

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

Sister [REDACTED] LHW

Support person present: No

Others present: Ailis McKeown, Solicitor, Donnelly & Wall Solicitors

1. My name is Sister [REDACTED] LHW My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1934. My contact details are known to the inquiry.
2. My name at birth was [REDACTED] LHW When I first joined the Order of Sisters of Nazareth I was known as [REDACTED] LHW and did not use the second name. The Superior General when I first joined the Order saw my middle name and laughed. She asked me if I would like to adopt [REDACTED] as my middle name and I agreed, so I then changed my name to [REDACTED] LHW After the first year in the Order, I was professed and took my vows and took the name [REDACTED] LHW but this was in reality mainly shortened to [REDACTED] LHW I have now reverted to my birth name and have been known as Sister [REDACTED] LHW for the last ten years.

### The Sisters of Nazareth

3. I joined the Order, the Sisters of Nazareth, in 1960. I have had several postings and roles within the Order. In 1962 I went to Plymouth and from there moved to our house in Finchley and trained in a local college as a nursery nurse at Tottenham for two years. I was then posted to Swansea for five years to work with young children from babies to two years old. I loved this work. Most of these babies went back to the care of their parents or they were adopted.

4. I was then moved to Southend and did another course in taking care of children and worked there for about six years before being moved on to Oxford to help out there for a very short time. Then, in 1977, I moved to Bonnyrigg, Edinburgh in Scotland and spent two years there working with the children before moving to Cardonald, Glasgow in 1979. I stayed there until 1985.
5. I'm not sure where I was posted after Glasgow, but think it was Southend again for six years. Then I was sent onto Cardiff for three years, before Sligo in the Irish Republic for three or four years. After that, I was sent to Derry in Northern Ireland for six or seven years, and after that I returned to England again. I now live in a Nazareth House in England where I do voluntary work in the parish.
6. Immediately before my posting to Cardiff I stopped working with children and went to a hospital in Cheltenham for training in working with older people. Despite this, when I was in Derry I was asked to work with children again as that was where they needed help. I went back to working with older people after my posting to Derry.
7. With regards to qualifications, I attended a college in Tottenham Court Road, London for two years in nursery nursing. I then trained at another college later on in working with older children. When I was about 21, I went to Dublin to study a Theology course for my own benefit.

### **Nazareth House Children's Home, Bonnyrigg**

8. I was asked to go there in 1977 and I was happy to be posted to Bonnyrigg. I loved doing childcare work. I am from a big family so was used to lots of children anyway. There was no formal interview for the post or background checks back then, like they do now. On arrival at the home, I had my role explained to me by my superior. There was no training or induction offered and I went into the post with my eyes closed and hoped everything worked out for the best. I never had a problem with the children and nothing to worry about.

9. It was a beautiful house with lovely grounds. WE were near to a village rather than a big town. It was a lovely place and I was happy to be there. There was a purpose-built place for the children and well-kept. They had nice bedrooms and bathrooms, and there were large grounds and playgrounds. I cannot now recall much else about the grounds. Within the house there were no dorms for the children and instead they slept in small bedrooms. There were two or three groups of children, and each sister had their own group. I had one allocated to me. There were twelve to fourteen children in my group. Family members were kept together within the groups, unlike they had in the past when siblings were separated.
10. The children had their own dining area and a big play area. They had a big TV in their sitting room. Their facilities were better than I had as a child at home and the children were well looked after and provided for.
11. With regard to staff structure, there were child care workers for each group, made up of domestic staff to keep the place clean and tidy, and caring staff. There were roughly six staff members per group, this included one sister and three care workers and two or three domestic staff members. They did cleaning, laundry and shopping for the individual groups. The staff members reported to me and we worked together as a team. We were accountable generally to social workers, and I was accountable to my Mother Superior who at the time was Sister [REDACTED] LNE She was a lovely, kind person. As to other people who worked at Bonnyrigg, I cannot recall any staff names just now.
12. In total I had charge of between ten and fourteen children. The three sisters who had charge of the individual groups had similar numbers of children. There was also another two sisters who had care of children based in the separate main house. They were mixed sex groups, and there was not necessarily an even split between boys and girls in the groups. They aged from four to five years old up to fifteen year olds. They would stay at Nazareth House for different periods of time, depending on the different family circumstances. There were reviews held by social workers and the children might go back to their own home to live with their parents.

