

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness statement of

Sister [REDACTED] AGD

Support person present: YES

Others present: Richard Souter, solicitor, for [REDACTED] AGD
 Lesley Allan, solicitor, for the Daughters of Charity of St
 Vincent de Paul

Background

1. My name is [REDACTED] AGD My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1944. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.
2. I was formerly known as Sister [REDACTED] AGD I thought at the time that it was a lovely name but I think it's awful now. The reason that you were renamed when you went to a House was if there was a Sister with the same name. Sister [REDACTED] EAL was the superior, so I had to change. If that happened today, we would keep our own name.

Posting at Smyllum

3. I joined the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul in 1965. I did my 'juniorate' in Dublin between 1967 and 1968. I started working in Smyllum in 1968 and I was there until 1975.
4. When you leave your training period within the community, that would be the juniorate at the time, you would have a dialogue and people would say or the superior would say to you "we thought this might be your placement". At that time I wanted to do nursing but I actually thought I wouldn't get the exams so I thought "I'll go for children," so we talked about me going for children. When I heard it was in Scotland, for someone who's never been out of Ireland, I was happy to go, but that's how it works. You have a discussion with your Provincial and then the placement was set up because there was a vacancy in Smyllum at the time. There was no interview or anything. It was all just arranged by the Order. There wasn't any of the sort of vetting process that there would be for placements now other than just knowing who you were within the order and your superior vouching for you as it were. I didn't have any training or qualifications, other than coming from a large family.

Establishment

5. My first impression was that Smyllum was a huge, big place with all these children. I had no experience. I really didn't know what to do but the Superior was very experienced. Her name was Sister [REDACTED] EAL It was because she was also called [REDACTED] EAL that I had to change my name. And I think we had two staff at the

time. There were 19 children when I went. That's my memory of it and knowing what to do and how to do it was the big thing for me. I think I thought it was a welcoming place, I was feeling in awe about it. I was wondering how I would manage in this place, because I had no experience prior to it. They were all very friendly and welcoming, that's what I remember about it.

6. There were six groups, there were four within the main house which was the big house and then there were two outside in the grounds. The school was also on the grounds. My group was St Mary's. St Mary's was on the first floor at the front of the house as you came up the stairs. It was just there in front of you. I was in St Mary's the whole time I was in Smyllum.

Structure

7. As I say, there were two staff working with me. I can remember one of them as [REDACTED]. Whether we only had [REDACTED] or not, I can't remember. I'm sure there were two of them but I can't remember her name. [REDACTED] was one of the staff but I don't remember her second name. She wasn't long there and she didn't stay long, that's the bit I remember. Then we got two other staff and one was [REDACTED] ACV and the other was [REDACTED]. They were civilian staff and they lived on the premises when they were on duty.
8. The civilian staff and I worked together. They would have been responsible to me, and I was responsible to the Superior. There weren't rules that were just mine and rules that were just theirs. When you were getting the children up in the morning you were all there to try and move the thing along, to get them ready for school. The bathing and all of that. Then there was the tidying of the rooms and Hoovering around. That was for us to do so you were on duty most of the time.
9. The staff would get days off, but the Sisters wouldn't. We would go to the Barras to do our shopping, and that was a real day off for us. You had three members of staff and one would be off on her days off. They had two days off, so initially it was that you had two members of staff and yourself but then later on, when I came back from my training course in 1973, we got somebody who came in the evenings and that was a great help to us. It was coming up to bed time, and we had different age groups, so we got an extra member of staff then.
10. I was on duty all the time. Very often we would have a baby. We often took in babies and then you were on call. There wasn't a particular way of deciding who took the babies. It just depended on who had a vacancy to take a baby, and if you were interested.
11. In terms of other Sisters, I would say at a guess there would be about 10 or 12, because there were the six in the groups and then there were older Sisters there as well. Each group had one Sister heading it up, but the superior had overall responsibility. She would come round to make sure everything was alright and that type of thing.

My role

12. When I first started at Smyllum, there was no formal induction. There was a young lady, a member of staff at the time, who was going to join the order and she was there when I arrived. She helped me, and the Sister in the kitchen was helping her so she helped me as well. They gave me a good overview, and so did the Superior. I didn't have time to shadow the person I was replacing because she was leaving when I joined.
13. There was nobody who was to be my mentor but I had the opportunity to ask for advice from the superior or from the other Sisters. The other Sisters were also very helpful and we would meet in the middle of the day at some time as a community, we'd meet for lunch and they were always very helpful. I didn't raise concerns at these meetings because we wouldn't have talked about the children because of issues of confidentiality but we would go to Sister [REDACTED] EAL and we would talk to her about it or we could talk to individual Sisters.

