

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

MHG

Support person present: Yes

1. My full name is [REDACTED] MHG [REDACTED] My religious name is [REDACTED] MHG [REDACTED] My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1938. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.
2. I joined a Christian Brothers grammar school in Crosby in 1950, when I was twelve years old. I did my grammar school studies there for two years. I was quite impressed by the Brothers I met there and I felt an interior call to be a Brother, so I then did two more years until I passed my Junior Certificate of Education in seven subjects. Then I went down to the Novitiate in 1954 for one year of religious training, then I did my A Levels for two years. I did French, History and Latin.
3. I failed Latin, so I was sent to Gibraltar in 1957 to learn Spanish, which I succeeded in doing. I spent three years in Gibraltar doing O Level and A Level Spanish. I got a tonsillectomy while I was in Gibraltar.
4. I came back from Gibraltar in 1960, and was asked to go to St Ninian's, Falkland for a month to offer relief work to the staff there, which I did.
5. I then spent one year in Blackpool, in 1961, before spending four years at St Mary's College in Strawberry Hill in Twickenham from 1961 to 1965. I got an external BA degree and teaching certificate from London University.

Career

6. From 1965 to 1970, I went to [REDACTED] in Plymouth, where I was a teacher and also helped to look after boarders.
7. I was very keen on social justice so my Provincial Leader sent me to Liberia in West Africa to see if I could put it into practice. I was there from 1971 to 1976, working in a boarding school called [REDACTED]. That was a teaching and boarding situation.
8. I was invited to do a six month religious course in Rome for six months, from February to June in 1977. The rest of that year I worked at [REDACTED] college in Liverpool, which was an ordinary day school.
9. In 1978, I was invited to go back to Liberia, to work at [REDACTED], in Gbarnga, which was an ordinary, co-educational day school.
10. In 1982, I went to work in St Ninian's, Falklands in Scotland. I was there for a year and a half until the school closed in 1983.
11. I was in [REDACTED] in Liverpool from 1983 to 1984. I went back to [REDACTED] in Plymouth from 1984 to 1987. I was just looking after boarders this time, and doing a very small amount of teaching.
12. From March to December 1987, I went to [REDACTED] Therapy Centre, [REDACTED] in the Midlands. The order sent me there because they thought I needed some psychological help.
13. I was in Liverpool again from 1988 to 1989, where I was doing social work in [REDACTED]. I had been advised not to do teaching work because I wasn't a very effective teacher.

14. From 1989 to 2004, I went to a home for boys in care in London, called [REDACTED]. It closed down some years ago. Father McCabe, who is now dead, ran the place. He used to get people from Leicester University to come in and give us in-house training. They gave us tremendous training and input on how it felt to be a child in care, and to think about things from the child's point of view. I did a number of similar courses while I was there. On my days off, I did courses in counselling and pastoral care at the Richmond Institute in West London.
15. I was in [REDACTED] retreat house in Dublin from 1994 to 1996. We gave spiritual input to school groups who came in for two days at a time. I enjoyed that work very much.
16. I was invited to work in [REDACTED] Manchester in 1996, and I stayed there for thirteen years doing social justice work. I focused on justice and peace, and the integrity of creation. I went to many conferences and protest marches. The house closed in 2009 so I went to Altrincham to join the community there. I was mainly in retirement but I kept up some social justice work and sent petitions to MPs.
17. In 2013, I was asked to come to [REDACTED] in Liverpool. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I have been in Liverpool ever since.

St Ninian's, Falkland - 1960

18. When I came back from Gibraltar in 1960, I was free to do relief work because the schools finished early in Gibraltar. I was sent to St Ninian's for a month. I was there for the month of July or August to relieve the brothers there so they could go on holiday.
19. My role was to look after the kids and keep them occupied. I think I may have done a bit of teaching but I can't remember.

20. Brother **MOA** was the **██████████** who is now deceased. There was also a Brother **LNC** there. There was a Mr **BHB** who would have been there helping the Brothers. He was very devoted to St Ninian's.
21. The boys there had been in orphanages before, often in convents run by Sisters. They didn't have mums and dads, and were very fragile. I didn't know their case histories but I knew most of them were orphans or from convent schools.
22. In the early days, in the 1960s, when the school was starting out, the boys would help with things like levelling out fields and chopping trees. I didn't see this but I heard stories about it.
23. I remember the boys wore khaki uniforms, which were khaki shirts and shorts.
24. I remember there was a lot of bed wetting, maybe because the boys came from disadvantaged backgrounds. I was only there for a month so I don't remember how it was dealt with. I think they were just required to bring their sheets to the laundry to be washed. I always felt sorry for the kids because I wet the bed when I was a kid. I presumed they would have been invited to have a shower if they wet the bed, but I can't really remember.
25. It was a wonderful apostolate. I volunteered to go back to Falkland in 1965. I thought these were the kind of places we should do apostolates rather than posh, private schools, but I was sent to Plymouth instead.