13. My group was based in the downstairs section in Bonnyrigg. I do not recall the name of the group of children I had. My role was to be in charge of my group and ensure the children were looked after properly. I would be doing housework and I reported to social workers if there was a problem, and they would come in to visit as a result. I also had a religious life outside of the home. I slept in a room that was in the group area, next door to the children's bedrooms.
14. When a child first arrived at the home they would be brought in by the social workers. They would be introduced to staff members. I would try and make them feel at home and help them settle in. I would introduce them to the other children. We did our best to ensure they were happy and had toys to play with, just as they would in their own homes.
15. With regard to the children's clothing and shoes, the Mother Superior gave us the money to purchase school uniforms and we went out to buy them. Outside of school, they wore their own clothes if they were suitable, or we bought them clothes. There was a central laundry and a smaller laundry allocated to our own group of children in the home. Their shoes were polished by staff or I did it, if necessary. The older children might have done their own.

### **Routine at Nazareth House, Bonnyrigg**

#### *Mornings and bedtime*

16. The children would be woken up at about 7.30 am for school. They then had a shower or bath and put their school uniform on before breakfast and then off to school.
17. The children slept in bedrooms, not dormitories. There were two or three children to a bedroom. They had a wardrobe and chest of drawers for their own belongings and the rooms were furnished like ordinary bedrooms, like I had in my own house. The children went to bed in the evenings at times in accordance with their age. The youngest would be first at around 7.30 pm or 8 pm, after hot drinks and baths.

*Bedwetting*

18. There may have been one or two children who wet the bed overnight, but I don't recall any issues. In which case the child would be showered or bathed, and their sheets would be put into the laundry basket. I was on hand for anything that was needed. No fuss would be made about it. The staff did not sleep overnight in the house, but I did, so I was on-call if anyone was sick in the night. The children were free to get up in the night if they needed to use the toilet. The staff came in at 7.30 am for duty.

*Mealtimes / Food*

19. For breakfast, there would be cereal or porridge available to eat, along with fruit and boiled eggs. There were no fried breakfasts.
20. The food was very good, and we had chefs in the main kitchen who made the meals for us and it came over on hot trolleys from the central building. I made tea and toast in the evenings in our own unit, but did not make the meals otherwise. We baked birthday cakes in our own group kitchen.
21. We had our own dining room in the group with three or four different tables. The children sat where they liked to eat. They were not forced to eat the food if they didn't like it. There was no force feeding. They were offered a variety of food and could get what they wanted, and were better off and had more choice than they would have in their own homes.

*Washing / bathing*

22. The older children could do their own baths and the staff looked after the younger children. If they had a wet bed, they would have a bath or shower in the morning. If not, the child could have a shower or a wash, whatever they preferred. Each child would have a bath sometime during the week and they could have one every night if they wanted.

*School*

23. The children went to the local secondary schools, I can't recall the names. There was a driver who worked for everyone in the home who took them to school in a mini bus, and they walked home in the afternoon. We had non-Catholic children in the home who went to their own school. We attended parents evening and open days at the schools.
24. Staff would take children to the library outside of the home if they need help with learning to read. Myself and the staff helped the children with their homework if they were struggling. This was done in the dining room as the sitting room had the TV in it.
25. We didn't do any teaching in the home, such as skills for life after leaving care. That would be for the social workers to do.

*Leisure*

26. After school, the children went to the local park to play football and the staff took them. They were also taken into the local town to the shops if needed, and on weekends and staff would accompany them.
27. The children had a TV to watch in the sitting room in the evenings and there was a room with a snooker table in it. They also had books to read, we didn't have a library as such, but there were books in the cupboard. There was a library outside, in the town and they could be taken there to help them with learning to read. There were also games and toys available for them.
28. The children had two rabbits and there were birds in a cage. Also, at one point there was a dog but it went missing after the children went out to a Christmas party. I don't recall any after-school clubs, but the older children were able to go out to the

pictures or visit the shops. They had their own friends from school who could come into the home to play.

#### *Trips / Holidays*

29. The children went on a holiday to Dunbar once a year and a local lady came in to do the cooking for us. Also, they had day trips out to do things like ice skating and to see shows on the ice. This was funded by members of the public who donated money. People were very good to us.

#### *Birthdays and Christmas*

30. The children had a lovely Christmas, and staff dressed up as Santa Claus to give out presents. There was a Christmas tree and decorations. People from outside who were regarded as friends of Nazareth House, brought in toys for the children. The children went out to parties with friends from school. They had everything they wanted. We had birthday parties and baked birthday cakes and generally tried to make life as normal as possible for the children.

#### *Visits / Inspections*

31. We had inspectors who came in to the home. I don't recall if there was a visitors book. The children had their own visitors and were given toys by the visitors to keep. Children had visits from their own family members after school and on Saturdays. Some parents had issues, and I recall one set of separated parents who were alcoholics. The dad came in by himself and was drunk. I talked him out of seeing his children when he was like that. He agreed to come in the next day and stay with his children in the evening instead of going to a bar. I went to court and said he should have care of the children, and they went back to visiting the dad after school and on a Saturday so the dad could take them out. I liaised with social work and the parents, and the staff helped too, in order to organise the visits.

