

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

Sister Bridgette CUNNINGHAM

Support person present: Denis Moloney (Donnelly & Wall Solicitors)

Others present: No

1. My birth name is Bridgette Agnes Cunningham. I was known as Sister Josafat for a period of thirty three years. I am now known as Sister Cunningham. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1941. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Early life and career

2. I was born in Drumcliffe in County Sligo, Ireland. I grew up there. I had three older brothers and four older sisters. I was the youngest. I was almost nineteen when I entered the Order of the Sisters of Nazareth in 1960. I entered the Order at Hammersmith in London. I was in London for two and a half years. I was professed in 1963 when I was twenty two or twenty three. After I professed I went to Cardiff. My role in Cardiff was collecting. I was in Cardiff until October 1963.
3. In October 1963 I went to Nazareth House in Aberdeen. I was there a bit longer than a year so I would have left at the end of about 1964. My role really was more or less housekeeping. I kept the children's rooms tidy and did the washing. After Aberdeen I went to Lancaster. My role there was again collecting. I was about six months there. I then went to Mallow in County Cork, Ireland. I was there for about a year and a half. I cared for a group of old people there. There were about 300 men and women there to be cared for. After Mallow I went to Dublin for six months. I think I

went to Cardiff after that. After that I went to Blackburn. I then moved to Hammersmith in London.

4. I came back to Scotland in September 1967. I went to Nazareth House, Bonnyrigg, Edinburgh. That was the last time I worked in Scotland. It was also the last time I worked with children. I left Bonnyrigg in March 1968. I went back to Mallow. I left Mallow in 1970 and went to Dublin. After Dublin I only ever worked in England and Wales. I have had roles looking after churches and doing housekeeping in convents. I have also worked with the elderly.

Childcare qualifications and training

5. Before Aberdeen I had no training at all in looking after children. I had no qualifications for looking after children. I wasn't given any training after I arrived in Aberdeen.

Time spent working at Nazareth House, Aberdeen

6. The Mother General is based in Hammersmith. Back then it was Mother Donatis. She sent word to the house I was in Cardiff. I was just told to go to Aberdeen. There was no interview. There was no choice in where you had to go. I was just told that I would be going to another house and that would be Aberdeen. In those days you just went where you were told. I went to Aberdeen in October 1963. I stayed there until late 1964. I was there a little over a year.

Nazareth House, Aberdeen

Layout and structure at Nazareth House, Aberdeen

7. There were three groups in the girls section. One group was in a separate building. My group was on the ground floor of the main house. The other group was on the

second floor of the main house. There was a boys section on the other side of the house. The boys and girl sections were kept separate.

8. The groups were all self-contained groups. I'm sure there were over twenty children in each group in the girls section. It could be more. In my group there were two small boys who were twins. They were about three or four. The youngest girl in my group was about six or seven. The oldest girls were about fourteen or fifteen. Before going there I had had no involvement with looking after children.

The children at Nazareth House, Aberdeen

9. Nazareth House was an approved school for girls. It was for girls who came in through the courts. I don't think it was like that for the boys. I was told it was an approved school before I went there. The girls came in through the courts mostly because they had been stealing from shops.
10. I do remember that there was one little girl and two little twin boys in my group who weren't approved school children. I think they were the only three that hadn't come to us through the courts. I don't remember any other children in my group coming from other family circumstances.
11. I addressed the children by their first names. I can't remember how Sister FAF referred to the children. I can't remember children being addressed by their surnames. The children used to call me 'The Quine in White'. I was called that quite a few times. I don't know what that meant. In general they referred to me as 'Sister'.
12. The girls in general weren't the type of children you would go about hugging. They weren't the type of children who would want that type of thing. They were independent young girls with their own problems. I'd be nice to them and answer them and that. I wouldn't make favourites of any of them. To me they were all happy children. The only place they seemed boisterous was in the dining room.

