

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

[REDACTED]
LBE

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is [REDACTED] LBE My birth surname was [REDACTED] LBE My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1956. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Background

2. I have drunk all my life as a result of my time in care. This had an effect on my children as well. I have told them about being abused in a home. I explained things to them. I don't drink now.
3. I had a bad accident when I was young. They said it would affect my memory but I still remember what happened to me when I was in care.

Life before care

4. The family home before going into care was [REDACTED] Road, Kirkintilloch. Before this we had stayed at [REDACTED] Street, Kirkintilloch. I have two brothers [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] is older and [REDACTED] is younger than me. I have a sister [REDACTED] who is younger. [REDACTED] is known to people as [REDACTED]
5. I also have a step brother [REDACTED] and step sister [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were from my mother's second marriage.

6. It was when we moved to [REDACTED] Road that my mum and dad split up and divorced. This was when I was put into care. My mum always denied that this was the reason I was put into care.

Nazareth House, Cardonald, Glasgow

7. I remember that when I was taken into care I was with a social worker. I think his name was Mr McClune. I would have been about eight at the time. My sister was with me.
8. When we got there I can't remember what was said, if anything. It was the nuns who met us. If they introduced themselves I can't remember this.
9. As my sister was younger we were split up. I was taken on my own and shown my room and things like that.

Dormitories

10. The dormitory I was in was like a long corridor. It had a red floor. There were quite a lot of single beds. You had a wee side cabinet next to your bed for your things to go in. It was all girls but I'm not sure how many. I don't think we were all the same age. I think that there were girls older and younger than me in the dormitory. There was one nun in charge of the dormitory but I can't remember her name. She was about thirty years old. I don't think she had a room next to the dormitory. The nun in charge also had other staff that helped her. I think they were nuns as well.

Clothing

11. The first day I was there my clothes were taken from me and I was given a sort of uniform to wear. It was a green dress. Everyone wore the same clothes.

Routine

Mornings

12. Every morning you were woken by the nuns at five and taken to mass. You then went for breakfast. After breakfast I went and got washed and brushed my teeth. The nuns would watch you. They would check you had washed right and also check your head for lice.
13. If the nuns didn't think you had washed right they would say so and then give you a slap. When we had finished washing we went to school.
14. The routine at the weekends was no different from through the week, apart from not going to school. You just went out to play in the park. They would ring a bell for you to come in.

School

15. We walked in a row to school. The school was in the grounds. The teacher was a man from out with Nazareth House. It was all people the same age as me in the class. I didn't listen at school I was too traumatised. I can't remember if I received any punishments at school.

Leisure time

16. After school you would get out to play for a wee while. There was a kind of park outside. After this you would have chores to do before going for tea.
17. Once you had your tea you were able to go out again. If you were going for a walk the nuns would go with you. There was no television or anything like that.
18. There was a playroom but I just more or less coloured in books.

Siblings

19. I never saw my sister when I was in the home. I did ask to see her but I wasn't allowed.

Chores

20. If you hadn't eaten your meals one of the punishments was to clean the shoes. These belonged to the other people in the dormitory. There were benches outside the dormitory. This was where the shoes would be left. You had to clean the shoes with a brush. If there wasn't a shine on them you would get another slap.

Food

21. You were given porridge for breakfast. It was horrible. Lunchtimes were back at the main building. You didn't have lunch at school. For lunch it was things like mince and tatties. I was so hungry I ate it but I was "boaking". It was terrible. The food was in a big urn thing and was stirred with a big spoon.
22. There was an evening meal. It was much the same as before. All the food was steamed. If you didn't eat it you would starve as you weren't given anything else.

Bedtime

23. Bedtime was about eight o'clock. There was no chance to read. The lights went out straight away. One of the nuns would come round and check on you.
24. I can't remember anyone being up through the night that would cause the nuns to come and check on us.

Bed wetting

25. In the mornings the nuns or staff would check your beds. They would throw the cover back. If you had wet the bed they would say, "You can lie in it". They wouldn't change it. When you went to bed at night it would still be wet.
26. The bed sheets were never changed the whole time I was there.

Religion

27. The only religious instruction I had was the mass every day. It was no different on a Sunday.

Hygiene

28. I had a bath every couple of days. It was a long deep bath. You always went in the bath yourself. The nuns filled the bath and it was always clean water. The nuns did everything. They had no cleaners or anything like that.

Trips

29. I never went on any trips.

Birthdays and Christmas

30. I cannot remember if I had a birthday or Christmas when I was in the home. I do have a letter that tells me when I went in and when I left.