32. With regard to inspections, we had notice and I have no idea where they came from. They were quite exacting on the details. They checked the children's rooms. I had no bad report. I'd get feedback. The inspections were twice per year, maybe three times at most. The inspectors spoke to me and all the staff members and spoke to the children, individually by themselves. I don't recollect any written reports as a result of the inspections. I do not recall any follow-ups after the inspections. They seemed to be checking the premises and the children's care generally and not really checking on particular children. When social workers came into the home they spoke to the children by themselves. They came in quite frequently and often unannounced.
33. I recall an inspector who was astonished at how well maintained the rooms were in our section. He expected there to be holes in the walls of the sitting room from children throwing balls and was surprised to see the wall was unmarked.
34. The social workers would also review a child's placement in Nazareth House through meetings in their own office and not in Nazareth House itself. I attended those meetings to report my views. If the parents were fit to take care of their children they would go back home. Siblings were placed in the same group in the house. That didn't happen years ago. If parents didn't visit their children, or if they couldn't, we would have to tell the children that they weren't coming and why. On one or two occasions I ended up taking children to their parents' house to ensure the visit happened. Perhaps the parents felt guilty about not being able to take care of the child at home. The children were happy to see their parents were well but were glad to come back to Nazareth House after their visit.
35. With regard to unsupervised access to the children, that would only be myself, staff members and trainee sisters. Priests rarely came in to see the children as if they came into the house they were mainly there to see me. I don't recall anyone from the local community coming in to see the children. Myself or a staff member would sit in on any medical examinations.



*Healthcare*

36. I was good at looking after the children's health. A doctor came in every Tuesday to see the children as a matter of routine, and we could call on the doctor from a local surgery to come out anytime we needed them. If hospital treatment was required, there was one nearby. The children had dental care from a local practice and also had free glasses if necessary. They were well looked after. There was no nurse on site in my section at Bonnyrigg, although there may have been one based in the main building, in the care home.
37. There were no deaths amongst the children when I was at Bonnyrigg and I have no idea what the procedure would be for dealing with a death.

*Religion*

38. There was no religious instruction at the home as that was the church's business and would also happen at school. I took the children to church every Sunday morning and they took first communion and confirmation. The children would be expected to go to church when they were told. We also took the non-Catholic children to their own churches too.

*Chores*

39. The children did not have chores to do like polishing floors and cleaning. They had to make their own beds and tidy their rooms, and they helped out with things like clearing the dining tables and drying crockery.

*Personal possessions*

40. The children had their own toys and were able to keep the toys and clothes that they had when they first came into Nazareth House.

*Discipline*

41. With regard to discipline and rules of behaviour, I told the children what any mother would tell them. I can't think of anything I did other than as a carer of children in setting boundaries. I told them not to wreck the house. There was no particular set of rules that I gave them. If a child didn't behave I would scold them and report serious issues to social workers. I would phone the social worker about disturbed behaviour such as children hitting each other, disturbed behaviour or running away. The children were grounded if they ran away, and some did abscond. We had to go out looking for them in the car and bring them back ourselves or they would be found by the police and brought back. I would ground them for the next week so they weren't allowed outside of the home. I gave them a verbal telling off. Sometimes children ran away just for the fun of being chased by a nun. I don't know how often I had to ground children or tell them off. There was probably a written record kept of the children who ran away and the punishment, it would be in the archives now.
42. I have been asked if I ever saw behaviour towards children that was abusive and wrong. I don't recall ever seeing it. If a child was abused or mis-treated, they could confide in a social worker. I don't know who the child could confide in outside of the home as I can't recall it ever happening. Within the home, a child could speak to a social worker or myself. I don't recall it happening. I only once ever saw something unacceptable that I reported and it had nothing to do with Nazareth House.

**Abuse at Nazareth House, Bonnyrigg**

43. I have been advised that children who stayed at Nazareth House, Bonnyrigg, have made allegations of abuse against a member of the Order, Sisters of Nazareth. No allegations have been made against me at this location and I have not been the subject of a police complaint nor have I been subject of a civil action.

Sister [REDACTED] LTX

44. I do not want to discuss the allegations made against Sister [REDACTED] LTX. She has had a very bad time. I went on holiday with Sister [REDACTED] LTX once when we took a group of children away, I never worked with her. She was a very good sister who has had a hard time. She would never do any harm to a child. She was so loving to the children. I know allegations were made about her and I am very disturbed by it. She was based in another house in Bonnyrigg when I was there, and we lived there as a community so I knew her well, she had a similar role to me. I've never seen her ever doing anything to any child or even raise her voice. She has had a hard time. It has destroyed her life. She was a lovely nun and a gentle person who never raised her voice.