My role at Nazareth House, Aberdeen

13. I was told before I went to Aberdeen that I would be an assistant to one of the older Sisters there. She was called Sister [FAF] I did what she told me to do. I was really just an assistant housekeeper. I only worked with her group in the girls section. I didn't have much responsibility for the children. That was more Sister [FAF] job. I was just there to do housekeeping and do whatever Sister [FAF] asked me to do. Sister [FAF] was the only Sister that had an assistant Sister. I really don't know why there weren't assistant Sisters in the other groups. I would have been one of the youngest nuns there during my time in Aberdeen. The nuns in the other groups were all older than me.

Management structure and Sisters at Nazareth House, Aberdeen

14. Sister [LKM] was in charge of Nazareth House, Aberdeen. She was the Mother Superior. Sister [FAF] was in charge of one of the three groups of children in the girls section. She was the most senior Sister in the girls section. Sister [FAF] reported to the Mother Superior.
15. I really don't know whether the Sisters in the other groups in the girls section reported to Sister [FAF] I can't remember the set up. The other two groups in the girls section were looked after by Sister [LJI] and Sister [LGN] [LGN] They're both now dead.
16. I remember Sister [LDR] being in charge of the boys section. She's now dead. I think for a short time Sister [LFD] was also there. I remember there were two Sisters in the boys section.
17. There were also two Sisters who went out collecting, a Sister who did the laundry and a Sister who did the sewing.

Staff who helped with Sister [FAF] group

18. [FAJ] worked with Sister [FAF]. She was there whilst I was there. She was there before I arrived and there after I left. I remember meeting her. I think she did housekeeping. I know she swept the dormitories and things like that. I can't really recall what she did. I can't really remember her role with the children. There was a blonde girl called Janet who used to come in to help. I can't remember her surname.
19. There was a carer who came in to look after the two twin boys during the day. She did that because they were too young to go to school. I can't remember her name. Any staff that were civilians who worked in the group reported to Sister [FAF]. I didn't have any authority over them.

Introduction to the children

20. I wasn't given any instruction by Sister [FAF] concerning how to look after the children. When I started she just said that some of the children were in the house because they had gone through the courts. I wasn't given any information about the children in the group.

Routine at Nazareth House, Aberdeen

Admission

21. I wasn't involved in admitting new children. I don't remember any children leaving. I wasn't involved with admissions or discharges. I have no idea about the processes.

Daily routine

22. Sister [FAF] was responsible for getting the children ready in the morning. She went around the beds and got the children up. I would sometimes assist with calling

them up. After the children got up they got washed and ready for school. They would then make their beds before going downstairs to the dining room. The first time I really would get involved with the children in the mornings was maybe whilst I supervised them during breakfast. I would stay with the children until they cleared the tables and went off to school. There was a bus laid on for the children to get to the school.

23. After the children went to school I would sort out the children's clothes. I'd do the laundry and tidy up their rooms. I also had jobs to do in the convent. I can't remember the children coming home for lunchtime. I think the children came back at about four o'clock. The children would change out of their school uniforms and put on their ordinary clothes. I think Sister [FAF] then took the children to do their homework before going for dinner. I wasn't involved with all of that. I might sometimes get involved with serving out the meals in the evenings in the dining hall. I can't really remember what activities there were for the children in the evenings. I wasn't involved with supervising that. I wasn't too involved with them at all. That was Sister [FAF] role. I would be at prayers with the community in the evenings. I think the children were in bed by about nine o'clock. I really don't remember what the routine was for the children going to bed. I suppose they would've had baths. I wasn't involved in getting the children ready for bed. I have no recollection at all of what happened on Saturdays with the children. There was mass on a Sunday

Sleeping arrangements

24. There were three children to a room. Some of the children had their own room. I can't remember how many dormitories there were. My accommodation was a room within one of the children's dormitories. There were three children in that dormitory. I had a room for myself cut off in the corner of the dormitory. Nobody else shared that room with me. There was glass window which allowed me to see into the dormitory. I could see where the children in the morning. I can't remember where Sister [FAF] had her room or whether it was attached to any of the dormitories.

