

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

LTQ

Support person present: No

1. My name is [REDACTED] LTQ [REDACTED]. My surname at birth was [REDACTED]. I am divorced and continue to be known by my married name. I have two grown up daughters. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1961. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I am from a family of seven siblings, made up of six sisters and one brother. The eldest is my sister [REDACTED] LBI [REDACTED] followed by [REDACTED] and my other sisters in order of age are [REDACTED]. I am the youngest of the family.
3. My dad was a typical Irish navvy who was brought up in County Tyrone. He was rarely at home to take care of his children as he was always away working, and my mum stayed at home in Dennistoun, Glasgow to take care of the children.
4. When my mother was pregnant with [REDACTED] she was diagnosed with breast cancer and later had a mastectomy. As a result, mum may have believed that her cancer had been cured. However, mum fell seriously ill when she was in the very late stages of her pregnancy with me. She was taken into hospital and I was born a few days afterwards. Her cancer had returned and she had been ill throughout the pregnancy, but had put this down to being pregnant. I was born in Robroyston Hospital in Glasgow, and I stayed there for some time as I too was ill because of the birth and because mum had been so unwell throughout her pregnancy. I was

baptised there and two of the nurses who took care of me were my god parents. My mother also stayed in the hospital for her own cancer treatment.

5. Because my mum had been in hospital, there was no-one at home to look after the children so within days of mum being admitted arrangements were made for her children to go into care. This was arranged through a family friend and there were local priests involved. My sisters were placed in to care at Nazareth House, Cardonald.
6. My brother [REDACTED] didn't go into Nazareth House. He was aged ten or eleven when mum became ill so he stayed home, and lived with my gran. My gran also lived in Dennistoun. Boys of that age were not put into institutions like Nazareth House as they were reaching puberty and it was seen as being inappropriate for them to live in the same place as girls.
7. I was kept in hospital for some time and when I recovered I left hospital and went into a council-run nursery until I was six months old. Then I came home to be with my mum. Mum arranged for everyone to come home for a weekend to get together as a family. They came back from Nazareth House and [REDACTED] LBI my eldest sister, told me later that they thought they were coming home to live there again. They were excited to meet their baby sister for the first time. In fact, it was to be the last time they would see their mum at the family home in Dennistoun. The six of us, all the girls, including me, were taken back to Nazareth House, they all thought mum was just unwell and they'd be home to Dennistoun again. Mum and dad were able to visit us in Nazareth House. When my sisters first went into Nazareth House, [REDACTED] was aged three, and [REDACTED] LBI the eldest was about twelve. Mum Died in [REDACTED] 1962.

Nazareth House, Cardonald

8. I was just six months old when I went into care at Nazareth House. and as I already mentioned my sisters had already been living there since our mum became too ill to take care of them. I went straight to the nursery when I got there. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] They normally only took children over the aged of two and boys had to leave around age ten, and girls were expected to leave at age fifteen or sixteen. I think they took me as a baby because of the family situation. I think my mum knew that she wasn't going to live much longer and she spoke to the convent to ensure that her girls stayed together. I stayed in the nursery until I was about four-and-a-half maybe five.

9. I tend to refer to Nazareth House as 'the convent'. It is situated off Paisley Road West in Cardonald. It was run by an order of nuns known as the Sisters of Nazareth. It is a massive, stunning building. It was not just a children's home there was also an old folks home there too. The children's home was in the main building which was on three floors. The nursery was on the ground floor to the right as you came in to the main reception.
10. I have a vivid recollection of being in the nursery when I was aged three or four years old. There was an older lady called Mary who lived there and used to help out in reception area. I believe she had learning difficulties. One night she answered the front door. Mary came running into the room where Sister [REDACTED] was. She was the nun in charge of the nursery at that time. Mary was shouting "There's a drunk man at the door! There's a drunk man at the door!" I recall the commotion as I woke up and remember standing in my cot. Sister [REDACTED] went to investigate the situation and then came back into the nursery. She came over to me and in a very loud voice told me to get out of my bed as someone had come to see me. It was my father. I didn't believe her as I didn't associate a drunken man with being my dad. I was frightened, so I hid under the covers. I never got to see my dad that night.
11. I remember Sister [REDACTED] as being a very tall woman and quite young and also quite loud. I remember she used to walk about clapping her hands and shouting orders at the same time. I don't know if she was there when I arrived as I was too young to know. She was there when I left, aged four-and-a-half. Outside of the nursery there were three other groups. The green, red and blue groups. All my sisters were in the green group, and when I was old enough I also joined them in the green group.

