

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

FJK

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is FJK I am known as FJK My date of birth is 1962.
My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Experiences in the Foster Household

Background

2. I live with my partner and I have four adult children who have all left home. I left school at fifteen years old, with no qualifications, and went straight to work for a fencing company. After I left the fencers, I went to work in the fields for in Methil. After that, I worked in St Andrews, Crieff and then Tarbert. I'm still working and currently work as a gardener for the National Trust for Scotland.

Life before sharing home with foster children

3. When I was a child, I lived with my mum, dad, brother and two sisters. My mum's name is FJH and my dad's name is FJI. My sister, FJG is the oldest. She is a year older than me. My brother, is a year younger than me. My sister, is the youngest. I'm not sure how much younger, but there was quite a big gap between her and
4. I would describe my mum as quiet. She just got on with things and wouldn't say boo to a mouse. Dad was fine. A wee smoke and that would be him.

5. As a family, we moved all over the place because my dad worked on different farms. We started off up north and then moved south. I don't remember everywhere we lived.
6. We moved to [REDACTED] Farm in Cupar when I was still at school, probably high school. I think I was eleven or twelve, but I can't be sure. It was a livestock farm and we lived in the farmhouse because of my dad's job. He worked for whoever owned the farm. In the farmhouse there was a kitchen, living room, bathroom, a downstairs bedroom and three bedrooms upstairs. I slept in the bedroom at the top of the stairs with my brother, [REDACTED] FJG [REDACTED] had her own bedroom. My mum and dad slept in the bedroom downstairs. [REDACTED] slept downstairs with mum and dad before the foster kids came. After they came, [REDACTED] shared a bedroom with the foster kids FCV [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]
7. Life at [REDACTED] was fine. We just worked on the farm. There was always something to do. There is a long road up to the farm and there is an old cottage at the side of the road. Further up the road are the sheds, a caravan, the house and the outbuildings. There was a lodger living in the caravan. I think his name was [REDACTED] but I don't remember his second name. He didn't work on [REDACTED] farm. I think he worked on another farm close by.
8. I don't remember there being much difference between the time when the foster kids were there and before they were there. We were all different and had different things to do. We all just did our own thing. At night, after school, or at weekends, I used to go to St Andrews, Ceres or Cupar to meet my pals. We played down there and then went home.
9. After I left school, I didn't stay at home all the time. I used to cycle down to the fencers when I worked there. Then, when I was seventeen and went to work in Methil, I stayed in digs. I'd go home some weekends. Maybe once a month or something like that. During the winter time, I just stayed in the digs because I couldn't get transport home. That went on for a year or a couple of years before I moved back to [REDACTED]

10. We lived at [REDACTED] while the foster kids lived with us. After they left, my mum, dad, [REDACTED] and I moved to [REDACTED] because my dad lost his job. I think FJG [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were away to the army by then.

Parents becoming foster carers

11. I couldn't tell you what year my mum and dad started fostering. I think we talked about it. My mum and dad just said they were going to foster because they needed extra money coming in, but that was as far as it went. It happened and that was it. I just went with the flow. I thought, oh well, if that's what they want. I can't remember if they asked what I thought about it. I knew it meant that children would come to live with us, but I didn't know for how long. I just thought, if that's what they want to do, fine, why not.

Foster Care Arrangements

12. I knew my mum and dad were going to get financial support. That was the whole reason they did it. I have no idea about any of the other arrangements.
13. My mum and dad only ever fostered the [REDACTED] children. I remember [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] came first. I don't know what year it was. I just thought they were two kids. I didn't know how old they were, but they were younger than me. It was a long time ago and I don't remember much. I was hardly ever there. I was always out on my bike or walking to Ceres. I was hardly in the house at all.
14. My mum told us that another two older kids were coming from the family. I didn't really have a say in what my mum and dad did. They could do what they wanted. I thought it seemed like a good enough idea because the whole family would be together. It made sense. FCV [REDACTED] and her sister, [REDACTED] came sometime after [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

Placement preparation

15. I don't remember my mum and dad getting any training and I don't think anything was done to the house before the foster kids came. There was a boy, with a big car, came

to visit the house, but I don't really know who he was. I can't remember sitting down and having any discussion about when the kids were coming or their backgrounds. I didn't know anything about that.