Children

14. The children in St Mary's were in separate dorms but within the one group. There would be up to four in a room. The group was nineteen children, boys and girls. As I said, we could have them as babies. When I went in, we had a little one of two and I think the oldest then were probably about twelve, up to that because I don't remember having anyone at secondary school at that point.
15. Later in my time in St Mary's we had secondary school age children. I think the oldest child I had was up to sixteen.
16. Sometimes families came in together rather than individual children. Mostly families were kept together but if, say, four come in and you only had beds for two, they would be split then. In the main they would try and keep them together within the same group. They might be separated within the house, but they kept contact with one another in the playground and such.
17. You never covered another House, but if you talked to the other Sisters you knew what they were doing.
18. Some children stayed in Smyllum during my time who actually went home. They would be there maybe a year or so but then others would maybe just be there until the end of their time. At other times, we took in children but we really didn't have the capacity for but because there was an emergency, we would have to wait until they found a placement elsewhere. Sister [REDACTED] EAL was always very obliging and she would always try and help out social services.
19. The children didn't have a uniform to wear. Some of them wouldn't be properly clothed when they'd come in so we would have to take them shopping or we would go shopping for them and make sure that they had sufficient clothing for themselves. We would go to the Barras and we got great choice there. Sometimes we would take the children and sometimes we would go with other Sisters, if they couldn't drive, and that

would be a day out for us. We didn't always take the children, but we would know which child we would be buying for. We would go other places too but other places were often very expensive and we wouldn't have the money for it because the money was quite tight. Some of the children would get clothing themselves from family members.

20. We actually did all our own laundry. We had a washing machine and a dryer down at the end of our place so we would do it there and then. Outside, we had lines and you could put things out to dry. Each house looked after its own things rather than having the laundry done centrally. The Sisters and staff would normally do laundry when the children were in school, because when they came home you didn't have time.
21. For shoes, you would roughly know the size of a shoe that a person would want but if the shoes that we bought didn't fit, we were always able to exchange and get the ones that fitted. We often took them to a shoe shop but often if we were going shopping, we'd know that [REDACTED] needed a pair of shoes and we'd chance it but we would be able to return them.
22. We would always buy them new things for the summer. In September you would go and kit them out for the school, even though we didn't have the uniform. You would kit them out for school, that was always a kind of a big event of the year and I think we also did it at Christmas time. We would create the opportunity if it was needed so we would go according to need.

First day at Smyllum

23. When children first arrived in Smyllum, people welcomed them and they were placed with other children in their bedrooms, be that male or female. They were introduced to all the children. We would have a kind of special tea for when they came. Then they would be taken to the school and introduced in the school. I think the children then started to befriend them and introduce them to the other children in the yard so there were great opportunities for them. Then as they made little friends of their own, they would bring them in and they could take them to tea.
24. We didn't get a lot of information about new children. Very often we just knew they were coming. I think Sister [REDACTED] EAL would have had a phone call. She would tell us about them but they could be there in a day. You were just making sure, once Sister [REDACTED] EAL knew we had a vacancy, she would know to fill it. She would then say to us that we were going to get a new child, a boy or a girl. Sister [REDACTED] EAL would be on the phone to the social worker so she would get information, but we didn't get a lot.

Mornings

25. We would always call them at about ten to eight. We got them up, got them dressed and got breakfast for them. We would have children who maybe had wet the bed and they would have to have a bath, so it was to accommodate everybody that we had the earlier call at ten to eight. It used to be eight o'clock and then we moved to ten to eight. So people got up, got dressed, they tidied their room a little bit and that was it. They left everything and then we went downstairs and we had breakfast and it took an hour to do all of that. Then they went up to school.

26. Later on we had children who went out to secondary school and they would be up earlier because they had to get the bus. The primary school was on our grounds so they just had to go up the hill. It was a real flurry to try to get all of it done and we always tried to have three of us on duty so that somebody was doing the breakfast and somebody else was upstairs.

Mealtimes

27. We all had our own dining rooms and ours was just down by the front door. We had a big room there and we would all sit down to breakfast. We always had cereal or porridge and toast. We never had a fry on a weekday morning because we just wouldn't have had the time. Tea or coffee and then when they were finished, they would go and we would clear up because the thing was to get them to school on time.

28. There were four groups in the main house and they all had their kitchen. We didn't have our own kitchen so we got our food from the main kitchen. I think that's right. We actually had whatever the Sisters had because the kitchen prepared for both so our food was good. I mean it mightn't be maybe stuff that the children had been used to, I don't know but the food was good and solid and nicely presented.

29. My memory is that they were always hungry. They'd eat whatever it was they got but on a Saturday we always were a bit more lenient. We would have late breakfast and they would always have bananas because they loved bananas on toast and things like that. At the weekend we had the opportunity to have a more leisurely meal. It was what they wanted but during the week it would be a set meal for breakfast.

30. It was good food and you know very often they themselves were actually in control of it because they got very friendly with the kitchen Sister. They'd sit on the kitchen step and say to her "oh, can we?" and she would produce something for them so there was a bit of a con going on between them, I think. I think maybe the children in St Mary's were onto a better deal than some of the others, because they could influence what they were eating.

31. Initially the children would come home from school for lunch but later the secondary school children started having school dinners. We tended to have dinner at lunch time. They would come down for school at half past twelve. Then they would have their dinner and go back to school and again the same thing happened, it was the same meal that the Sisters would have.