Washing and bathing

25. I wasn't involved with the washing or bathing of the children.

Food

26. There was a big kitchen in the house. The meals were prepared there. Each group had their own dining room. The food was brought to our dining room on a hot trolley. The children had tea and toast or cereals for breakfast. I don't think in those days there was a choice of food for the children. Sister [FAF] came in and out of the dining hall during meals. She would do that because the group was her responsibility.
27. I never saw any of the children not accepting their meals. As far as I can remember all the children ate the meals that they got. I remember that the children were very boisterous during mealtimes. They used to fight. They would throw tea at each other and pull each other's hair. They could be pretty rough with each other. There were disruptive girls. If there was any of that going on I would call Sister [FAF] in to deal with that. I didn't have any part in the discipline of the children then. Sister [FAF] would take over. She would speak with the disruptive children privately. She corrected them verbally. I can't remember whether she raised her voice. That's all I saw Sister [FAF] doing in the dining room.

Clothes

28. I think the Mother Superior went out and bought the clothes for the children. I think the children would have been allowed to pick out what they wanted. The children had a school uniform but I can't remember what that was. They had their own clothes to change into outside of school.

Chores

29. The children had to make their own beds. They had some work to do like dusting their room and cleaning the dining room. I can't remember much about the chores that they had to do. I've no recollection of children being given weekend tasks.

Leisure time

30. I expect there were toys. There would've been toys for the younger ones. I can't recall if the children had extra-curricular activities. They may have gone to Brownies but I just don't know.

Possessions and pocket money

31. I don't know what the situation was with personal possessions. I wasn't really involved with that side of things. The children would have got pocket money but I don't know how much they got. I wasn't involved in distributing pocket money. Sister [FAF] did that. I can't really remember what happened with pocket money. I've no idea whether all the children got the same pocket money.

Letters and correspondence

32. I have no idea about whether children received letters or not. I have no recollection of a child receiving post. Sister [FAF] may have given the children letters but I have no knowledge of that at all.

Holidays

33. I never went on holidays with the children anywhere. I do remember some children going on holiday with their families in Glasgow though.

Trips to the beach

34. In the summer we walked all of the children from the girls section down to the beach for the day. We did that nearly every day during the six week holiday. I don't think we went on the wet days. We went at about ten o'clock in the morning. I would help the other Sisters in the other groups. I can't remember Sister [FAF] being there with us but she might have been with us on a couple of occasions. It was a long walk. I think she may have not come with us because she was a bit older. There would be one or two civilian members of staff who would help out.
35. We had chalets at the beach where we were able to prepare food for the children. We would bring the food with us from the house. We would spend maybe about six hours at the beach. It might be longer. We would then walk home in the evenings.
36. The children needed a lot of supervision when we were at the beach. We had to keep an eye on them in case they needed the toilet or went off into the shops. We watched the children going into the water and made sure they were alright. I don't think there was any misbehaviour at the beach. We never had any problems. The children played nicely at the beach. I can't remember any arguments between the children at the beach.
37. I remember one occasion where we had to run into the water in our full habit and shoes to rescue some children. Both Sister [LGN] and I went in to rescue them out of the water and bring them back in. I remember there were photographers there. They ended up putting the photos in the local paper.

Birthdays and Christmas

38. I don't remember any of the children having birthdays whilst I was there. I vaguely remember the Christmas I was there. It was celebrated. There would've been presents. I can't remember gifts being sent in by families. I wasn't involved with that side of things. Sister [FAF] and the other Sisters in charge of their other groups

would be in charge of all that. I know they would have had a Christmas dinner because that happened in all of the Nazareth Houses.

Bed-wetting

39. I wasn't there getting up the children every morning. It was Sister [FAF] who was mostly there. If I was around after a child had wet the bed I would just take the sheets to the laundry. That was about it.

Schooling

40. I can't remember what school the children went to.

Healthcare

41. I think the doctor was called in if a child was unwell. I have no idea where the doctor came from. I can't remember anything surrounding dental care. I presume dentists visited their school. I don't recall a dentist coming into the house. I am sure that if any of the children needed care they would have got it.

Deaths

42. I don't think any nuns died during my time there. No children died during my time there.

Religious instruction

43. I think some of the children went to mass if they wanted to. I don't know what would happen if a child didn't go to mass. I wouldn't have a say in that. I wasn't involved

with taking the children from the house to mass. During mass I would kneel behind the children at church.