St Ninian's, Falkland – 1982

26. The main building was a Georgian mansion. That was where the dining room, and class rooms were. There was an annexed area next to it, where the dormitories were. You had to go through the main house to get to the annex. The ground floor of the annex was known as "the dungeon" which was used as a boot room, and the dormitories were on the first floor.

Recruitment and training

27. I was sent to St Ninian's again in [REDACTED] 1982, and was there for a year and a half, until they closed in [REDACTED] 1983. Another Brother was invited to go to St Ninian's but he wasn't keen because he was doing good work in Sunderland. I was supposed to be going to Sunderland, but I was sent to St Ninian's instead. I was just told I was going there and I didn't object to it.
28. When I arrived, there were about five Brothers and forty boys. The kids there were much tougher and streetwise than they had been in 1960. They had homes in Glasgow, Bathgate, Edinburgh Perth or Dundee, and went home at the weekends. They didn't show much appreciation of the staff. I think I had been spoiled by my time in Africa where the boys were very grateful for everything they got, both materially and academically. The boys in Falkland weren't too keen on education.
29. My role was to teach [REDACTED] while I was there. I also sometimes helped with games, which I wasn't very good at. I then looked after the senior boys for the rest of the time, who were aged fourteen to sixteen. I supervised them in the evening and made sure they went to bed at night.
30. I don't remember shadowing anyone, getting any training or having my role explained to me. I was more or less thrown in at the deep end, but they knew I had been in charge of boarders before so probably thought I knew how to handle the role.
31. I didn't have a mentor or any additional training while I was there. You just tried to learn by experience. Brother Farrell would oversee what was happening. He once helped me out and showed me how to manage the kids in a very human way which was very effective. I was a bit too academic and not so in touch with my feelings so he showed me how he managed his class.

Staff structure

32. Brother Farrell was the headmaster of the school and sort of Director of the Children's Home part of it. Brother **MBS** was the Brother Kelly was in charge of the junior boys, who were aged twelve to fourteen, and I was in charge of senior boarders who were aged fourteen to sixteen. I also took some classes. There was also an elderly brother, Brother Keane, who did a little bit of teaching. The Brothers all resided within St Ninian's.
33. There were lay teachers who came in for the day, who were Mr **MIK** Mr **MKF** Ethel Philp, **BHB** and **MCG** Brian Beith came in after a while
 MCG
34. The lay staff who were teaching, were answerable to Brother Farrell, who kept an eye on all of the teaching side of things.
35. There were about five domestic workers who were answerable to Brother **MBS** There was a maintenance man called Morris Kilbane, and his wife Penny was the seamstress. The cook was an elderly lady called Mrs Brown. There was also a laundry lady. There was a matron whom the boys called Peggy, but I don't think that was her real name. She had an artificial leg.
36. There was also a called **MBV** He had been a Brother in Falkland in the 1960s and 1970s. He then left the Brothers and got married and had a family. He came back as a lay man and became at St Ninian's. He didn't reside in the house as he would go home to Kirkcaldy to stay with the family after work.
37. Nobody other than staff or visiting social workers would have had access to the children. I only remember the Laird, Ninian Chricton Stewart, who would come on formal occasions to present prizes to the boys. I don't remember anybody else from outside coming in.

The boarders

38. I don't think the status of the school had changed from when I was first there. I thought it was a List D school. I got the impression that it was a home for boys who couldn't be handled at school or at home, and needed more special training.
39. I don't know how the boys were placed there or why. I heard snippets that it was for things like glue sniffing, petty thieving or truanting from school. I heard smatterings that it was usually the children's panel who would send the kids to St Ninian's. I assumed the local authorities from where they were referred, also paid for their time at St Ninian's
40. The boys in the home ranged from about twelve to sixteen years old. The time that the boys stayed at St Ninian's varied. Some boys stayed longer than others, but they had to leave when they reached sixteen.
41. I did hear that boys were invited to see St Ninian's before they started there and had a choice about whether they came there. I also saw them visiting before they started. I didn't get the impression that they were forced to be there.
42. When a new boy came in, Brother Farrell would invite the parents and social worker into his office with the new boy. I was involved in only one of these induction meetings, which was for a new boy called [REDACTED] who was from Dundee. That was the only one I was involved in so I don't really know how welcoming new boys was handled.
43. I only remember one or two new boys starting during the time I was there. I don't think there was any formal procedure of induction for new boys. I think Brother Farrell or Brother Kelly would give them some kind of introductory talk and tell them what was expected of them.
44. I think they just got a bed where they was space in either the junior or senior section, depending on their age.

45. The only siblings I remember during my time were two brothers called [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I think they slept in separate dormitories. I think [REDACTED] was older and that's why they slept in different dorms. They did both look, small, pale and vulnerable. [REDACTED] was very caring about his older brother [REDACTED].