32. After school, they had a cup of tea and a biscuit. Then they would have their tea in the evening. In the evenings, if they wanted something special, if we had time to do it, we would do it at that time. Tea would be bread and jam or maybe Cornish pasties or that sort of thing or sandwiches. We very often had fruit at that time.

33. For supper, just before bed time, we used to have biscuits and milk or something like that.

Bedtime

34. With the little ones, they could be going to bed by seven, half past seven. Then it would stagger to nine. The last one would probably go to bed at nine. That was on week days. At weekends they could stay up but we started having a thing where they had to earn, according to behaviour. You could stay up if you'd earned it and they loved to stay up to watch television because we had a telly and just to have a nice time.

Washing and bathing

35. Bath time was in the evenings so what they would do is they would have their bath and come into the television room. Bath time would be staggered. The younger ones we would start straight after supper and then after that the older ones would go and have a bath.

36. They would have about three or four baths a week but with the younger ones we used to give them more baths than the older ones. The older ones didn't always want one every night. If they were bed wetters, baths would be in the morning.

37. I remember once going to the doctor and asking the doctor if there was any way that we could help the children who wet the bed. He then started to tell me about it possibly being caused by their situation, that they are so upset and all of that. He also said to maybe watch their fluid intake. Not to give them drinks too late at night, that that might help but it didn't and I didn't really want to distress them because I think it was hard enough on them.

38. There wasn't a rule that children who wet the bed weren't to get drinks after a certain time in the evening because that would be unfair on them. There's a stigma attached to it. I did talk to the doctor about medication but he wouldn't advocate that.

39. Bed-wetting was just dealt with in the morning because we didn't have night people. If I got up in the morning, if they were awake and they wanted to have their bath at that time they could. They could change and sometimes that did happen but others would just sleep through. In the morning they would just take their sheets and put them in the washing machine and have their bath because it was just at the end of the corridor. The lay staff were not on call at night. It was only me that would have been on call. The lay staff were down in a place past the bathrooms but there was a door there that was closed and the children never went through that.

40. If anyone needed to use the toilet in the night they would just get up and go to the toilet. If they were ill or something they would knock at my door but if all they wanted to do was go to the toilet it was just around the corner and we would have the light on. The light was on at night so they would be able to see. They didn't need to get a key or anything.

41. Children were not made to wear their wet bed sheets or anything like that.

42. We had two baths, just ordinary, household-sized baths. We didn't have showers at that time. We would help the younger children to bathe but the older children would bathe themselves. They would do it later but they wouldn't go in the bath together, they wouldn't fit.

Leisure time

43. We had great grounds at Smyllum, we had a big yard at the back. Then we had a few further on and they all had their little friends among the other groups. They would meet out and they were always out to play particularly if the weather was good so we never had trouble with that.

44. Now the older children tend to be a little bit more bored, that kind of thing and they'd either want to watch television or, if they had friends in Lanark, they could meet up with them. We tried to make it as normal as possible. They could go to Lanark at the weekend or on a school day if they wanted to. Some of them would come home with their friends if they were coming by bus. Then they'd loiter and they'd only get in at tea time. Later on, after bath time, they would start watching television unless it was summer time and they'd be out in the grounds again.

45. We had our own television room. We had a small room at the top of the stairs at the beginning of our thing and then there was another room that we used to call the sewing room. If they wanted to do other things they went in there so the opportunity was there for them.

46. They used to hate having to do homework. We used to have them in the sewing room after school to see how much homework they had. Not a lot of them had homework in those days, not a lot.

47. To use the library, they would have to have gone down to Lanark. We would encourage them to join the library in Lanark. We had a few books but I wouldn't really say that we had a lot.

48. They all had their own toys. They had them all by their bed, they had drawers under their bed as well so they could put stuff into that and they had their wardrobe. If there was anything that was a prized possession or anything like that, we would take them and would lock them away for them. They knew that they could ask for that. We wouldn't take the children's possessions from them unless they asked us.

49. I don't think in my time there was an organised football team or anything like that. The boys would go out and they would just kick ball themselves but there was nobody organising that. I think prior to that there was but in my time there wasn't. There wasn't anything like that. They'd go out and they'd meet one another and they'd just kick ball among themselves or play hide and seek, that type of thing.

50. We had indoor games in our dining room which was a huge room. There were games and they used to like to watch television down there as well because there was more space. Maybe the young ones were annoying them upstairs. I think they tended to try and meet as groups as they got older and as I said before they would want to go to Lanark if there was anything on. There was a hut as well, there was a hut and I think

somebody used to come and show films. I can't remember who that was, somebody from outside would come in and show films in this place. It was just opposite our place.

51. None of our children ever went to the cubs, or Scouts, or anything like that.

Trips and holidays

52. There was a cinema in Lanark and swimming baths in Lanark and they went to that. Sometimes if it was in the holiday time we would take them further afield. We would take them to the seaside a lot. We would get them all into the mini bus and take them off and they loved things like that. We would bring picnics with us. At weekends we would often do things like that as well.