Visitors

44. I can't remember there being any visitors. I really can't remember anyone coming in. I think a priest came in on a retreat day to talk about the church. I don't remember any other external people coming in. I'm not aware of any social workers coming in to visit the children. I wouldn't have been involved in anything like that if they did.

Records and record keeping

45. I didn't do any writing at all. Sister [FAF] would have been responsible for that side of things. I expect I would have just told Sister [FAF] if anything had happened. I wouldn't have made a note of it. I have no idea whether records were kept with regards to the children. I wasn't given any access to files about the children. I have no idea whether each child had a file.

Inspections

46. I remember the Home Office coming in for an inspection. The Home Office were the authorities who inspected children homes. I think they were from the Government. I don't remember when that happened. It happened just once during my time there. I remember that Sister [FAF] knew the inspector was coming.
47. As far as I can remember it was just one person who came. She spoke with Sister [FAF] I'm sure she would have spoken to the other Sisters who had groups as well. I didn't speak with the inspector.

48. The children were out at school when the inspector came. As far as I know the inspector didn't speak with any of the children. Sister [FAF] took the inspector around the rooms and the bathrooms. She took the inspector around the girls' side. I've no idea what happened on the boys side.

Families

49. I think most of the children who were in my group were single children. Most of them weren't part of family groups. I do remember that there two sisters in my group by the name of [REDACTED] I wouldn't know if the girls in my group might have had brothers on the other side. I have no idea what arrangements were in place to allow siblings to remain in contact in the home.

Discipline and punishment

50. I didn't have any responsibility for disciplining the children. I had nothing to do with that side at all. I couldn't really say how the children were disciplined. I never saw anything. I never saw any children being physically abused. I did see children being verbally corrected in public. Sister [FAF] did that. I saw that at the dining table during mealtimes. I didn't get involved.
51. I don't know what the nuns in the other groups did in terms of discipline and punishment. We were all separate. We never mixed. I never saw the other Sisters correcting children at the beach when I went with my group with them. I didn't really take any notice of them because I was busy minding my own children. I wouldn't be watching what the other Sisters were doing.

Recollections of an incident where children were disciplined

52. I remember going shopping into town with all the groups from the girls section on 8 December 1963. We had the whole lot of the girls down. Sister [LJI] Sister

LGN and I were supervising the children alongside some staff. I can't remember who the staff were. Some of the children were buying things for Christmas and things like that. Some of the children stole some things from Marks and Spencer's. We didn't see them taking the things. When we got home we discovered that the boss from Marks and Spencer's had called the house. He reported what had happened. After that the Mother Superior and Sister FAF took all the girls from the three groups into the big play room. I wasn't present when they did that. They talked to the children and got back the goods. I didn't hear what was said in the room. We took back all the stuff to Marks and Spencer's.

Specific allegations of abuse against Sister FAF

Allegations made against Sister FAF by LCP

53. I don't remember the name of LCP from during my time in Aberdeen. I have been told that LCP has said in her statement that *"if you didn't eat your food you would get hit by Sister FAF or whoever was there... If you got hit it would be a slap to your head. I saw it happen to others too. If you didn't eat your main course you didn't get any pudding, and you would get made to stand up at the table."* I never saw Sister FAF hitting anyone. I never saw any punishment given. I never saw anything like that. I can't remember a situation where the children didn't eat their food. I don't remember children not getting their pudding if they didn't eat their main course. I never saw anything like children being made to stand up at the table.
54. I have been told that LCP has said in her statement that Sister FAF would beat her with a brush. I would know nothing about that. She has also said in her statement that Sister FAF would humiliate children if they wet their bed. I never saw anything like that. LCP has said in her statement that Sister FAF would slap children across their faces. I never saw that. I have been told that LCP has said in her statement that Sister FAF would repeatedly punch her on her knees. I can't imagine Sister FAF doing that.