16. When the foster kids came, they fitted in alright. I suppose, they had never stayed in the country before and they had to get used to it. We all just mucked in and got on with it really. We all had things to do in the house. That was that. I don't think all eight kids were ever in the house all at the one time. My sister and brother were in the army.

Daily routine and sleeping arrangements

17. In the morning my mum would get us up. She would shout 'time to get up'. We just got up and had breakfast which was toast or cornflakes and a cup of tea. I know that FCV [REDACTED] has said in her statement to The Inquiry that for breakfast she got a piece and butter that tasted of onions and she often hid it down the back of the settee. I don't remember that. We all got our own breakfast. Sometimes we didn't have breakfast. It would depend if you could be bothered or not, but there was always something there to eat if you wanted it. After breakfast, we would get the bus to school. After school, we just played outside until teatime. After tea, we would go outside to play again until it was time to go to bed.
18. I don't remember much about the bedtime routine, but I know the foster kids went to bed first. I think the older ones got to stay up later, while the younger ones went to bed earlier, but I don't know what time that was. I've been asked if I remember anybody telling the foster kids that there was a tape recorder in their bedroom and they weren't allowed to talk. I don't remember that. I don't even know if we had a tape recorder.
19. The house was ok in the summer time, but cold in the winter. On the whole, it was tidy and clean, but it was a farmhouse. [REDACTED] shared a bedroom with me and [REDACTED] My sister, FJG [REDACTED] had her own room. FCV [REDACTED] and her sisters, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] shared room. All the kids were in the upstairs bedrooms. Mum and dad were downstairs.

Mealtimes/Food

20. My mum cooked the tea. I couldn't cook so I had nothing to do with that. I remember her cooking things like macaroni and shepherd's pie. I think most of us ate our tea in the living room. I know from FCV's statement to The Inquiry that she says, "We used to eat separately from the FJH/FJI in the kitchen standing up. and me stood around a wee table."

There was a table next to the wee pantry. I think that is probably what would happen.

21. FCV also says in her statement, "We used to go through and ask to leave the table and they would say "what the fuck are you asking to leave the table for?, you've already left the table."

I don't remember anyone saying that to them.

22. FCV goes on to say, "We got different meals from them. I recollect getting tatties and fried egg or homemade soup for tea. my big sister, used to dish it out. They got other things like sausage, bacon and chips."

I don't think it was like that. Everybody got the same.

23. My mum kept some food separate in her bedroom. She had to keep it in there because someone in the house was stealing it. Things like biscuits and sweeties were going missing and no one would own up to who took it. We had quite a big pantry and stuff like crisps, sweeties and biscuits were kept in there. When things started to go missing, mum moved it into her bedroom and locked it away. I heard mum and dad taking about it and we all got questioned about it. It wasn't just the foster kids.

24. FCV has said in her statement to The Inquiry "The 'goodies' got locked in Mr and Mrs FJH/FJI bedroom. The FJH/FJI kids had a key and they could go in and get what they wanted."

That's not true. We didn't have a key. Mum and dad were the only ones who had a key. If we wanted something we would have to ask for it. If we asked for a biscuit, mum would just get them and give us one each. None of us got a lot of treats.

25. FCV [REDACTED] has also said "Me and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were always huddled together on the settee. We used to get sent to bed without tea a lot."

I can't remember that. I can't see that happening. I just can't see mum and dad doing that.

Washing and bathing

26. There was one bathroom in the house at [REDACTED] It had a lock on the door. FCV [REDACTED] has said in her statement "FJK [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] used to go to the toilet when I was in the bath. They did that even when I got older."

That didn't happen. If someone was in the bathroom, they could lock the door. I would always lock the door when I went in. If someone was in there, I would just go outside to have a pee. You could do that on the farm.