53. The minibus wasn't big enough for us to take everyone out at once so we would take so many one day and so many another day. That's how it would work out. We also had children who went out with people. We had two little girls and they went out regularly, every weekend with this couple. So a number of our children would go out with people.

54. They weren't relatives, they were people who would come and they would be assessed by Sister [REDACTED] EAL. I don't know what the assessment process was but she would vet them and they would take them out. She would dictate the parameters really and they would take them out on a Sunday maybe for an afternoon or some of them would go out but the children. The two little girls themselves would let us know what they wanted. They were very happy to go and they went on holidays as well.

55. We went to Girvan every year and they liked Girvan and we stayed in a school. We hired a school. It belonged to some order, it was very near the beach and they just loved it. We would take them during holiday time as well to other seaside places.

56. The farm had disappeared by the time I arrived in Smyllum. I heard talk of the farm but I had no knowledge of it.

Schooling

57. For my first two years I think it was run by my Sister [REDACTED] EAA and then Sister [REDACTED] EAL left and Sister [REDACTED] EAA replaced her in the house. She left but all our teachers then were lay people. They all came in to teach in the school. A number of them had been there for a good number of years. They knew the children well and they would take them out. If there were outings in the church that they could go on they would take them on those.

58. We used to go and see the teachers and the teachers would phone us. I mean it was only up the hill, there was a very good relationship between us. Miss Sweeney was there for years and years and the children were her own. She always told you and we would tell her if they were going to school upset for some reason.

59. The school was just for our children. All the teachers were registered teachers.

60. A number of the older children went to St. Mary's which was just across the bridge but down near Lanark, and some of them went to Motherwell. It depended really on their level of intelligence and where they could fit in best but a number of them went to St. Mary's. That then sadly closed and I think after that, that was after my time that it closed, after that they would all go to Motherwell.
61. The children weren't taught life skills like how to cook or budget or anything because there wasn't the time when they got home for that kind of thing.

Healthcare

62. We had a sister, Sister **FAM** I'm not sure about what her level of training was. She was an older sister and she had this little room. It was just along the corridor from all of us and she always sat in there. She was the one we would go to if there was somebody sick. Every Thursday, a lay person came in, Maureen something or other, and she was there and if you had any difficulty at all with the children medically you would go and see Maureen. She would assess whether the doctor would come or not but the doctor would come every fortnight in those days. Doctor Allan was the main doctor. He was excellent, and Dr Telford would replace him if he wasn't around, and they were great, great people.
63. There were routine health checks for the children. Sister **FAM** would keep detail of that and she would let you know when it was coming up so that happened regularly, on a regular basis. It happened when children first came to Smyllum.
64. If any children needed to go to hospital it would have been to Wishaw. I had never known any of them to go to hospital in my time but that would have been the local hospital to us.
65. There was a local dentist. I can't remember his name but he also owned the local cinema and he used to invite the children to the cinema regularly. He never saw the children in Smyllum. There was always an appointment made for the children to go to him. They would all get annual check ups.
66. Sister **FAM** would be in charge of keeping the children's medical records up to date. We didn't keep anything like that. She would tell us when they were due different things.
67. I don't remember keeping a day book or anything like that.

Deaths

68. During my time, there was one but the child didn't die in Smyllum. The child ran away with one of my children. The child who died wasn't in my group, they were in another group, St Joseph's. One of my children was with her. We used to have terrible trouble with mums telling us they were coming to see them and they wouldn't come. It was a terrible time and two of the children ran away and one of them was knocked down and died in hospital. The family then took care of it after that but that was very distressing for us.

69. Sister [REDACTED] AEG [REDACTED] was in charge of the child who died. The child in my group was [REDACTED] I knew [REDACTED] wasn't in the group and I guessed what had happened. I was going to phone the police. I went to talk to Sister [REDACTED] EAL [REDACTED] and I was going to phone the police and the other Sister [REDACTED] AEG [REDACTED] came down and told us that her child had also gone so we phoned the police then and we didn't hear for about an hour, an hour and a half. It only happened out by the Cartland Bridge which is not very far from Lanark. The child was taken to hospital because she hadn't died on site but she died that night. That was the only death during my time in Smyllum.
70. Sister [REDACTED] AEG [REDACTED] would have been responsible for sorting things out. I didn't have any involvement in speaking to her family or anything. The police didn't speak to me, they would have spoken to Sister [REDACTED] EAL [REDACTED] and Sister [REDACTED] AEG [REDACTED] because of the circumstances.
71. We tried to talk to the children individually about it rather than as a group. In my group, we talked the children individually about it because we felt that not all of them would have the same relationship with the other girl. They needed to hear from us about it so we did actually speak to them individually and felt they were OK. Whether that was right or wrong I don't know but we felt that they were OK and we monitored, we kept an eye on them for ourselves in our own group.