55. [LCP] has said in her statement "Sister [FAF] would come in to our bedroom in the morning to waken us up and we knelt down beside our beds and said a prayer. She pulled the beds back and would see that I had wet it. She made me take the sheet off and put me in a cold bath in the bathroom. She would shut and lock the bathroom door then go away to Mass and was probably away for between thirty minutes to three quarters of an hour. When she came back she brought a hairbrush and thrashed me on my body with the hairbrush in the cold bath. I would have to wash the sheet I had wet in the bath. I might have had to hang the sheets up but can't remember. I then got dressed and went down for my breakfast." The children would probably have had to say prayers but other than that I never heard of or saw anything like that happening. I never ever saw any punishment given by Sister [FAF]. I never saw Sister [FAF] punishing children if they wet the bed. I would remember seeing that if I had seen it happen. I can't recall any of the girls wetting the bed whilst I was there. I never saw children being given cold baths. I never saw it happening.
56. [LCP] has said in her statement "At night time if you were supposed to be sleeping and you were talking or carrying on, you would hear Sister [FAF] shouting and asking who was talking or whatever. You had to admit it if it was you and she might make you go along and kneel outside her room door and say prayers like the rosary or something. Sometimes she would forget you were there and you had to cough to make sure she knew." I never had any idea of anything like that happening. This is all new to me. I never heard of any of this.

Allegations made against Sister [FAF] by [LBP]

57. I don't remember anyone by the name of [LBP] [LBP] has said in her statement "We all had chores to do, and mine was to put the counterpanes onto all of the beds in the dorms in the evening... 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.” We did have counterpanes. They were covers that you put on after you made the bed. They’re now called bed spreads. They would go on during the day and normally come off in the evening. The older girls would make up their own beds. The children would use the buffer on the wooden floors. It was like a sweeping brush though with block and a duster on the end. The children would maybe do that at the weekends. I never saw Sister [FAF] thumping children for not doing their chores. I never saw Sister [FAF] hitting anyone whilst I was there.

58. [LBP] has said in her statement that “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.” We all wore leather belts around our waists. Sister [FAF] would’ve worn a belt. She would have had to have taken off her rosaries and her crucifix if she was going to hit someone with her belt. I never saw that done.*

Allegations made against Sister [FAF] by [LBA]

59. I am told that [LBA] was known as [LBA] when he was at Nazareth House in Aberdeen and that he was there with his twin brother [REDACTED]. I remember twins and one of them being known as [REDACTED]. I don’t remember [LBA] [LBA] [REDACTED] was only tiny when I was there. He was a baby. He was either three or four when I was there. He was a bit of a rascal. I would’ve known the twins when I was there because they were in Sister [FAF] group.

60. [LBA] has said in his statement that “*I remember a nun called Sister [FAF]. She was old. She was senior but she wasn’t the mother superior. She was a “god fearing” woman. She was a very strict and angry nun. She was very much a disciplinarian... You did as you were told by her. You knew that there were consequences if you didn’t. You avoided her because you didn’t want to make eye contact with her. You would keep your head down when you were near her.” I would agree that Sister [FAF] was strict. She was a strict person. I would do what she would ask me to do. When she told you to do something she expected you to carry it out. I did what she told me without question. She didn’t punish me if I*

didn't do anything. I never saw her punishing children if they didn't do anything. She would expect the children to tow the line. I don't really know what she did if the children didn't do what she expected them to do.

61. [LBA] has said in his statement that "Sister [FAF] would "knuckle you" on your head if you didn't stand still whilst she was brushing your hair and putting brylcreem in your hair. It was extremely sore and painful." I don't remember anything like this at all. I would go around and see whether the children had their uniforms on but the twins never went out during my time there. I don't remember anything surrounding Sister [FAF] "knuckling" children's heads.
62. [LBA] has said in his statement that "Sister [FAF] would quite often give me a slap across the face or hit me with a ruler if I got any words wrong when doing reading... I remember that every time I got a word wrong Sister [FAF] would hit me with a ruler. It was a big thick ruler and she wrapped my knuckles with it." I have no recollection of anything like that. I don't remember Sister [FAF] helping children with their homework. I don't remember her having a big thick ruler. I never saw anything like that.
63. [LBA] has said in his statement that "Sister [FAF] used carbolic soap quite often as a punishment. I'm surmising that that was given to you for swearing or answering back. You would be frothing at the mouth." I don't know anything about that. I never saw that happening.