Daily Routine

46. As far as I remember, boys got up at about 8 am. They washed their face and cleaned their teeth at basins, which I supervised. After washing, the boys went for their breakfast.
47. There was a dining room for the boys where they ate their meals. I have a vague recollection of breakfast, but I think Brother Kelly may have supervised them.
48. School started at 9 am and classes went on until 12.30. Lunchtime was about 1 pm. It was usually me and [REDACTED] BHB who supervised them during lunch times. I got on well with [REDACTED] BHB and we would have a cup of tea together after lunch.
49. The cook, Mrs Brown, prepared the meals for the kids and the brothers. The food was generally of good quality. I am not sure if the Brothers ate the same meals as the boys. The Brothers who were not supervising mealtimes would be in their own dining room in the main house, so I am not sure if there was a difference in meals.
50. I don't recollect there being any case where a boy found meals difficult or didn't want to eat something.
51. From 2 pm onwards, there was usually games, swimming, gymnastics or some kind of physical education. There may also have been some classes some afternoons.
52. There was tea at about 4 pm. Then there was some free time until homework at 5 pm. Supper was at 6 pm, then there was leisure time from 7 pm until 9 pm.

53. There were showers between 9 pm and 10 pm, although showers may have just been a few days a week. They wouldn't all have fitted into the showers at the same time so they must have gone after one another. I don't remember supervising showers even once. I think they were down at the end of the corridor where Brother Kelly's room was, and I think he supervised them.

Bedtime

54. The boys would go to bed after showers. They had some time to chat and listen to music in bed, before lights out at 10 pm. I think all the kids went to bed at roughly the same time.
55. I had a room near the senior boys' dormitory, which I supervised. The boys were in separate sections of the dormitory with three or four boys to a section. They had partitions to separate each section. There was just one door going into the dormitory.
56. I would be in the Brother's community room downstairs for a while after the boys' bedtime, and usually when I would go upstairs, the dormitory would be dark and quiet. They weren't heavily invigilated at night. I would just pop my head in to the room to see that everyone was settled. I would assume they were all safely in bed asleep.
57. I would have been able to hear if there was any "monkey business" or shouting going on in the dormitory at night because my room was next to the dormitory.
58. I only remember one incident at night that upset me during my time there. As I came upstairs, I saw the light on in the dormitory and there was noise coming out. I went in and challenged the boys. I maybe shouted at them and one of the boys threw a hard bottle of aftershave or something, and hit me right on the head. That was quite traumatic. I had to go to the doctors to get stitches.
59. I don't remember a lot of bed wetting while I was there in the 1980s, or what the procedure was when that happened. The boys were free to get up and go to the toilet

when they wanted to and I think they knew that. I would be in my room and would be aware of boys going to the toilet when nature called.

60. I can't remember where the toilet was. There must have been a different toilet for the juniors from the seniors, but I can't remember where it was.

Clothes

61. The boys didn't wear uniforms. They just wore jeans and jerseys. I don't know where the clothes came from or if the home provided them.
62. I don't remember anybody being taken shopping. They all seemed adequately dressed and looked like normal boys.
63. One of the domestic staff was the laundry lady who laundered all the boys' clothes. I think the boys polished their own shoes in the boot room.
64. The boys had little cabinets next to their beds. I don't remember much about their rooms, but they must have had space to keep their things

Schooling

65. The classes mainly took place during the morning.
66. The education was fairly basic. There was maths, English, history, religion, geography. MKF would take the boys who found academic work difficult, and had ways of getting them to do some work. A teacher called Margaret Nicol had that role before him. They taught the very academically weak boys.
67. There was very [REDACTED] which was taught by Mr MIK Brother Farrell taught singing and had a lovely way with the boys, who called him "Paddy."

68. Mr [BHB] took [REDACTED] which was mainly [REDACTED]. He also helped out with games in the afternoons.
69. [MCG] took the [REDACTED]. He left after a while, and then Brian Beith came in.
70. I don't remember any basic exams for the youngsters. I should have asked about that at the time, but I just accepted the way things were.
71. There were no classes outside of school.
72. The P.E. teacher took some of the boys to gymnastics in the nearby town of Cupar or Kirkcaldy. It was just a few boys who were good at it.
73. [MKF] and I took the boys to the linoleum factory in Kirkcaldy as part of career studies. Ironically, there were lots of big machines, and only one man putting things into the machines. It wasn't the most enticing way to introduce them to future jobs.
74. We also took the boys to a farm. We saw the farmer separate the newly born calves from their mothers, which we thought was very cruel.
75. I don't recall the boys being taught any skills like budgeting or cooking to prepare them for adult life. I recall there was some sort of baking, but I don't remember details.