Religious instruction

72. Religious instruction was given at school. The Sisters had a church service every day. We would have it every day because we are Sisters. We could go to mass every day but the children would go on a Sunday and that went on for a while. We used to have benediction on a Friday and they went to that but they didn't like it and it broke in on our prayer time. I hated it because it's so difficult to manage them. So anyway, we talked about it and we stopped it. We stopped having Sunday mass as well so we just had weekday mass for us so the children didn't have to be involved in that. We said grace at some mealtimes.
73. Not all of the children were Catholic so you have to take account of that as well and respect it. Benediction and mass on a Sunday was mandatory before it was stopped.

Work

74. They would be expected to do the washing up after their meal. Not individually but, you know, everybody would help and it was a big room so somebody else would Hoover over it and that kind of thing. That would be an expectation for them to do that. We just expected them to keep their bedrooms tidy and if you have anything to do with teenagers you know that that doesn't happen so we would always have to keep the rooms tidy. We had somebody in that would do it.
75. We had carpets in most of the bedrooms upstairs. The big room downstairs didn't have carpet at the time but the staff would do the floors because it was a huge room.

76. The children got pocket money, but not much. They were encouraged to save it but they chose to do what they wanted to do and then they would get extra money when they were going on holiday. That's how it would work. They didn't get very much because we didn't get very much.
77. There wasn't a tuck shop for them to spend their pocket money in but Lanark was only ten minutes away so it was within walking distance for them.

Christmas and birthdays

78. We celebrated birthdays and we tried to give them gifts if we could. There would be a card, and a cake at tea time and if they had a friend in one of the other houses, they could bring them in. They didn't always do that but they could.
79. Christmas was always a great occasion because lots of people would give you stuff. They would give you nice things and you'd get gifts from different people. We would have money ourselves that we would have saved over the year and we would splash out on that so I always enjoyed Christmas because it was always lovely to see them. They would help with the decorating and the tree and all of that and it was a time of excitement and we always tried to do nice things on Christmas.

Visitors

80. Anybody that would come to see the children we would be delighted about and the time never mattered to us. If they came in the evening or at tea time or whatever. Even if they came at night when they were in their pyjamas it didn't matter because they would be able to join in. If they came and the room upstairs was available they would see them there or else they would see them in the dining room downstairs. We didn't have a lot of visitors and a lot of the families didn't come. Any family that was able I suppose took them home. We had one of two fathers maybe that came but other than that, we didn't have a lot but we would encourage them – we would say, "Oh, do come again. They love to see you". That's as much as you can do.
81. I can't say that I ever had correspondence with parents or extended family. They didn't get letters, a lot of the families wouldn't have been able to write but they were encouraged to phone and they could have got phone calls. They would need permission to use the phone. The phone was in the main work room because that was the nearest place for us to hear it ringing. But not all the parents would have a phone at the other end.
82. We had some fathers and they were excellent, they would visit regularly to their children but not everyone.
83. There was a group that used to come with gifts to give the children, I've forgotten who they are now. They used to come and then other people would come like parishioners would come from Lanark or people who knew the Sisters, especially around Christmas time. They would come with gifts and then they would want to see the children and they would stay a while chatting to them and that kind of thing.

Inspections

84. If we had them they didn't make a great impression on me because I don't remember them. I know that there were inspections but I can't honestly say.
85. I don't recall ever speaking to anyone who introduced themselves as an inspector. I can't remember if there were any inspectors who spoke to the children, or if they just spoke to Sister [REDACTED] EAL [REDACTED]
86. I don't remember ever getting any feedback from inspections. The only thing you might know is if the child was going to be moved on for some reason but I'm not sure would that have come out of the inspection or would that have come as a result of a phonecall.
87. Some social workers came but not many. Very often Sister [REDACTED] EAL [REDACTED] would phone them and say to them "look we're having a problem with [REDACTED] and eventually they might come but I have never known us to have a review of the children. Now, the social workers would come at different stages and they would just perhaps see how we were doing or have a chat to Sister [REDACTED] EAL [REDACTED] but they didn't come regularly.

Review of care/placement

88. I wasn't invited to participate in any reviews or anything. I think Sister [REDACTED] EAL [REDACTED] would be invited to them if there was going to be any. She would have good telephone conversations with the social workers. She would be in touch with them and if we were having difficulties, she would phone social work for us. I was never called upon to write a report or anything.

Access to children

89. We would have students who came from the college, I think it was Cardross, who were preparing to be priests and they would come to different groups. We actually had one and he came, I can't remember his name though, [REDACTED] something or other, and as a student he came but once he was a priest he didn't come back. He didn't have the time basically, but some of the groups would have students from some of those colleges and they would take an interest in the children and sometimes go on holiday. Some of them kept up. I've been asked about a Father [REDACTED] ADB [REDACTED] and a Father [REDACTED] ADC [REDACTED] but I didn't recognise either of those names. I don't know where they came from. They weren't in my time but there was the opportunity there for student priests to come and in a way they did a great service to them because they would take them out and do things with them. It was very much a monitored thing, in so far as we were able. The children liked that and if possible we loved to have them coming on holidays with us because it was extra people and they were able to do more things with them.
90. The [REDACTED] that was in my Smyllum in my time was [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED]. We never had anything to do with him because he was [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. He didn't in my time do anything with the children. He wasn't the scout leader or the one that took them on activities or anything

like that. Whether he did that before or after my time, I don't know. He had a key to the hut, but it wasn't used for things with the children in my time.