Bed Wetting

27. I remember the foster kids wetting the bed. I don't know which one it was. Whether it was one of them or two of them. I heard mum shouting "You've wet the bed again", but I don't know who she was shouting at. I have no idea what happened after that. I know FCV [REDACTED] has said in her statement "They called us "dirty" and "pee the bed". They made us wash our own bedding and put the mattress up against the window."

I can't remember that and I don't think that happened.

Chores

28. We all mucked in around the house. I am aware that FCV [REDACTED] has said in her statement to The Inquiry "When we came from home school we got changed and did our chores. We had to brush and sweep the stairs and do the dishes. We had to do things for them. The [REDACTED] children didn't do any chores. I didn't mind doing my chores."

29. We all had our own bit to do in the house. Everyone was on the same level. The foster kids weren't different from anybody else. I remember having to saw up logs and cut kindling. I don't know exactly what chores FCV [REDACTED] did. I wasn't really involved in the

chores inside the house. [REDACTED] and I were mainly doing chores outside. The only thing I probably did inside would be cleaning out the fire or something like that.

30. We worked on the farm at the weekend and nights. We'd help feed the cattle and sheep. At [REDACTED] the cows and sheep were in the fields. I suppose if the foster kids weren't used to the animals, they could be frightened of them. That's understandable. Any kid is frightened of animals they don't know. The young bullocks would dive to the fence to show off. That might give someone a fright. Animals will sense if you're scared or not. If they know you're scared, they'll keep charging. It's just a case of getting used to them. I don't remember any specific incidents with the foster kids and the animals.

Pocket Money

31. I didn't get pocket money from my mum and dad. None of us did. We all had to earn our own money by working on the farm. We didn't work on the farm my dad worked on. There was a farm down the road where we would paint gates or clean the tractor to earn money. These sorts of things. Whatever money I made was mine to keep.

Leisure Time/Trips and Holidays

32. We had some games in the house. I don't know if there were any books or not because I didn't read. I think there were some comics. I don't remember going on any trips as a family, not me anyway. Mum and dad bought a minibus and went away in it, but I stayed at home. I think my brother, [REDACTED] might have stayed as well. There wasn't enough room in the van for the luggage and all of us to go, plus I had things to do on the farm. I chose to work on the farm. That's all I remember about that.
33. I've been asked if I remember [FCV] [REDACTED] going to the Brownies, in Ceres, on her bike. I can't remember her cycling down there and back. It's alright going down the way, but it's not coming back up those hills. I've also been asked if I remember her coming home with the police and getting "battered". I can't remember that happening.

34. I've also been asked if FCV was allowed to watch the TV much. I don't know about that. None of us watched TV much. I don't think it was the situation that we were allowed and the foster kids weren't.

Schooling

35. I went to New Gilston Primary and then St Andrews Secondary School. I didn't get on very well at school and I didn't get any qualifications. When the foster kids lived with us, I'm not sure which primary school they went to. I think, at some point, they went to St Andrews Secondary School, but I don't know if I was still there or had left school by that point.
36. I think we did get homework from school, but I didn't do mine. I just couldn't be bothered with it. I don't think mum or dad really encouraged me to do it. I don't know if the foster kids would have had homework or not. I really don't know if my mum and dad went to any of our parents' nights.

Healthcare

37. I think all of us, including the foster kids saw the same doctor and dentist. It was mainly the school doctor and dentist that we saw. They would come in to the school to do check-ups.

Christmas and Birthdays

38. Christmas and birthdays in our house were just another day. At Christmas, we did have a Christmas tree. My dad would go up to the woods to get one. I think we maybe got a selection box and an apple and an orange in our stocking. That was it. There wasn't much celebration.

Discipline

39. I think my dad would have been the one to carry out discipline at home. He'd probably shout and bawl and that would be enough. He didn't hit us. He wouldn't go as far as that. I don't really remember specific punishments. He'd just raise his voice and say 'don't do that again' and that was it. It didn't happen very often.