### **Records**

45. When I left Bonnyrigg the records of the children would have been kept for the next person in my post. There would have been records kept in the group house to record a child coming into the home and being discharged, along with care plans and details of inspections. There would also have been a record of children running away and their being grounded. Health issues that were serious would also have been recorded and a doctor's visit. The record book would have been kept in one single A4-sized hardback book that was accessed by myself and staff members only. The records would have been sent to Hammersmith eventually to be kept in the archives.
46. I have not given a statement about my time in Bonnyrigg before this one. I have never given a statement to solicitors or to the police or reported anything to them. I don't recall the police visiting Bonnyrigg when I was there with regard to a complaint about behaviour towards a child. I have not given evidence in any criminal proceedings regarding my time in Bonnyrigg.

### **Leaving Nazareth House, Lasswade**

47. I left Bonnyrigg sometime in 1979 to go to the Nazareth House in Cardonald, Glasgow.
48. When children were leaving the Nazareth House to live elsewhere, their names would be written in a discharge book and parents or social workers would sign to say they had taken them. If a child was leaving care we would talk to them about going back to their parents.

### **Nazareth House, Cardonald**

49. I transferred to Cardonald, Glasgow in 1979. Again, there was no formal interview as such and I was asked to move there. I helped open the brand new bungalow that was purpose built for the care of children. I was asked to go there because another sister who was initially meant to go there, was unable to go. I loved it there. It accommodated up to twenty children, but I had around twelve to fourteen children in my group. I went back to visit the site six years ago and it was so run down, and the bungalow has since been demolished. It was in the grounds of Cardonald. The convent was facing it, but at some distance away and the residential care home building was some distance away too.
50. There was a big kitchen in the main house with chefs to make the meals for everyone. There was also a central big laundry, and a smaller laundry room in the bungalow for our own group. There were other children, carers and Sisters in the main house
51. The care of the children was organised in a similar way to how it was in Bonnyrigg. There were between four and six staff on duty at a time, on a three monthly rota. There were domestic and care worker staff. They did a course run by the social workers from outside of Nazareth House to become care workers. My role was to oversee the running of the bungalow and the work of the carers and domestic staff. Their roles were separate. I was overseen by the Mother Superior at the time and I

recall that was Sister Martel. I had the care of around twelve children in the bungalow and the group was mixed between boys and girls. They were aged between four and fifteen years of age. I cannot recall how many children would have been resident in Cardonald as a whole. I believe the care of the other children would have been arranged into similar groups of between twelve and fourteen children. I think there would have been three groups of children, including my own.

### **Routine**

52. We knew what we were doing and what was expected of us. I had also done the social work course in Southend. I slept in a room next door to the children, and I was the person who was responsible for them overnight as the staff went home at night. If a child needed to get up in the night, they were free to do so.
53. When children were admitted to Cardonald, social workers brought the child into the bungalow who would then be introduced to the staff who would try to settle the child in. The procedure with regard to clothes and shoes was similar to Bonnyrigg. They wore their own clothes and we bought some more to fit them from the local shops. They also had a school uniform to wear. The daily routine was very much as it would be in their own homes, up for breakfast, school, home, out to play, meal, TV, homework and bed. We made things as homely as possible for them.
54. The children slept in bedrooms, rather than in dorms. There were two boys or two girls to a bedroom and there were single rooms for the older children. Siblings would be kept together if of the same gender.

### *Food*

55. The food was cooked in the main kitchen by the chefs. The food was lovely and of good quality. We had all mod cons. We had our own dining room in the bungalow. Any child who refused to eat the meal would be offered different food to eat.

*Bedwetting*

56. There were very few, if any, young children who wet the bed and if anyone did at the odd time they would be washed or bathed in the morning. The sheets were put in the laundry basket and it was done without fuss. It was a similar routine to how it was in Bonnyrigg.

*Leisure*

57. The children had a snooker room and there were shops around Nazareth House to go to spent pocket money. It was a more central location than Bonnyrigg. There were parks and activities. We trusted them to go out to the pictures or the shops by themselves. They also had the grounds to play football or other games in. I don't recall any outside clubs that they were involved in. The children had access to books, toys and games.