91. I don't know if there were checks of the people who had access to the children because it didn't affect my group, but Sister **EAL** was a very astute person and I would have thought that she would have checked but I don't know.

Discharge/life after Smyllum

92. Towards the end of my time I think we did have a process in place. You would have a meeting and very often the teachers were involved in that to see where the children might go or that kind of thing. Social services were also involved in that, they had to do the communication with the parents. We had another service that we developed in Wilton Street and the children could go there for further education and that was in Glasgow. So some of our children would have moved onto that, but not all of our children would have done that.

93. I didn't have anyone old enough to leave.

Discipline and punishment

94. If the children misbehaved I tended to take things from them. They couldn't watch television or they would have to help around the house on a Saturday morning, which they hated. Different things like that, that would be the type of punishment that I would mete out to them.

95. We would tend to go for the deprivation as punishment. Whether that was right or not, that was the one that we would go for more than the other.

96. I am not aware of corporal punishment being used.

97. There were no written codes of conduct for the children.

98. I've been asked what might lead a child to be punished. Sometimes they just would not do as they were told no matter how the staff were trying, they wouldn't and they made life difficult for the staff so that would be one thing that they would be punished for, because otherwise it could get out of hand. It was very often for being cheeky. By today's standards we would be more accepting, maybe, of the things that we would have punished them for but they could cause mayhem sometimes by their behaviour and that was the only control we had, we had no other control on that.

99. We often got them to help with the jobs as well, and they didn't like that either.

100. On some occasions, you'd stop pocket money. We were very limited really. Sister **EAL** would be the one that would come and talk to them and she managed to get round them but she would be the one that would have more sway with them that we would and they didn't like that to happen.

101. I couldn't say that my approach to discipline was the general approach in Smyllum but I know that was the one that we kind of used.

102. There was no punishment for wetting the bed, because the children couldn't do anything about that. We had talked to the doctor and there was nothing he could do either. I wasn't aware of punishment being given to bed wetters in other groups. The way the groups were, they were kind of very much on their own even though we were within the main house. So very often you wouldn't know what was going on. I didn't hear any reports.
103. With the benefit of hindsight, there is nothing that I can remember that I would consider to be abuse now that I saw at the time.
104. I can't say that I ever witnessed any form of corporal punishment being administered by any member of staff or other sisters, in relation to any child in Smyllum.
105. If there was a record kept of disciplinary measures handed out to the children in Smyllum, I knew nothing about it.

Abuse

106. I can't honestly say that I never saw any behaviour that gave me concern during my time at Smyllum, that I considered may have been abusive in relation to any interaction between any staff or visitors to the resident children during my time at Smyllum.
107. I have no recollection of ever hearing of anything during my time there. I have no recollection of ever hearing about anyone losing their temper, for instance.
108. I think if any child ever reported anything to me I would have done something about it. That would be my gut now.
109. I don't know if we had a procedure for children to raise concerns but I would immediately talk to Sister [REDACTED] EAL about it, that would be my first line of contact.
110. I've been asked if there was anyone who the children could talk to if they had any concerns. I don't really know but perhaps the teachers. They could have the teachers to talk to but we didn't have safeguarding officers like we would have today.
111. I've been asked if any bullying among went on among the children. The children would come in and say thing like "he is bullying" or "she is bullying out there", but it wouldn't come to anything. It wasn't real bullying, it was more play-acting amongst themselves.

Specific allegations

112. Allegations against unspecified persons have been made.
113. [REDACTED] alleges that a child was hit by a car after running away from me. Patricia Meenan wasn't in my group and she didn't have a lot to do with me. It was the girl that was with her that lived in our group so I don't know why she would have said that.