Chores

76. The domestic staff did the cleaning. I don't remember the boys cleaning. It certainly wasn't given as a penance.

Leisure time

77. Leisure time was between 7 pm and 9 pm, and was a relaxed time because the boys preferred it to classwork. There were indoor recreation games in the form of board games, billiards, table tennis or snooker that the boys could play.
78. There was also a television in one of the rooms, and the boys would watch programmes that they liked. I can't remember how the programme was chosen. I imagine they would be allowed to watch the ordinary programmes of that time during the peak time. I only have a vague memory of it. Maybe senior boys had one television and junior boys had access to another.
79. I can't remember many books or comics. The group of boys there weren't hungry for literature so I don't think there would have been a great demand for books. I don't know that we encouraged reading. I think we just took the boys as they were, and they weren't very curious or interested in intellectual things, therefore we wouldn't have pushed them in that direction. That would have been left to school time.
80. In summertime, the boys could play outside and mess about on the grass. They could have an informal kick around with a ball. It was a normal environment.
81. I don't think the boys were allowed into the local village. I think that was out of bounds.
82. There was a tuck shop where boys could buy things, so they presumably got some pocket money. I don't know if that was from St Ninian's or if they got money from their families when they were home.
83. I think the boys were respectful of each others' things. I never saw or heard of boys stealing or any bullying going on.

Religious instruction

84. It would have been the basic teaching of the Catholic church and moral teachings. We would have celebrated Mass on a Sunday at the Chapel Royal in Falkland, and I think the boys were expected to join in.
85. We had a very beautiful chapel of our own, and would have Mass there from time to time. I can't remember how often because it was difficult to get priests in. The boys were expected to attend but I don't think they minded it because it was a break from the usual routine.
86. I think the boys would have assisted the priest with wine and water as altar boys. That was customary, but it wouldn't have been a specialised task.
87. I can't remember if we said grace at mealtimes or bed time. If we did, it would have been simple. I don't really remember. We probably encouraged them to do it but left them to it. There was no ceremony made of it.
88. Brother Kelly was very effective at teaching. He used a cartoon of Snoopy to put things across to kids during mass. This earned him his nickname of "Snoopy." I wasn't as imaginative as that.

Trips and holidays

89. The show, "Jesus Christ Superstar" came to Kirkcaldy during the time I was at St Ninian's. I suggested to Brother Farrell that it would be lovely to take the boys, and we did take a group of boys to that.
90. We had a minibus to transport the boys, as well as a coach. Brothers Farrell and Kelly were very competent and qualified at driving the coach.
91. There was an organised visit to Stoke on Trent. The boys would stay at the homes of some of the day pupils from St Joseph's school in Stoke on Trent.

92. We also took the boys to Liverpool. There was a youth centre in Sefton Park, Liverpool, which belonged to the Archdiocese, where the boys stayed.
93. In the summer time, the boys went up to Glenshee to go skiing. We also took them to Tomintoul in the Grampians, where we took over and stayed in a former seminary. The boys could do outdoor activities there like rock climbing and abseiling. I looked after the house and garden in Tomintoul. I wasn't much use with the activities and had a torn ligament at that time.

Christmas and birthdays

94. I don't remember much about Christmas and birthdays. I think most kids went home for Christmas. I am sure we would have done something for the kids who couldn't go home. The boys gave firewood to senior citizens and entertained them to a Christmas meal. We also did a sponsored run for charity.
95. I don't specifically remember celebrating birthdays but I am sure Brother Farrell would have seen to it.
96. I remember Burns night, which was celebrated. [REDACTED] BHB [REDACTED] would bring in haggis and play the bagpipes.
97. There was a big celebration when the home closed. There was a big dance, with people playing bagpipes. It was a sad but also joyous occasion. We invited friends and neighbours.

Healthcare

98. There was a matron who dealt with healthcare. I think she used to be a Sister, and had an artificial leg. The boys called her Peggy, which wasn't very nice. I don't think that was her real name.

99. The boys would be sent to her by a teacher in the first instance, and she would do the basic first aid.
100. If it was anything more serious, then the boys would go to see the doctor in the village. I don't remember the doctor coming to the home to see the boys, but I am sure he would have if a boy was in bed and needed to be seen. There was a good relationship with the doctor.
101. There were no routine check-ups of the boys. They would be seen as and when they needed care.
102. I don't recall any hospital visits during my time. There was a boy who had his leg in plaster, but that had happened while he had been home with his family in Glasgow.
103. I don't remember boys going to the dentist or having trouble with their teeth. I am sure they would have been taken if they needed to be seen.
104. I don't know if any medical records were kept. I would assume the matron would have kept her own records, but I was never privy to them.
105. There were no deaths amongst the boys whilst I was at St Ninian's. Mr [REDACTED] BHB died suddenly of a heart attack, but that was during the weekend while he was out of school. It happened shortly before St Ninian's was due to close. His wife died a few days later. It was very sad.
106. We spent quite a bit of time with the boys after [REDACTED] BHB death because everybody loved him. He was a very dedicated teacher and was caring towards the boys, and took them out on trips. He would play the bagpipes on Burns night and bring in the haggis. He was a wonderful person, so we gave him a good funeral and all the staff and boys attended it.