*Washing and bathing*

58. The children mostly washed and bathed themselves, and if they couldn't, the staff or myself would take care of them.

*School*

59. The children went to schools that were off-site. Some of our Sisters taught in schools outside of Cardonald. The children were mixed and some were of no faith. We tried to put some faith into them, but it didn't work. The children went to different schools in accordance with their beliefs and staff would attend open days and parents evenings.
60. They had a dining room and a sitting room in the bungalow for doing homework. We tried to give them skills and training for adult life. I recall one girl aged fourteen or fifteen years who was not very bright and a bit lazy who was not going back to her family. She needed to find something to do in the future as she couldn't continue to

live at Nazareth House. I spoke to her, and helped her decide to do a nursery nursing course as I had done. She did the course for two years and enjoyed it. I took her tea and toast every morning to make sure she was up to attend her college course. She stayed in her own single bedroom in the home, with her own furniture. She qualified in nursery nursing and turned out well. She had a difficult brother and a sister [REDACTED].

### *Trips*

61. There were annual holidays to the seaside in Girvan. The children loved it and they had great fun there. The children had their own pocket money, and I encouraged them to save it up so they could spend it on their holiday and if they ran out of money they could come to me. The property in Girvan was a homely old fashioned house and was in good order, and located close to the sea.

### *Christmas and birthdays*

62. We had great Christmases at Cardonald with a tree and everything. The children went out to parties that were organised by a local taxi company. When a child had a birthday, everyone would get together and we would bake them a cake with candles for the child to blow them out.

### *Medical treatment*

63. I remember there was a doctor who came into the home every two weeks to see the children routinely. If anyone was ill outside of that routine, the doctor would come out to the home. We never had to go out to a hospital with any of the children in my time at Cardonald. There was also dental care available at a local dentist practice.

### *Religious instruction*

64. As in Bonnyrigg, religious instruction was the responsibility of the church. The children attended their first communion and we ensured they were prepared for that

event and knew what to do. The teachers would do the same. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, if a child did not want to go to church they were told to go, it was an obligation.

#### *Chores*

65. The children did not do scrubbing of floors or cleaning. They were encouraged to clear the tables after meals, and help out with washing up and drying plates. They didn't have much more to do.

#### *Personal possessions*

66. The children had their own space in their bedrooms for their own belongings, and there was a wardrobe and a dressing table. They had their own purses to keep their own pocket money in.

#### *Visits/inspections*

67. Parents might come to visit and they were encouraged to come to see their children. It was mainly arranged by social workers. Parents were always made welcome, and we encouraged children to phone their parents. With regard to inspections, I cannot recall any, but am sure that it happened. Social workers came in through their own arrangements to see children, and for review of the care placements. The arrangements were similar to those in Bonnyrigg and we would attend meetings outside of Nazareth House in the social work offices.
68. With regard to unsupervised contact with the children, there was someone called Joe Duffy who came into the bungalow at weekends. I had no idea that anything unforeseen was going on. I am aware of the things that have happened to him since and I would not like to enlarge on that. There were no volunteers with access to the children.



*Deaths*

69. There were no deaths amongst the children in my care in the time I was at Cardonald, and I cannot comment on what the procedure would be for dealing with that.

*Discipline and punishment*

70. Certain behaviour within the establishment was not acceptable. If we thought behaviour went beyond what was generally accepted by the institution we would correct the children, and I would speak to them. I told the child that I loved him or her and cared for them, and was correcting them because I thought about their future life. I would try to put myself in their place as a child whose parents did not take care of them. There could be very serious reasons for them coming into the home. I remember a child sobbing his heart out in front of me, and there were some sad cases. I tried to be motherly towards them, and this may have meant hugs and kisses sometimes. The staff members did the same and some were mothers themselves.
71. In terms of managing a child who mis-behaved, as a group we would get together to discuss how to deal with him or her. We had no locks on doors and could not lock children in their rooms, and would try to reason with them instead and send them to bed with peace of mind. We might ground them for things like stealing from shops as they were old enough to be responsible and allowed out by themselves. I remember one time when we were on holiday in Girvan, some older children had been out by themselves and afterwards, at bedtime, a key ring dropped out of a child's pocket. I found that there was about £60 of stolen stuff in the children's pockets. Things they didn't need like staplers and adult's sunglasses, not even chocolate. I phoned the police and asked for them to come in to speak to the children. The policeman came to speak to the children and gave them a telling-off, and the children returned the items to the shop. The children were grounded, and the last night party was cancelled. I said to them the next year, "don't you dare steal from shops again". They told me how they had done it and it was shocking to hear.

72. I never used physical punishment on a child, I would shout at them. Smacking children was normal in those days and I might have slapped the back of a child's hand, but I never physically beat a child. I saw unacceptable behaviour towards a child in another house, I don't want to say where and it does not concern Cardonal. It was dealt with and the staff member was dismissed. If I saw behaviour myself that I was concerned about, I would have approached social workers. If a child in my group had fears they wanted to confide in someone, they could have approached me or a staff member.