114. [REDACTED] has made an allegation about being forced to eat inedible food and drink sour milk. I just cannot believe that that would have happened. [REDACTED] and her sister [REDACTED] I think, were the ones that used to go out every two weeks with the couple out at Bellshill. They always seemed very happy with their lot. They went regularly to this couple and we didn't have too much trouble with them. The trouble we would have with [REDACTED] more than [REDACTED] was when the mother would say that she was coming and didn't come. It affected [REDACTED] more from what I could see at the time than her sister.
115. [REDACTED] has also made reference to being forced to share cold and filthy bath water with other children. To my knowledge now, that didn't happen.
116. She also referred to having her hair washed with Jeyes fluid, and her body washed with carbolic soap. Jeyes fluid, I don't if we've ever had it in the house. I don't know about carbolic soap. I am wondering if you know in the past you went to cash and carry and you got soap, it wasn't carbolic but it was different to what we have now. I am wondering if that's what it was, maybe. I don't know but hair was something that was very important to me and I always putting in ringlets so that's why that one doesn't kind of marry up for me. I don't have any recollection of using anything like Jeyes fluid or carbolic soap. That would smell.
117. [REDACTED] has also alleged that she was made to watch her sibling being beaten. I have no comment on that. I don't understand why she has said that.
118. She has also alleged that if she didn't finish her food she was given the same meal to eat at subsequent meal times, until it was finished. That wouldn't be a practice. It didn't ever happen, to my knowledge. She alleges force feeding, but I would deny that.
119. I remember [REDACTED] who was [REDACTED] sister. She refers to being forced to sit on sailors' knees and give them a kiss and a cuddle and being beaten if she refused. We did have sailors come but they were happy occasions. We couldn't have something like that.
120. I never told children at Smyllum that their siblings who had been moved on were in prison. I couldn't even tell you who was in prison belonging to them.
121. I am asked about [REDACTED] who says that she was forced to kiss my feet on a daily basis. The [REDACTED] came into us and there were eight of them. We didn't have space for them so we did the best we could. I got [REDACTED] she was the youngest. She was two. The [REDACTED] only stayed a short length of time because four of them went to live with the Sisters of Nazareth and then when they had space they took the rest so they weren't that long with us. I definitely did not make [REDACTED] kiss my feet on a daily basis. I don't think that I had any of [REDACTED] sisters.
122. I've been asked about [REDACTED]. She was related to the other [REDACTED] there were six of them in Smyllum at the time. [REDACTED] was troublesome at times but she was the one most upset when the mother didn't turn up. She was the one that was involved with the girl that ran away. The mother would say she was coming and it

really affected her badly. I never disciplined her about it because she was hurting. I don't remember disciplining her on any occasion.

123. [REDACTED] says that she had to wear shoes that were too big for her. That wouldn't have happened. People would have seen that they were too big for her.
124. I've been asked whether I have any explanation for why these allegations have been made when I have no knowledge of them. I don't know why these allegations have been made.
125. I've been asked whether it is possible that the passage of time has affected my recollection. This is a possibility, but as this moment in time I have no recollection.

Allegations against other Sisters or staff

126. [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] In my time, [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] didn't have anything to do with the children except they would meet him out in the garden. I had no recollection of [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] having anything to do with the children. [REDACTED]
127. I never heard anything about the children being frightened of [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED]. I never heard anything about [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] bathing children in San Izal, causing their skin to burn. The [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] I knew had nothing to do with the children. [REDACTED]
128. I was never aware of [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] belting the children. Whether that's after my time or not I don't know but definitely in my time he had nothing to do with them. I knew the kind of era it was, maybe.
129. I've been asked about the [REDACTED] family. I remember the sister, [REDACTED]. She wasn't in my group, but I remember her. I don't remember the boys. I'm told that [REDACTED] AAF [REDACTED] was in Smyllum during my time but I don't remember him well. He was upstairs in the top group and [REDACTED] was there as well. [REDACTED] AAF [REDACTED] has made an allegation that [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] knocked him unconscious for being out of bounds in the orchard, but there was no orchard in Smyllum when I was there.
130. [REDACTED] AAF [REDACTED] has also alleged that children were struck with golf balls by [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] and injured. I don't remember that. That's a shocking thing and I would have remembered that. I think the [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] I knew is not the [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] I'm being asked about.
131. I've been asked if I ever saw [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] with the children. If we were outside, he would be [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] and that kind of thing but he wouldn't be with the children. [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] wouldn't be one that they were running round with or anything like that because he had a job to do and he was doing it.
132. I don't know why these allegations are being made about [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED]. I am quite shocked to think something like that was going on, that we weren't aware of it if it was in my time. If these things were happening, I would have expected that the house mother would have learned about it, the person in charge, because if something happened to

the child, the child would be upset and I would expect that they would know about it. But it didn't filter to us.

133. [ADF] (carer). We did have a [ADF] but not in my unit. She was in an outside house. Her surname might have been [ADF] but I don't know. She is the only [ADF] I remember. She was in an outside house that you could see from my unit. She left, I think, about the same time I did. I don't know too much about her because she wasn't that long there when I was there.

134. She seemed to get on very well with the children. She had a lot of boys in that house. They weren't all boys but she had a lot of boys and she seemed to get on reasonably well with them.

135. All I can say is I think she was strict. You know when you hear children talking, that's what they would say, that she was strict. What that meant I don't know.

136. I've been asked if I saw her interacting with the children. Her house was away from ours and I suppose the actual day to day, we wouldn't know about it unless some of our children were friendly with the children in her house and they would talk. But I don't think that happened, our children didn't seem to be friendly with that house.

137. Miss [IAQ] I have never heard of a Miss [IAQ] I would need to know the house that she belonged to but I just have no notion of who Miss [IAQ] is. I've only heard her name mentioned recently.

138. [REDACTED] I remember [REDACTED] He has been mentioned as being the Scout leader, but he wasn't. He worked in the chemist and he came as a volunteer to one of the houses, St Kentigern's and he was there all of the time that I was there. [ADE] [ADE] was in charge of St Kentigern's. I don't know who replaced her.

139. He came in and did things with the children. I never observed him with the children.

140. Miss [ACV] [ACV] was with us in St Mary's for maybe the first year and a half or two years and then she left to get married. She came back to another group, maybe two years later.