Family and social work contact

107. I remember parents coming to the home for visits. They would meet with Brother Farrell in his office. I wasn't involved in that.
108. The boys went home for the weekends, so there must have been some contact with the family to arrange that. I don't know how that was arranged. There was a phone in Brother Farrell's office so maybe the boys used that. I don't remember any letters being written or coming in.
109. On the weekends, the boys from Glasgow would be taken home in a big coach. They would be driven to Glasgow on a Friday and picked up on a Sunday afternoon. There would have been different arrangements for boys from Perth, Bathgate and Edinburgh. I imagine they would have gone home using public transport.
110. Going home for the weekends was supposed to be the norm, but if boys gave trouble during the week, then one of the punishments was to not allow them home at the weekend.
111. I was quite separate from the social workers and their connection with parents and visits to the school, so I don't know how it worked.
112. I can't remember the procedure for meeting with social workers. I imagine if they came to see a boy, then the boy would just be summoned from class. I don't know if they met with the boys alone, or if Brother Farrell insisted on being present.
113. When [REDACTED] threw the aftershave bottle at my head, his social worker came to the home. I was asked by Brother Farrell if I wanted to take it further, but I said no. He was a disturbed boy and I partly blamed myself because I had shouted at the boys, and maybe with his background, he had felt threatened. That was the only time I was asked anything by a social worker.

114. I think the resident social worker and Brother Farrell would have prepared any paperwork for panels. I was never asked for any input.

Inspections

115. I don't remember any inspections from the local authority. There was a system where our provincial superiors would visit every year. I don't remember that happening in Falkland, but it should have happened as I was there for over a year. Maybe it happened but it didn't make an impression on me.
116. Brother Coffey was our provincial at the time, and he made a survey of some of the children's homes. He was favourably impressed with Falkland because he thought it had a homely atmosphere. He had spent time in Falkland before my time.

My relationship with the boys

117. I could see some boys didn't fit in as well as others. It was usually the boys who didn't play sport. I would notice if they were quiet, but they wouldn't have come to me if they had any concerns. I was very academic, and had been in Africa for ten years. It was like I was from "outer space."
118. I tried to read a lot about boys in care and what was helpful for them. I remember coming back from Glasgow on the coach with the boys on a Sunday. I sat and read a book about how to look after boys in care, while totally ignoring the boys in care around me.
119. I was more head than heart. If I had realised then that the heart would have been better than the head, then I could have put the books away and spent time listening to them.
120. Towards the end, with experience, I began to realise "what made them tick."

Discipline and punishment

121. If a boy ran away, then he would be made to stand in the hall for a certain number of hours as punishment. I think that was to show other boys that you couldn't get away with it, because running away was very disruptive and the police would have to be called to bring them back. That was the only time police would ever come to St Ninian's.
122. A lot of the Glasgow boys wanted to go back to the bright lights of Glasgow so they would mainly be the ones who would abscond. They would get lifts from lorry drivers to get home.
123. Another form of discipline I remember is boys not being allowed to go home at weekends if they had caused trouble during the week. I also vaguely remember boys not being allowed to get anything from the tuck shop as punishment.
124. The only type of behaviour that I can recall that would lead to being disciplined, was running away.
125. When [REDACTED] threw the aftershave bottle at my head, I had said to Brother Farrell when asked, that I didn't want him to be punished by not being allowed to go home. I think [REDACTED] had actually said that I had told the other boys not to take it out on him because they had seen what he had done.
126. I never disciplined or punished any of the boys myself.
127. I don't remember seeing any formal code of conduct laid out on paper for the boys. I got the impression that we treated them like ordinary boys who should behave themselves and conform to lessons. It was an unwritten law.
128. I never saw the tawse being used. I didn't even know there was a tawse in the house. [REDACTED] it seems that it was used.

Abuse at St Ninian's

129. I didn't see or hear of anything abusive taking place at St Ninian's while I was there. I never heard of any boys complaining or talking about anything abusive at the time, and nobody came to me with any issues of concern.
130. I once passed the shower room and saw Brother Paul Kelly going from one boy to the other and putting shampoo on the boys' hair. I thought that there was a better way of giving them shampoo, for instance in a sachet or something.
131. It was common knowledge at the time that Brother Kelly used to have four or five boys lying on his bedroom floor. His room was at the end of the corridor from mine. I think it was in the shape of a sort of U, and we were at different ends.
132. I passed by his room once or twice and saw boys lying in duvets on the floor. I thought that was an innocent thing, and he was allowing a "sleep over" to prevent them from being scared. I thought there was safety in numbers and didn't see anything sinister in it.

Procedure to deal with allegations of abuse

133. There was no formal reporting procedure in place to report abuse, but if the boys had an allegation, there was a lot of staff that they could have told, like the domestic staff or the external teaching staff, but nothing came out at the time.
134. There was no formal procedure in place for the staff on how to deal with it if an allegation of abuse had been made at the time.

Recording incidents

135. I was not aware of any punishment book to record punishments or anything else at St Ninian's. I wasn't required to keep any records of anything.

136. I was not aware of any daily log book at St Ninian's.

Discharge from St Ninian's

137. I would hear that going to the army was a good thing for the boys once they left, because they would be in a discipline system which suited them, and the boys who went into civilian life might struggle. There was a boy called [REDACTED] who was a big lad, who joined the army. I heard that he got on really well.