### Abuse

*Joanne Peacher(nee Thompson)*

73. I understand an allegation has been made against me by Joanne Peacher (nee Thompson) who was placed in care at Cardonald when I worked there. She was in care at Cardonald from 12/01/1979 to 26/01/1979 and from 06/08/1980 to 20/12/1981. She says that she remembers a boy saying to her "Don't believe in Sister LHW She'll hit you because she hit me". Joanne has gone on to say the boy told her Sister LHW hit him on the back of his head, and Joanne herself says she never saw Sister LHW doing anything like that.
74. I cannot recall Joanne Peacher now, with the passage of time I could have forgotten her. I remember some of the children's names, but I don't know her name. I do not recall hitting a boy on the back of the head, or who the boy might be or hitting any child on the back of the head. I can offer no insight into why a boy said such a thing about me. If it had happened it would be physical abuse, but I did not do it.
75. Joanne Peacher who was in care at Cardonald from 12/01/79 to 26/01/79 and from 06/08/1980 to 20/12/1981 has alleged "When I was 8, Sister LHW was away at a conference. LFW was in charge of the bungalow. I was out in the snow playing with another girl. LFW shouted 'Come in here, you.' She whacked me

with a stick 3 or 4 times on my ankle bone. She hit the other girl on her back. LfV LfV had told me not to say anything. She told me to say I'd fallen. I couldn't move my foot. Sister LHW came back later that day, I was limping and she asked what had happened. My ankle was swollen. I told her I'd fallen and twisted my ankle. Sister LHW took me up to the hospital. She phoned my mum, and my mum came as well. I told the doctor my ankle had given way in the snow. They said I had a fractured ankle. The doctor said it wasn't a twisting injury and it looked like I'd been hit with something. Sister LHW kept asking what happened. I kept saying I'd fallen. I think Sister LHW knew I was lying because she kept asking me. I was too scared to say anything. Sister LHW went to the toilet. My mum asked me who had done it. I told her, LfV hit me with a stick'. I asked her not to tell Sister LHW because I thought I'd get into more trouble. She told me I wouldn't. They put my foot in plaster. My mum came back to the home with me. Everybody was asking me if they could sign the plaster. LfV was in the kitchen. My mum grabbed her and said 'if you touch my daughter again you're going to get arrested'. Then my mum punched her in the face. Sister LHW pulled my mum off her and then went to have tea with my mum. I went to my bed because my ankle was sore. LfV came said sorry to me. I said 'it's okay, but just don't do it no more.' She said 'I promise I won't'. After that, she was closer to me than normal and being friendly. It didn't feel right - she was just being too close". I have no knowledge of this girl hurting her ankle or of taking a child to hospital. The name LfV also does not ring any bells for me.

LCY

76. I understand an allegation has been made against me by LCY who was in care at Nazareth House, Cardonald from 1979 to /1984. She has said in her statement, "The nun in charge of the little house was Sister LMQ and the nun in charge of the bungalow was Sister LHW There were no other nuns that were responsible for us. I remember Sister LHW stayed with us in the bungalow. She was there and was a presence, it was like it was her role, trying to rule with an iron rod". I don't think I did that. I remember the girl. I met her again, about six to eight years ago when I went to Cardonald on retreat. I asked the woman in charge if

she knew any of the girls who had been brought up in Nazareth House. [REDACTED] LCY

[REDACTED] LCY then came into visit Nazareth House and she had nothing but the best to say, she never mentioned anything about these allegations then. Those children did very well for themselves, and she'd brought her own son with her to see me. Never a word like that was said when I met her again. The Superior we had when she was in Cardonald was wonderful, she used to ensure there was lemonade, biscuits and sweets for the children. I can't believe she's said it. I got their addresses and sent them cards at Christmas, I got a reply at least once, but for the last few years I've had no reply and wondered why. This must be the reason. I have stopped sending the cards myself in more recent years.

77. I remember [REDACTED] LCY as a lovely girl. She had a twin sister, and they were totally unlike. I am shocked at what she has said. I believe it is all part of a money racket, they just want to get money out of us. I don't recall having to punish [REDACTED] LCY because of mis-behaviour or because she'd done anything wrong. She was a good girl growing up. She had a sad background. I remember her living in the bungalow that I was in charge of. I think that they both went back to live with their father before I left Cardonald. The dates that have been given to me for [REDACTED] LCY being in care at Cardonald correspond with my recollection of her stay. I don't believe the passage of time has affected my recollection. If I had done anything wrong I would have remembered it. I don't know why someone would say these things when they didn't happen.