141. I thought she got on very well. In our group, I thought the children liked her and if complaints have come from our group I am very surprised about it. She was always very nice to them. She was young and she would do things with them.

142. Sister [AEG] Sister [AEG] was upstairs. She was strict, I would have said, but I thought she got on very well with her children, she seemed to be very fair and I would have thought the children liked her but that doesn't marry up with the allegations that have been made about her. She was there before I went and after I left.

143. If you wanted anyone to help out or anything you would ask [AEG] and her staff seemed to get on very well with her.

144. I can't say that I saw her interact with the children. We would meet as Sisters in the community room and we would chat and go shopping together and that kind of thing but I can't say I saw her with the children.
145. I definitely didn't see her disciplining the children.
146. There are references to her beating children with belts and clothes brushes and so on. I never heard anything about this. I think I worked in a different place.
147. I am just so surprised about the allegations against her. The allegations about bed wetting would all have taken place within her own group so unless I was there I wouldn't know about any of that. I don't remember any discussion about any of the things alleged to have happened.
148. Some of the children in her group were quite vocal and I'm surprised we didn't hear something. The children talk and they would say "Oh, did you hear?", so that's what surprises me about it.
149. The children would talk. They could tell you a lot of stuff. They would come in and say "What do you think?".
150. The allegations made against [REDACTED] AEG just seem to refer to someone who's totally different to the Sister I know.
151. Sister [REDACTED] HBP I don't know a Sister [REDACTED] HBP I think Sister [REDACTED] HBP wasn't there in my time. I have a funny feeling, this might be wrong, that I replaced Sister [REDACTED] HBP Sister [REDACTED] HBP definitely wasn't in Smyllum when I went there.
152. Sister [REDACTED] BAH I think I have heard of Sister [REDACTED] BAH but she was not in Smyllum when I was there.
153. Sister [REDACTED] AFU I don't know anything about Sister [REDACTED] AFU
154. Sister [REDACTED] AHO I knew Sister [REDACTED] AHO She's dead now. She worked with Sister [REDACTED] and I think she was strict too but any more than that I don't know about. I never observed her with the children. All I know is that she was strict, she had a lot of boys.
155. **Unnamed nuns.** I don't remember a cane ever being used by anyone at Smyllum.
156. There is an allegation children weren't allowed to speak to the social worker on their own. If a social worker came to see a child, they would be given time with the child. You would speak to them, but leave them to it. If they wanted time alone they would have it. In a way, in those visits, the social worker was in control.
157. There is an allegation that one of the Sisters removed her clothing from her top and held a boy to her chest. I just find it so hard to believe that could have happened. I haven't heard of anything like that happening.

158. There are allegations of force feeding and making children eat their own vomit. I've never heard about that happening.

159. There is an allegation about the nun in charge of St Kentigern's. During my time in Smyllum that was [REDACTED] ADE [REDACTED] The allegation is that a child witnessed her and another nun in an embrace and was beaten to unconsciousness for having witnessed that. We'd have heard about that, if that had happened in my time. These things filter through. We'd have heard about it. St Kentigern's children followed on from St. Mary's.

160. I don't know why these allegations are being made. It is possible that the passage of time has affected my recollection, but I am so shocked by some of the allegations that I doubt that I would have forgotten them.

Prior statements

161. I have given a statement to the solicitors acting for the Order, but in addition to that I have given no other statements about my time in Smyllum.

162. I have never been questioned about my time in Smyllum or Smyllum in general, and have never been interviewed by the police or anything. I have no knowledge of the police ever investigating my time in relation to Smyllum.

163. In fact my time at Smyllum was very happy. My memories of Smyllum are of a very happy time. In my statement to the Order's solicitor I said that people would come in and say that Smyllum was a happy place. Often visitors pick up atmosphere quicker than those there. I still think that's true.

164. My recollection of Smyllum is very different to the account you've given me based on the allegations. I must have been either blind or deaf.

165. I didn't have any cause to report any concerns that I may have had during my time at Smyllum, either at the time or subsequently. In fact, I was very upset at leaving it.

166. I can't think of anything that, with the benefit of hindsight, I should have reported. Procedures were very different.

167. With the benefit of hindsight, we would have more procedures, more systems in place but we didn't then. Listening to what I've been asked about today I would say that safeguarding would be an issue, but then we didn't have that kind of thing in those days so it's kind of looking back with today's knowledge.

Records

168. I think the records that were kept, were kept by Sister [REDACTED] EAL [REDACTED] or sister [REDACTED] EAA [REDACTED] after her. I don't know where they would have been kept, but I suspect they would have been in the Superior's office.

169. Whatever records we would have would have gone to Mill Hill. When a house closes, records would go to Mill Hill.

Closing remarks

170. I haven't any idea why the Inquiry has received so many allegations from numerous sources.

171. I wasn't aware of any of it, so I can't say anything about the continuing impact on the residents of things that they say happened to them in Smyllum. I can't say that that didn't happen because that has been reported, I am saying that I had no knowledge of it.

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.

AGD

Signed..



Dated.....

29-09-2017