Contact with Family

40. I don't know anything about the foster kids having contact with their family.

Visitors

41. I certainly don't remember anyone coming to visit. I don't know if any social workers maybe visited when I wasn't there.

Relationship with Foster Children

42. My relationship with the foster kids was fine. I wouldn't say the foster kids were treated any differently. We were all treated the same. I can't remember any more about it. That's all I've got to say about that.
43. FCV [REDACTED] has said in her statement to The Inquiry "*They used to turn us against each other. They would say that [REDACTED] said I had done something or [REDACTED] said this or that. It was like we were all against each other in the house. If we got close to each other they would find a way of stopping it. We would end up arguing with one another.*" I can't remember that.
44. FCV [REDACTED] goes on to say "*They were the worst days of my life. We never got any affection. It was them and us. I have no happy memories of being there. I think I have blocked a lot of it out to help me cope.*" I don't think that's right.

Convictions

45. I don't have any criminal convictions.

Allegations of Abuse

Awareness of Abuse

46. There was nothing that happened at [REDACTED] that I thought was abuse. I can't remember anything like that.
47. [FCV] has said "We weren't allowed to wear socks or pants in bed. We were freezing. [FJG] hit us with a slipper if we were caught with them on. She lifted our nightie up and struck us on the bum in front of [FJK]. She would be watching us if Mr and Mrs [FJH/FJI] were away out. She used to come upstairs and catch us."

I can't honestly remember that.

48. [FCV] goes on to say "One time I got thrown in a trough of cold water by [FJK] [FJK]'s friend, [REDACTED] I don't know his real name. I was soaking wet and freezing cold. He was laughing. Another time I was thrown in beside the cows by [REDACTED] too. I was frightened of the cows."

I can't remember that happening.

Reporting of Abuse

49. I've never had to tell anyone about abuse, because I don't know anything about that.

Allegations of Abuse for which there has been no Criminal Conviction

50. [FCV] made allegations against us and that's why the foster kids left [REDACTED] I can't remember how old I was when they left and I can't remember off hand what the

allegations were. She made allegations against me, my brother and my dad. I don't know if my mum and [REDACTED] were involved or not. The whole family got questioned by the police and I had to go to court. I was taken to Cupar Police Station and questioned for six or seven hours. I don't know what day, month or year it was. I can't remember what I said to the police. The allegations she made are just what I've read in [FCV] s statement to the Inquiry. That's what the police questioned me about.

Criminal Proceedings

51. After I spoke to the police I had to get a lawyer. I can't remember much about what happened after that because the lawyer dealt with it. I can't remember if I got charged or not, [REDACTED]

52. All I can remember [REDACTED] was getting a knock at the door in the middle of the night from the police. It was after I spoke to them at Cupar Police Station. They said I had to go to the police station at 7:30 a.m. or they would take a warrant to arrest me. I went to St Andrews Police Station, sat there for two hours, got flung in the back of a van [REDACTED]. When I got there, all these people were round a big circle, someone mentioned my name and that was it, I was out the door. That's all I can remember.

Specific Allegations Against you that have been made to the Inquiry

53. From what I can remember, [FCV] was alright. She was just like any other kid. She didn't say much.
54. [FCV] has made the following allegations in her statement to The Inquiry:

"You couldn't write the things that happened in that house. [REDACTED] and FJK [REDACTED] used to punch us for hiding the bread. They would slap me across the head and punch me on the chest."

"The sons hit us all the time. I used to have marks all over my legs. The sons used to call us names. They called me "big nose" and "big mouth". It was constant. It was nearly every day. There was always something."

FJK [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] used to get a wet towel and hit us when we were standing doing the dishes. I don't know if they told them to hit us. They never got into any trouble or anything for it."

I have no idea about any of that. I can't remember it. I don't know if my memory has been affected by the passage of time. I just can't remember it. Your guess is as good as mine why she's said that.