78. [REDACTED] LCY goes on to say in her statement "*I have an allergy to oranges that was diagnosed when I was a very wee girl, even the smell of them turns my stomach. One of the nuns once made me drink this orange drink, I was held down and forced to drink it and sure enough I this reaction and a doctor had to be called out. I was about thirteen at the time and I told the doctor I'd told the nuns I was allergic to oranges and that they'd held me down. The nuns told the doctor I was such a liar*". This claim is untrue, and I swear to that. It is absolutely a made up story. I would never hold anyone one down, and neither would any of the Sisters. It is ridiculous and an absolute lie. It's very sad to think that is what they are saying and it's not true. I'm annoyed that she has said such a thing. I would never force a child

to drink anything. I have no recollection of a doctor coming out because she had an allergic reaction to something. I do not recall her having any allergy to oranges and there was no mention of it when they came to see me. There is no way that I or any nun or any staff forced [LCY] to drink anything.

79. [LCY] goes on to make a general reference "*The nuns and staff both disciplined the children. It was usually just whacks from the nuns*". That is absolutely untrue. I can't believe what I've been told. [LCY] goes onto say "*We would get whacks across the head all the time, just with whatever they had. Sister [LHW] would hit you with her clogs, a toy, her rosary beads*". That is ridiculous and untrue. I never even wore clogs. Its absolute lies. I'd swear it isn't true. I have spoken to one of the girls and she said nothing about it. They were nice and friendly when I saw them. It makes me think it is part of a money racket. I've been asked if there was another person with the name Sister [LHW] who could have been confused with me. There wasn't in my time at Cardonald.
80. [LCY] goes on to say in her statement "*There was also an incident when someone in school got caught smoking and they'd said they were me. I got leathered by the nuns and locked in my room for that and I've never smoked in my life.*" This is totally untrue. I never caught a child smoking. I had no way of locking anyone in a room.
81. [LCY] goes on to say that she was angry at being punished for something that she didn't do. She put a chair up against the door, turned the taps on and flooded the place. "*I got leathered by Sister [LHW] for that. I know I was totally out of order for that but I hated getting punished for something I hadn't done*". That is totally untrue. I would have remembered that. I have no recollection of this event.
82. [LCY] says "*There was random hitting by the nuns but I kept my head down and I knew the rules*". That was untrue. It makes me mad to hear that.
83. [LCY] who was in Cardonald from [redacted] 1979 to [redacted] /1984 said in her statement "*Joe Duffy was clever, he became friends with the staff and children. I'm*

*not sure exactly when but the group he was working with shut down, and he moved in to help with our group in the bungalow. Joe was allowed to stay there, I don't know why, he slept in a room off the main group of beds. At one point he shared that room with [REDACTED] who was another kid at Nazareth House. At night and weekends it was really only Sister [LHW] and Joe in the bungalow so he could easily sneak about". This has been dealt with by the courts and he has been questioned. He's been dealt with. I don't think it's up to me to talk about that. I hope something will be done about the protection of children in the future. Why didn't they tell me or the social worker what was going on with him wandering around the bungalow. I had no idea what was going on. I know he's been punished for it now. I don't want to make any more statements about it.*

84. [REDACTED] LCY has said that I hated him, but I never said I hated him at all. I knew him, but I never said I hated him. I hated what he did. I feel sorry for him now. [REDACTED] LCY goes on to say "Sister [LHW] hated Joe but she accused me of being infatuated with him and said it was my fault and that I instigated it. I was told to stay away, as if it was me that was at fault but the abuse continued, it still happened. That was one time I should have said things were wrong but I didn't even get an opportunity". I have no recollection of that. If it is true or false I really do not know.
85. [REDACTED] LCY goes on to say in her statement "There was a book that Sister [LHW] had, where she and all the staff would write down and record things on a daily basis. Perhaps something was written there, about her saying I was infatuated with Joe Duffy. She must have seen some signs, that she was aware of, to accuse me of being infatuated. She did nothing. I was thirteen or fourteen and they did nothing to try and deal with it. Why didn't she take it further? Something must have twigged within her, so why didn't she do something about it, she hated him". I had no idea of this. It is untrue. "I would say it was a day book and it was kept in the office in the bungalow. Sister [LHW] had an office and inside that there was a locked cupboard but the book was on her desk most of the time. I saw staff writing up things about the kids in the book." I didn't say it. I don't know if that's a reference to the book I have referred to earlier in my statement. I do not know.