Final thoughts on Sister [FAF] in light of allegations

64. I never observed Sister [FAF] being affectionate with the children. I can't really remember what she was like as a person. I can't remember the way she reacted. I can't remember hearing Sister [FAF] praising the children. I didn't hear her scolding them either. I don't believe a word of the allegations made against Sister [FAF]. I know that she was a strict person but she was a good nun.

Specific allegations of abuse against [REDACTED] FAJ [REDACTED]

65. I have been told that [REDACTED] LBP [REDACTED] has said in her statement that *"You could also get a smack on your head or your body from [REDACTED] FAJ [REDACTED], but her abuse was more verbal."* None of those things happened in my presence at all. I never heard that [REDACTED] FAJ [REDACTED] verbally abuse the children. I can't understand it. I never heard or saw anything like that.

Specific allegations against unnamed staff member

66. [REDACTED] LCP [REDACTED] has said in her statement *"I used to wet the bed a lot and when I did there was a helper woman, not a nun, who used to hammer me with a stick."* I never heard or saw anything like that.

General allegations made against unnamed nuns and staff members

67. I have been told that [REDACTED] LCP [REDACTED] has said in her statement that the nuns wouldn't give any form of affection. We wouldn't give one child affection and not give it to another. We made sure we didn't have any favourite children.
68. [REDACTED] LCP [REDACTED] has said in her statement that *"Our letters were always opened by the nuns."* I don't know anything about that. I have no recollection at all concerning letters.
69. [REDACTED] LBP [REDACTED] has said in her statement that *"There was a regime of discipline... You would get thumped or got the belt... I didn't get the belt, I just got thumped. Other kids got the belt. I was hit every day."* I really don't know what I would say in response to that. I never saw anything like that happening. Nothing like that ever happened in my presence.

70. [REDACTED] LBA has said in his statement that *"During my time in Nazareth House I was both physically and emotionally abused by different nuns growing up. Most days involved some form of abuse. There were many occasions where physical abuse was the norm. Some of the nuns were very angry. They dished out punches quite frequently"* I can't offer any comment on that. I can't understand why he is saying that punches were dished out frequently. I never saw anything like that. If I had seen anything like that I would have reported it to the Mother Superior.
71. [REDACTED] LBA has said in his statement that *"There was never any nurturing. There was no love or genuine care. There was a coldness about your life. There was no hope and I found this difficult... I wasn't allowed to cry as a child as this would make things worse. I often received physical abuse if I was crying."* I remember giving little [REDACTED] a hug and the other little girl who was the sister. I don't know what they expected. They were well fed, well clothed and taken out to the beach. I think that the Sisters did what they could for them. I don't recall any physical abuse if there was any child crying. This boy would have only been three or four years of age in my time. I've no idea how a child would be dealt with if they were crying during my time there.
72. [REDACTED] LBA has said in his statement that *"I never received any praise when in care. I received constant criticism."* I wouldn't know anything about that.

Reporting of abuse

73. As far as I know there wasn't anyone in the home that the children could go to if they wanted a chat. As far as I know there wasn't anybody in the home available for the children to go to talk about any issues they may have. I never saw any outside people coming in to provide any support for the children. No child reported to me that they were being mistreated during my time at Aberdeen

Leaving Nazareth House, Aberdeen

74. My time in Aberdeen came to an end when I was moved. I was given a week's notice. My Mother Superior got word from Hammersmith that I was to be moved. There was no discussion. You just got your things together and went where you were told.

Time spent working at Nazareth House, Bonnyrigg, Edinburgh

75. I went to Bonnyrigg from Hammersmith in September 1967. I left in March 1968. I was there about six months. When I arrived I wasn't put in the convent because they didn't have any room. I was given a bedroom in the children's section.

Nazareth House, Bonnyrigg, Edinburgh

The children at Nazareth House, Bonnyrigg

76. It was mixed boys and girls. I think there were three groups but I can't really remember. The age range in the group I was involved with was between six and thirteen or fourteen. I can't remember whether all the children who were in the home came from Catholic backgrounds.

My role at Nazareth House, Bonnyrigg

77. My role was to go out collecting in the streets. I did that all around the shops with an older Sister in the city. I was out collecting from ten thirty in the morning until five in the evening. I did that for the whole time I was in Bonnyrigg. When I wasn't out collecting I sometimes helped the three other Sisters in the home with looking after the children.