138. I didn't hear of any other avenues other than the army that the boys could explore after they left.

139. Towards the end, when the home was closing, people started to drift out in dribs and drabs in the months before we closed. I don't know what provisions, if any, were made for the boys to prepare them for leaving, or what happened to them when they left. That was handled by Brother Farrell and social workers. The impression I got was that when they left our care, that was it.

140. The home closed in 1983. I wanted it to stay open because I thought it was a good school. Brother Farrell and myself went down to the provincial council in Plymouth and begged them to change their minds and keep the school open, but they wouldn't.

Review of other staff members

141. I have been asked about other members of staff at St Ninian's who may have been present during my time there.

142. Brother [REDACTED] LMZ was at St Ninian's a few years before me. He went out to Liberia and I met him there, but I never met him at St Ninian's.

143. I met former Brother [REDACTED] MCY [REDACTED] once or twice. One time was in Manchester. I don't have any recollection of him in relation to St Ninian's. He left the brothers eventually.
144. I never met Brother [REDACTED] MHJ [REDACTED] at St Ninian's. I think he was there way before my time.
145. Brother [REDACTED] LNA [REDACTED] was not there at the same time as me. I think he had been at St Ninian's a year or two before I arrived there.
146. [REDACTED] BHB [REDACTED] was at St Ninian's during the time I was there. He had his own family in the village and was [REDACTED]. He devoted himself to St Ninian's and spent a lot of time there. He took [REDACTED] supervised lunch time, and sometimes was there during sport. He would go on trips during the summer time with the boys. He was a wonderful person. I never witnessed him disciplining the boys, or saw or heard anything of concern. The boys loved him and called him [REDACTED] BHB [REDACTED].
147. [REDACTED] BHB [REDACTED] died while I was still there. The day he died, the provincial had gone up to see him and negotiate retirement with him, because the home was going to be closing. We had to get another [REDACTED] teacher in to replace him for a few months until the home closed.
148. Brother [REDACTED] MBV [REDACTED] was not a Brother anymore when I was at St Ninian's. I had known him when we first entered the Brothers in the 1950s. We were in the same community when we first started out. He also went to Toddington where the novitiate and Scholasticate were, but that was after I had already left Toddington.
149. [REDACTED] MBV [REDACTED] and I would meet on and off over the years. I would meet him at summer fetes. I also remember he used to visit his family in Plymouth when I was there, and we went on a cruise on the River Tamar on a boat.
150. When I was at St Ninian's, [REDACTED] MBV [REDACTED] was there as [REDACTED]. I didn't have much interaction with him. That is something I was a bit critical about. I think he could have been a good go between, between the teaching staff and the boys, but instead

he spent most of his time in his office and at meetings. I think he could have done more to make better relations between the boys and staff.

151. I never observed [REDACTED] MBV [REDACTED] with the boys. I never saw or heard anything about him that would have given me any cause for concern.

152. Brother [REDACTED] MBS [REDACTED] was at St Ninian's the whole time I was there. I had also worked with him in Gibraltar from 1957 to 1960. He was the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] He might have done one or two lessons but had very little to do with the boys. I never saw him discipline any boy, and I never saw or heard anything about him that gave me cause for concern.

153. Brother [REDACTED] MBS [REDACTED] was a very loved man, and the brothers thought the world of him. I didn't have a lot of interaction with him on a day to day basis because I was busy with the boys, but would meet him for a drink in the evenings. He died of a heart attack some years later.

154. Brother John B Mark Farrell was the headmaster at St Ninian's for the entire time I was at St Ninian's in the 1980s. I found him very sure of himself and very solid. He seemed to love the work and loved looking after the youngsters. He was very sad when the place closed.

155. Brother Farrell had a good relationship with the lads. He would try to cheer them up on the coach on the way back from Glasgow on Sundays. He would have music on and try to lift their spirits on the way back to the home.

156. I went into one of Brother Farrell's music classes and he showed me how to encourage the kids. He seemed to have a good relationship with the youngsters and I admired him for that. I never saw him discipline any child or heard anything of concern about him.

157. Brother Farrell seemed to be a man's man on his days off, he would play golf and have a glass of beer. He was just a regular sort of man.

158. Brother Paul Vincent Kelly was at St Ninian's the whole time I was there. He did a tremendous amount of work there and was a pillar of the place.
159. I would hear Brother Kelly when I was in my classroom next door to his. I used to think he was telling the boys off, but he just had a strong, powerful voice. He taught in a very controlling way. He was very effective with the boys.
160. Brother Kelly was very much into sport. He loved swimming, rugby, football, rock climbing and other outdoor activities. He spent a lot of time with the boys, he didn't leave much time to spend with the Brothers. He was very individualistic.
161. I observed him with the boys on the sports field, when we went swimming, and when I could over hear him in class. He had boys camp out in his room at night, but I thought that was just a homely thing. He would play lively music in his room late at night. I think it was to help the boys sleep and calm them down, but I would have thought it would have had the opposite effect. It was very strange. I was very sore about it when I first moved in because it kept me awake, but then I got used to it.
162. I regarded him as a strong, effective and capable man. I didn't see or hear of anything about him that gave me a cause for concern. Had I known anything was going on, I think I would have had the courage to remonstrate with him about it, but nothing like that arose. I didn't even see him disciplining the boys.