Visits/Inspections

31. My family never came near me when I was in the home. I think that Mr McClune came in a couple of times to see me.

Medical care

32. When I first went into the home a doctor came and checked me. I was healthy. I don't think the doctor stayed there. I didn't have any medical care after this. I never went to the dentist whilst I was there.

Abuse

Nuns

33. Every couple of days they would hit and slap you. If you didn't do something right you would be hit. You were "feart" to do anything. They put the fear into me. They would hit you on the head with their hand.
34. One time they hurt me with a belt. I can remember that.
35. It wasn't all the nuns who were cruel. There might be one that was alright.

Incident with unknown male

36. I remember one day I was outside playing on my own in the grounds. It was a sort of park. I remember this man, I don't know who he was or if he worked there. I think he was in his thirties. He asked me to take my pants down. He told me to open my legs. Then he said open them wider. He asked me to sit with my legs open.

Reporting of abuse

37. I didn't tell the nuns about the man in the park. They wouldn't have believed me.

38. When I left Nazareth House I told my mum what had happened to me. I told her that I had been hit. My mum never said anything.
39. At the time I left I never discussed what had happened to me with my sister or anyone else.
40. I haven't reported what happened to me to the police.
41. Later on, when I was involved with alcohol I told the "weans" that I had been abused in the home. I tried to explain things to them. I never told my sons because I hadn't told my ex-man. I didn't want my boys going back and telling him.

Leaving Nazareth House

42. I was in Nazareth House about three weeks. My mother met my step father and I was able to go and stay with them at Cumbernauld. My mother eventually married this man.
43. I remember my mum taking me to my father in Kirkintilloch because he hadn't sent his £2.50 maintenance money. My father stayed with his mum and dad. There wasn't any room for me and my sister. That was when me and my sister were put in the second home. I can't remember what this home was called. I think it was down the Torrance Road in Kirkintilloch.
44. We were only in that home for two days. My step father's mother took us out there and we went to stay with her. The second home wasn't a religious establishment. It was more like a children's care home.
45. The two days at the second home were fine. There was no abuse. There was enough room for us to stay at my step father's house as it was four bedrooms. It was my mum's decision, saying she couldn't afford to look after us because my dad

hadn't paid the £2.50. When I said this to my mum she denied it and tried to blame my dad.

Life after Nazareth House

46. When I left the home I went to school before leaving and becoming a packer.
47. I met my husband, we were married and had four children. Two boys and two girls. I also have nine grandkids. I was married for 21 years. I'm divorced now.
48. I became pregnant with my first son before I was married. I was still staying with my mum at Cumbernauld. I hid the pregnancy from her. If she had known she would have made me have an abortion. That was how much my "ma" noticed me. She didn't even know I was pregnant. I was flung aside all my life.
49. My mother died almost two years ago. I took that quite bad. When she was in hospital I was there for her. I still loved her despite her not believing what had happened to me. Before she died my mother still denied that she had put me in care. She said it was my father. Even when I showed her the letters I had about being put into care she wouldn't admit it was her. She would still say it was my father. My father was a drinker. He died when he was quite young.
50. When my mum died she had a bought house. I wasn't left a penny. It wasn't about the money. It was the principle. I had been there for my ma all the time.

Impact

51. I have been flung to the side all my life and rejected. I didn't want the same for my kids and grandkids. I tell them I love them all the time. I was never shown anything like that. I feel you have to get it to give it out.

52. When I worked at Waverley Park Hospital I had a lot to do with the patients. I felt that I had to help some of them and ended up getting too attached. My kids were telling me that it had to stop.
53. I have tried to help people all my life, if I could.

Records

54. I have managed to get my records. Christine, who works for In Care Survivors managed to get them for me. These showed me when I went in and out of care. I have sent a copy to the Inquiry.

Other information

Counselling

55. I did say to my ma that I needed counselling for the abuse at the home. My mum would say that I didn't and that I was alright.
56. I eventually received counselling for the abuse I suffered. I went to Kirkintilloch Health Centre at [REDACTED] I told Martine who works there about the abuse. Martine referred me to a counsellor. The counsellor helped me.
57. I'm not a member of any support groups for the abuse. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
58. I think we are in a different day and age now. I think in those days a lot went on that was not brought out in public. It is good now that people know what went on behind closed doors. I can speak about it now and this has given me closure.

59. 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.

LBE

Signed.....



Dated.....

26/1/18