78. I only had one official duty allocated with regards to the children in my group. There had been a number of complaints about children getting into mischief during their journey to school. The children were ringing doorbells, throwing dustbins and things like that. Because of that I became involved with walking the children to school. I did that with Sister **LFD**. One of us would stand at the front of the queue and the other would stand at the back of the queue. I didn't walk the children home because I was out collecting. Sister **LFD** did that with someone else.

Sisters at Nazareth House, Bonnyrigg

79. The nuns I remember as being in charge of the three groups were Sister Patrick Joseph, she's dead, Sister **LFD** and Sister **LFJ**. Sister **LFJ** was in charge of the group I helped out with. I never heard Sister **LFJ** have a cross word with any of the children. She was a very kind woman. Sister **LFJ** is dead now.

80. From what I saw of the Sisters interacting with the children they were active with them. They would go out and play with them in the grounds. I remember Sister **LFD** in particular being very active with the children.

Staff at Nazareth House, Bonnyrigg

81. I can't remember how many staff there were. I remember one lady called Mrs **LJH** but can't remember anyone else. She helped out with all the groups. She was a house mother in a way. She would mostly work with Sister Patrick Joseph or Sister **LFD**

Routine and life at Nazareth House [REDACTED]

Daily routine

82. Sister [REDACTED] LFJ called the children up in the mornings. She would go around the group and wake the children up. I think they got up before seven o'clock. They would then get washed, dressed and have their breakfast. I wasn't involved with any of that. During that time I would be at prayers and having my breakfast in the convent. My involvement started when I collected the children to walk them to school after breakfast. That was my only involvement during the day because I went out collecting after that.
83. The children would have had their dinner before I came back from collecting. Sister [REDACTED] LFJ and some of the staff supervised the evening meals. In the evenings the children did their homework followed by playtime. The boys would go out and play football. There would also be baths before they all went to bed. I didn't have much interaction with the children in the evenings because I went to eat after coming back from collecting. I then had all my prayers to say that I had missed during the day. I might go over and say goodnight to the children but that was about all my involvement.
84. I would still collect on a Saturday. I might be with the children on Sundays. I didn't go out collecting on a Sunday. I think my only involvement was sitting in with the children and watching television in the evening time if Sister [REDACTED] LFJ wanted a break. I might also supervise the children in the grounds if Sister [REDACTED] LFJ wanted a break. I didn't really have much contact with the children on Sundays.

Sleeping arrangements

85. There might have been three or four children in each dormitory. I can't remember how many dormitories there were. My room was built into one of the dormitories with the children from Sister [REDACTED] LFJ group. There were about four in that dormitory. I could look into the dormitory if I needed to.

Washing and bathing

86. I wasn't involved with washing or bathing the children. The staff did all of that.

Food

87. I didn't eat with the children. I had all my meals in the convent. None of the Sisters ate with the children. As far as I can remember each group had their own dining room. I wasn't ever really present when the children were having their meals. I might have on some evenings gone into the dining hall to check that they were alright. I never saw any children refusing their food.

Clothes

88. I can't remember much about the clothes. The children would have had their own clothes. I think they had school uniforms.

Chores

89. I don't know whether the children had chores. I was away during the day so I didn't see that.

Leisure time

90. There was a shop that would be opened for the children in the evenings. It was more of a locked cupboard in the play room. Sister LFJ had the key. The shop sold sweeties and things like that. I think it could be opened up any time the children wanted.

Holidays and trips

91. I wasn't involved with taking any children on holiday. I don't remember being involved with taking any children on outings.

Birthdays and Christmas

92. I don't remember anything around birthdays. I was there one Christmas. Christmas would've been much the same as any Christmas in Nazareth House. The children would have had a Christmas dinner and presents. I do remember that there were a lot of firms who donated toys to the children. I think I was involved with putting toys by the children's beds.

Bed-wetting

93. I don't remember any children wetting the bed. I don't remember any issues surrounding bed-wetting. I have no idea how it was dealt with if it happened.