55. *FCV [REDACTED] also alleges, "My brother [REDACTED] used to get battered in front of us. [REDACTED] and FJK [REDACTED] would use a horse whip on him and call him 'an idiot'. I saw [REDACTED] get battered every second night. We had to watch that. He was covered in bruises. They were all over his body. They would always tell him to say that "he fell if anyone asked."*

I don't know about that. I didn't even have a horse whip. I can't remember it. I have no idea why she's said that.

56. *FCV [REDACTED] goes on to say, "FJK [REDACTED] had a pellet gun. Him and FJK [REDACTED] used to shoot rabbits with it. I used to get threatened with it a lot. One time he threatened to shoot me in the foot with a pellet gun if I didn't dance. I was dancing but he shot me anyway. I started screaming so FJK [REDACTED] kicked me up the bum. It was the pain that goes right through you."*

I did have a slug gun, but I wouldn't have shot her. I wouldn't have shot it at anybody for that matter. It was only for wildlife. I've no idea why she's said that.

57. *FCV [REDACTED] says in her statement, "There was a time when FJK [REDACTED] was looking after us when they were out. We were all in the living room. He had a knife and pretended he had stabbed himself in the kitchen. When we went through and saw*

blood everywhere. [REDACTED] and I ran in our nighties, bare foot, to the neighbour's, Mr and Mrs [REDACTED]. They lived in a house about a quarter of a mile away from the [REDACTED]. We told them that [REDACTED] that had stabbed himself. We found out later that it tomato sauce. We got battered by [REDACTED] because we had included someone else. He just got allowed to do it."

I can't remember that. I've no idea why she's said that.

58. [REDACTED] goes on to allege, "One day [REDACTED] took [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to Step Rock Pool in St Andrews. I was in the pool when [REDACTED] suddenly grabbed hold of me and stuck my head under the water. He held it under and kept it held under. I couldn't breathe and struggling. I was fighting to get up. I finally got up and I was gasping for air."

The Step Rock Pool is a natural outdoor pool. I can't swim so I wouldn't have been in the pool. I don't know why [REDACTED] has said that because as I said, I can't swim.

59. [REDACTED] says in her statement, "I remember [REDACTED] raped a girl [REDACTED]. I think he was about fifteen. I think he got charged. [REDACTED] never even gave him into trouble. I remember it was serious. He went to the special department in the school. He was still at the school for a bit when I was there. He left and went to work..."

I can't remember that. I think if I was charged with rape, I'd remember it. I've no idea why she's said that.

60. [REDACTED] has told The Inquiry in her statement, "They used to take me into the spare room. If they heard me talking they'd take me in there. It was just an excuse to get me into that room. That's when they would abuse me. I was frightened in the room so I used to go through to my bedroom and start crying. I didn't like being on my own."

I don't know where she is coming from with that. I can't remember it. I've not a clue where that's come from.

61. [REDACTED] alleges, "[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] used to sneak in at night. The three of them came in the room separately. I was touched underneath my clothing and made to touch them. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] would always take a turn each. It would be three, four or five times a week."

I honestly don't know. I've no idea. I can't remember anything like that. I can't understand why that's being said.

62. FCV [redacted] has said in her statement, FJK [redacted] *had sex with me when I was twelve or thirteen. I was bleeding after it. I didn't know where the blood was from. I remember thinking I needed stitches down there because of the time I'd cut my hand and I couldn't tell anybody.*"

I don't know where she's getting that from, but I don't have a clue about that. I just have no idea. It's her word against anybody's.

63. FCV [redacted] goes on to say, *"I was examined by a police doctor. After I had been examined I got taken right back to that house. FJH/FJI [redacted] said I was a liar. That's what I was being told. They said "you're just making up stories". They were saying "just leave her, she's nothing but a liar."*

I don't remember anything like that happening. I've not got a clue what she's on about. I don't even remember her coming back to the house after the allegations were made.

Lessons to be Learned

64. For a start, people should get their facts right before they start accusing people. It's as simple as that. A lot of people out there, like myself, are getting things like this thrown in their face after fifty years. I think it's all wrong and I'm totally against it.

Other information

65. 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..... FJK [redacted]

Dated..... 10/6/22/