Record keeping at St Ninian's

163. When I was in Isleworth in London, they had a good system of recording any events that happened. It was all written down in the book and it was viewed by the Director. There would be a weekly meeting on Monday mornings with the boys and lots of things in the book would be thrashed out. There was nothing like that in St Ninian's. It was a bit amateurish.

164. There was no discussion or training about record keeping. I have no recollection of anything being written down or being asked to contribute to anything.
165. I didn't even see an admission book. I just assumed that the headmaster would have dealt with that.
166. I don't recall any log book.
167. Had there been a system in place for record keeping, Brother Farrell would have been responsible for it, as the director.
168. I don't know who was left in charge of clearing the house when it closed down. I went on holiday and it was dealt with after I had gone.

Specific allegation made to Child Abuse Inquiry against me

169. One allegation has been made to the Inquiry against me by [REDACTED] MHS who was resident at St Ninian's at the time I was there. It has been put to me that the allegation made is as follows:

[REDACTED] MHG *tried to be affectionate towards me but I pushed him away. I told Brother Farrell and he had a word with him and told him to leave me alone."*

170. I remember [REDACTED] MHS very well. He was a tall, pale, slim lad. He looked a bit out of place. He wasn't as rough and street wise as the other boys. Sometimes he looked a bit sad and lonely. He seemed a bit more refined and gentlemanly than the other boys so he stood out.
171. I used to put my arm around his shoulder and comfort him. He seemed to recognise it and be happy that I was comforting him, and he didn't object to it.

172. I had come from ten years in Africa, where they are very demonstrative in greeting one another. I saw nothing wrong with putting my arm around his shoulder. I wasn't affectionate to him; I was just empathising with him.
173. This thing about telling Brother Farrell, who had a word with me, I would have remembered something like that. I was a very sensitive person and if somebody in authority like Brother Farrell had come and told me not to do something again, I would have remembered it, but nothing like that happened.
174. It may have been MHS lack of memory, but I am surprised that he said it.
175. Over the passage of time I have forgotten some things like the layout of the house, so it is possible that I have forgotten some little things, but I am pretty sure I didn't do anything improper to MHS
176. In hindsight I maybe should have been more cold and official. I don't regret putting my arm around his shoulder.

[REDACTED]

177.

178.

179.

[REDACTED]

180.

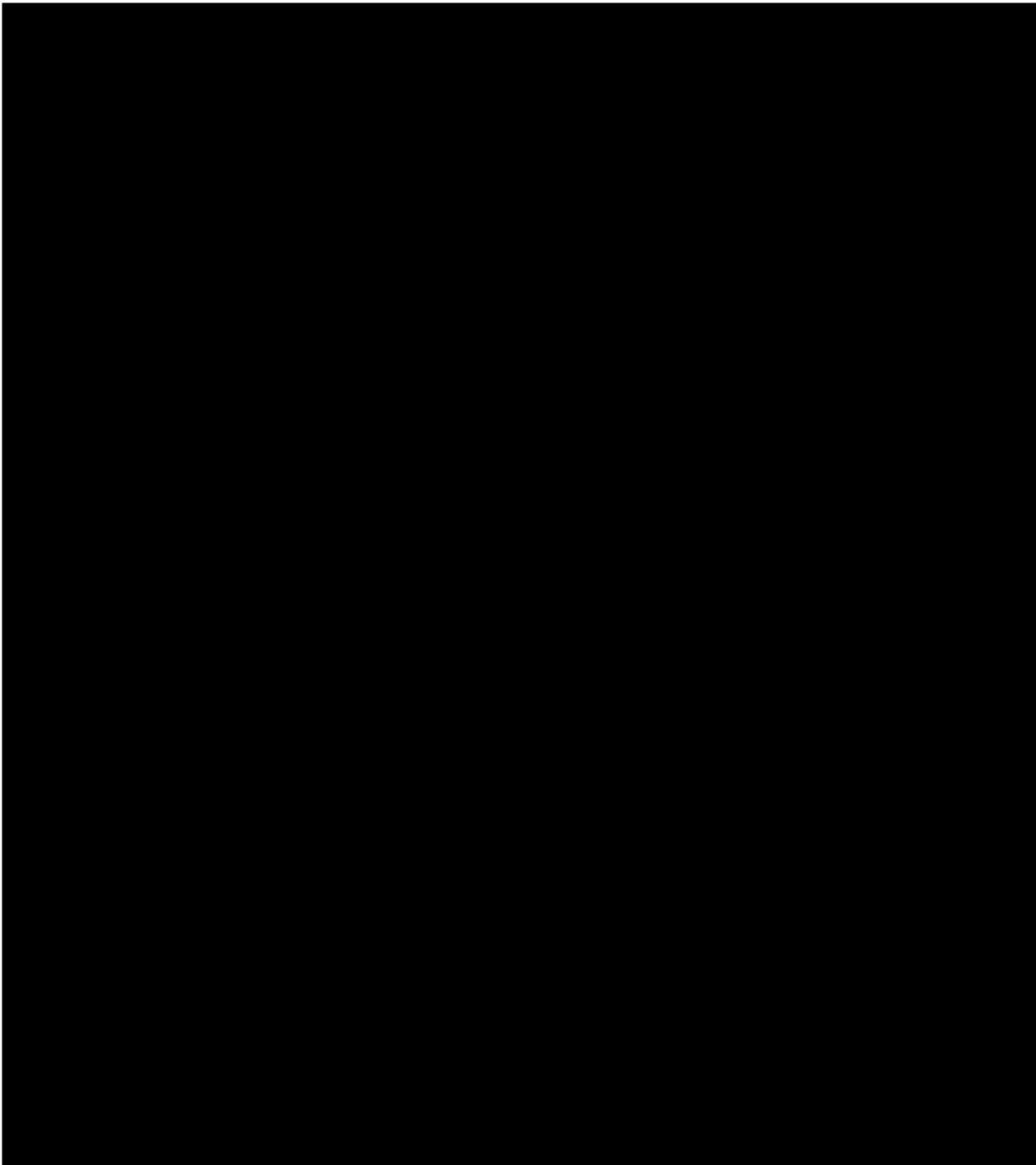
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Allegations against others

