I was appalled that my sister put my granny in there.

Reporting of Abuse

85. I reported the abuse to the police when I was an adult [REDACTED]

Records

86. I have seen my records as I got them from the social work department in Aberdeen. I couldn't read much of them as they made me feel ill, and I threw them away.

Lessons to be learned

87. There were failings in Nazareth House. They had too many children to look after, but there was no excuse for the way they treated the kids. There was no excuse for scalding my head and bathing us in Jeyes fluid. It wasn't humane. I have been scarred for life by that. The nuns had their favourite children, such as [REDACTED] because he had a metal plate in his head and there was one girl who was good at singing. As well as [REDACTED], Sister [REDACTED] LTX [REDACTED]s other favourite was a girl called [REDACTED] and she even went to a special private school called The Sacred Heart. The nuns were able to like some children.

88. I went into a children's shelter when I was little and my mum was in hospital. My sisters told me that the nuns in there were brilliant. I was very young then. Not all nuns were bad.

Other information

89. 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.

LBP

Signed.. [Redacted]

Dated. 9-2-018 .