86. [redacted] LCY goes on to say *"Just jumping ahead, I remember my brother [redacted] came back in about 2012 and he wanted to visit Nazareth House. So [redacted], [redacted], maybe [redacted] and myself all went back because [redacted] wanted to see where he'd come from. I remember Sister [redacted] LHW and [redacted] LKB who was a member of staff, not a nun, were both there when we visited. Sister [redacted] LHW spoke about Joe Duffy. She said she hated him and asked if he'd touched any of us. We just said no and skipped over it because [redacted] was there and it wasn't the place or time for that conversation"*. I don't recall that at all and I would have. I think it's a made up story. When I saw her she never mentioned Joe Duffy. I never mentioned Joe Duffy at that meeting. I didn't know at that time that he was in trouble. I've only known about that in the last few months. That's all I know about it. *"When we visited Nazareth House on that occasion Sister [redacted] LHW told us she was now known as Sister [redacted] LHW or [redacted] LHW and she took a note of my address. She then sent me a Christmas card in 2012 and 2013"*.
87. I understand that statements have been made regarding other sisters working in Cardonald. These statements and allegations contained in them have not been put to me, and I have been asked to give some of my own impressions of those people.
88. I recall Sister [redacted] LKR as a gentle, loving person. A very nice person. I do not recall her working with the children. I do not recall her being in Cardonald. I may have met her in another Nazareth House, but I know her as a person. I do not know if she has been known by any other names. I have never seen her looking after children. I do not recall any suggestion of her behaving in an abusive way towards children.
89. With regard to Sister [redacted] LTX I knew her as Sister [redacted] LTX I recall her being at Cardonald, working with children in the big house. She had a similar role to me. I know her very well and the allegations made against her were untrue. I know she has had a hard time. It is a sad situation. I worked with her on a holiday with the children and they had the most wonderful holiday. They loved her. I could never see her doing anything wrong to a child. She was a gentle person and I never witnessed or heard of her behaving in an abusive manner towards children.

90. I have also been asked if I have any comments to make about someone called Mr [LHM]. I vaguely recall him. I think he was a student. He left after a short time. I cannot help with comments on his involvement with children.

91. With regard to [LFV] I recall her. I have not had any contact with her for years. I think what was said about her was wrong, she was a kindly person. She worked in the bungalow. From what I observed of her work with children, she was a kindly person. I never saw or heard of her doing anything untoward. I never heard a single word about her regarding abusive behaviour towards children.

*Joe Duffy*

92. The final name I have been asked to comment on is Joseph Duffy, and he has been referred to elsewhere in my statement. He was a volunteer in the house. He was there before I got there. I took him on face value. I was shocked when I heard what had happened. He seemed a decent fellow and that was my impression of him before I heard of the things that happened. If anything happened when he was in the bungalow they should have told me, and it was wrong of them not to tell me anything. He's been found guilty by the court so something must have happened.

93. I have not witnessed or heard of any abuse of children at Cardonald or at Bonnyrigg. The only explanation I can give for the allegations of abuse of children is a motivation of money. That is what it is all about. It is very sad. A lot of what has been said is untrue. People have told the Inquiry about how childhood abuse has continued to affect them today, and have been asked for an explanation of why that could be. I did not see or hear of abuse, and I cannot explain why people feel like this and cannot say anything more about it.

## **Records**

94. During my time there, we kept a book for recording events concerning the group. We would talk amongst ourselves about a situation that a child was in and decide if it



was worth recording. Most of the time we recorded anything that happened. This could be if a child ran away and we would have to get him back by taxi, we would record the fact he had run away from the home. There were no individual files for the children and instead we had a central book for all of the children. When the children's section was closed down at Cardonald, the record will have been sent to our head house at Hammersmith.


95. There were records kept of the children, detailing their admission, the reasons for them coming into the house and detailing progress and dates of entry and dates of discharge. We would record any visits the children had and details of any grounding punishment they received. We would also record in the book any illness the children had. When I moved out of Cardonald, all the children had been discharged and the records went to our head house in Hammersmith.
96. I have never given any other statement about my time in Cardonald. I have not been questioned by the police about events at Cardonald and I have never given evidence in court about Cardonald.

### **Leaving Nazareth House, Glasgow**

97. I left Cardonald in 1985 and the children had all left. All the children who were resident at Cardonald left at the time I left, and the bungalow was initially used by a group of priests who lived there. The children's discharge was dealt with by social work in connection with myself and the staff. Some went to their own homes and some to foster care. We would meet with the foster carer beforehand, it wasn't just a sudden transition and the children were prepared for their new lifestyle. The foster carer came into Nazareth House and met the child, and the child would visit the house and spend weekends there over a period of months. I would ask the child after their visit how they got on. They were adequately prepared for their foster placement and that it was the right place for them. Finding foster care was the work of the social worker, and the children were not forced to go with any foster carer.

**Other Information**

98. 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*  LHW .....

Dated..... *22<sup>nd</sup> April 2018* - .....