186. I am aware that Brother John Farrell was convicted of a number of charges. I never heard any boy talk about him or complain about him at the time. I never heard of or witnessed anything about his interaction with the boys that caused me concern either

at the time or in hindsight. I would have remembered something like that. I was extremely upset when I heard the allegations and evidence against him.

187. Brother Paul Kelly was also convicted of a number of charges against him. I thought he was very good with the boys during my time at St Ninian's. Nothing about him at the time gave me cause for concern about him. When the allegations came out at the trial, it sounded very different from what I knew of him, and I hadn't been aware of any of it. I would have remembered anything like that because it would have made a deep impression on me. In hindsight, with all the allegations I've heard from the court case, it was not a very good idea to have boys in his room at night.

188. It came out in the court case, that Brother Kelly had his favourites amongst the senior boys, and he would use them to take the younger boys out of their rooms. I didn't realise that was going on and I felt guilty that I didn't know that was going on. I was oblivious. I thought that when they went to bed at night, that was it.

189. [REDACTED] MBV [REDACTED] I never heard or witnessed anything about his conduct with the boys that would have given me concern, either at the time or in hindsight.

Final thoughts in light of allegations

190. After reading what [REDACTED] MHS [REDACTED] has alleged happened to him at the hands of other members of staff [REDACTED] I think what he said about me might have been conflated and he may have just thought I was another one of them.

191. I know [REDACTED] MHS [REDACTED] had a hard background, and I don't know what happened to him in the years after he left St Ninian's.

192. [REDACTED] MHS [REDACTED] himself has talked about not knowing boundaries because of the way he was treated at home and by other people. It may have triggered his state of mind and maybe he thought everyone was on the go for him, or something.

193. [REDACTED] were saying that boys were forced to attend St Ninian's. That was never the impression I got. I always understood that they were allowed to visit before they started and had a choice about whether to attend. I think I just overheard that, and I also saw boys visiting with parents before they moved to St Ninian's.
194. I would have thought if any abuse was going on at the time, then the boys could have told someone at the time, like domestic or teaching staff. Nothing was said until decades later.
195. I was surprised to hear allegations about bullying amongst the boys [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] I am very sensitive to bullying and I don't like it at all. I never saw or heard of any bullying among the boys during my time there.
196. You don't want to say that the complainers are making false allegations, but why did it take so long, and why was there not even a hint of the fact that this was going on at the time? Some people may say it is for criminal compensation or that it is false memory syndrome.
197. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I thought to myself that maybe some of these young men were deeply damaged before they came to Falkland, and maybe by things that happened to them after they left. I wondered how much of their spectrum of life had been damaged and distorted, so that some of the allegations may not be true.
198. They obviously convinced the judge and jury of some of the allegations, which is where I am torn. I know that some abused children aren't able to say what happened to them until much later, and that would explain it a bit.
199. I accept that if the allegations made against the people accused are true, then it would amount to abuse. When I heard all the lurid details [REDACTED], I was very upset.

Final thoughts

- 200. If I was to make recommendations, I would say that people who staff children's homes should be very well trained and prepared for the spectrum of problems that can occur before they work there.

- 201. There should perhaps be some support for children after they leave care, so that they don't go astray. They shouldn't just be let out at sixteen with the hope that everything will be ok.

- 202. 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..... 

Dated..... *2nd May, 2019*