Schooling

94. I don't remember the name of the school. It was a Catholic school. It was a fair walk from the house. I think all the children from the house went to the school.

Healthcare

95. I don't remember being involved in anything involving healthcare. I know that the children could see a nurse at school. I don't know what happened in the house. I remember a doctor coming in to see the Sisters but I don't know whether he saw the Sisters. I have no idea about what happened in terms of dental care.

Visitors

96. I can't remember anything about children getting visitors when I was there. I can't remember anything about social workers either. I was never present when family members visited. I can't remember any family members visiting. I would guess that if they had family visitors they would've seen them in one of the sitting rooms. I've no idea whether they could see their families in private or a Sister was present. I wouldn't really know who came in and out during the day because I was out collecting.

Records and record keeping

97. I wasn't given any information concerning the children in my group when I arrived. I wasn't shown any records. In those days we didn't keep many records. I am sure that Sister [LFJ] would have kept some. I didn't add to any records when I was there. I can't remember writing anything.

Discipline and punishment*Recollections of incidents where children were disciplined*

98. I remember only being involved with the children during the night on one occasion. Some children had run away and Sister [LFJ] woke me. I think it was one boy from my group and two or three more from the other groups. Sister [LFJ] then went down to the police to report who had been missing. The police brought the children back in the end. Sister [LFJ] dealt with the police and the children when they came back. I don't know what Sister [LFJ] did.
99. On one occasion some of the children broke into the neighbouring golf course and filled all the holes with clay. They closed all the holes. The police ended up coming in. I think the children got a good talking to from the police. Sister [LFJ] would've

been present. That would've been about it as far as I know. I wasn't present when that happened.

General allegations made against unnamed nuns and staff members by

LCB

100. I don't remember anyone called LCB I have been told that LCB has said in her statement *"I remember a few of the younger boys wet the bed and they got cold showers. I remember going to bed and all of them who had done it were lined up in the corridor waiting to get a cold shower. This was during the night."* I don't remember anything like that. I never saw any of that. The bathrooms would have been up where the children's bedrooms were. I can't describe the bathrooms. I don't remember there being showers when I was there.
101. LCB has said in her statement *"Those who were in the home the longest got more of the abuse."* I don't understand that at all because I never saw any abuse whilst I was there.
102. LCB has said in her statement that *"The abuse was daily, not so much to myself but there was always one of the kids getting it. Punching, kicking, pulling hair."* I never saw anything like that in my time. I was out most the time. I never heard or saw anything like that. I couldn't imagine the Sisters that I lived with doing anything like that.
103. I have been told that LCB has said in her statement that *"There was always kids getting slapped about somewhere. It was just one of those daily things. You got used to seeing it. Somebody got hit every day."* I don't understand why people are saying these things. I can't imagine that happening. I never saw any punishment given to any child.

Reporting of abuse

104. I don't know anything about the side of things concerning whether children were allocated people they could speak to or whether there were people they could speak to. None of the children came and spoke with me about any concerns they might have.

Civil and criminal proceedings

105. I have never been involved in any civil or criminal proceedings concerning my time either in Aberdeen or Edinburgh. As far as I know there has never been a complaint made against me.

Prior statements

106. I have never been questioned by anyone other than the Inquiry about my time at Aberdeen or at Bonnyrigg. I have never provided a statement to anybody else concerning my time at Aberdeen or Bonnyrigg. I have never been asked about any allegation by anyone else other than when providing this statement to the Inquiry.

Closing thoughts

107. I think the people who are making allegations might have a chip on their shoulder about being in a care home and not being with their own families. Maybe that's affected their lives since. I don't believe any of the allegations that people are making. I couldn't imagine the Sisters I worked with doing the things that are alleged or it happening whilst I was there. I certainly didn't see anything.

108. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I never worked with Sister [REDACTED] LTX [REDACTED] either at Aberdeen or in

Bonnyrigg. However, we were very good friends as novices in Hammersmith. She was a very gentle nice person. I found her very helpful. I couldn't imagine her being cruel to children. The people who made allegations against Sister [REDACTED] LTX must have disliked her and the way of life. [REDACTED]

109. 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. *Sister* [REDACTED]

Dated. *2nd May 2018*