12. The building was made up of three floors. On the ground floor, immediately through the front door was the reception. To the left-hand side, were two living rooms for two of the colour groups along with some offices and the Mother Superiors Office. To the far end of that hallway there were stairs to the top floor and beyond these stairs was the entrance-way to the Chapel. Beyond this was a corridor that led to the old folk's home which was adjoined to the main building. I recall the living room for the third group was down the main corridor from reception past the kitchens.
13. On the ground floor, on the right-hand side of the building was the nursery and the dining rooms. There might have been one big dining room for everyone, I'm not sure. I don't know if we all ate together. At the back end of that was toilets. There was also a flight of stairs leading to the top floors. The middle floor of the building was where all the nuns stayed and you never went up there unless you'd been sent to look for someone. There were a lot of nuns living in Nazareth House at that time.
14. There were also stairs that led from reception to the top floor. On the top floor were the dorms for the different colour groups. There was a big long corridor down the middle, with doors to either side that led to the dormitories. At the top of the stairs, if you turned left there was the green group dorms. The flooring was old-fashioned wooden parquet flooring. The walls were tiled. I'm not sure how many dorms there were per group of children. Each dorm room, just inside the door, had a small makeshift room that was added on and that is where the nun in charge of the group slept. The dorms were big rooms and they were split into three parts with partitions that did not reach all the way to the ceiling. There was a door in each partition. If you looked up from the floor you'd see the wardrobes, then the top of the partition and then it would be an open space up to the ceiling.
15. I moved into the green group when I was aged four or five. There were twenty to thirty children per group and there were no boys in Cardonald above the age of ten. When I first joined the green group, I remember I shared a room with some of my sisters, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and maybe [REDACTED] LBI [REDACTED] This was a small room not attached to the dormitories and I have a memory of that being our own bedroom. I recall that this space was later turned into a lift shaft,. There were only three or four

beds so we weren't all in there. When I wasn't long out of the nursery, LBI was in that room with [REDACTED] and me. We were only in that room for a short time maybe a year or so when the ceiling fell in on us one night. No-one had noticed that the ceiling had collapsed until we got up the next morning and we were covered with plaster and dust. After this we were moved out of that room.

16. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were probably in one of the dorms at around this time, and they left Nazareth House soon after as they were rebellious and were kicked out. LBI was left to take care of me, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] as we were the youngest. Then LBI left Nazareth House herself a few months after the night when the ceiling fell in as she was old enough to go home.

17. When I first joined the green group, Sister LFL was in charge. I remember her being very strict. I'm not sure how long that lasted for. Then Sister LHA came in and took over and she was lovely. I didn't really come across any other nuns from the other groups other than just passing them in the corridor. I do recall one other nun that was friendly and always had a massive smile. Her name was Sister LKE. I remember my dad really liked her. I remember we used to call her LKE. She wasn't there for too long.

18. The daily routine remained very similar throughout my time in the green group. It got better as I got older and when Sister LHA took over, more staff came in to the convent to take care of us as before that the children had to do a lot of the chores.

Routine at Nazareth House

Mornings and bedtime

19. We got up early, somewhere between 6 and 7 am. We knelt by our beds to say prayers and then got washed and dressed. We were never really told how to wash ourselves, apart from my older sisters telling me. I was also never shown how to brush my teeth properly. After we got dressed, we might have gone to church or we

might have gone to breakfast. If it was a Sunday, or a Saint's day, we would have gone straight to church and then breakfast. We had to clean and tidy our room after breakfast.

20. We went to bed very early. In winter time it was about 7 pm and in summer we went at about 8 pm. It was always light when we went to bed in summer. I remember we used to see children playing in the park across the road. We never got a lie-in on weekends. On Saturday mornings we had to do a deep clean of our section of the building. Sunday was a day of rest and for attending mass. We also put our best clothes on for chapel, and because we got visitors on a Sunday.

Mealtimes / Food

21. Breakfast was generally porridge and cereal with bread and butter. We didn't get hot breakfast besides porridge unless it was a Sunday when we'd get bacon and eggs. If you didn't like something, the food would be there for your next meal and you were expected to eat it then. Or you would be expected to eat it the next day. You generally ate it anyway, as you knew it would be brought back to you. I don't think there was ever any concern that food would go off. Supper was maybe at 5 pm. The food was like typical school dinners. My main dislike was celery. I wouldn't want to eat anything with celery in it. I don't remember being force fed or seeing anyone else being forced fed. We mainly just had to eat the food they served up to you.

Washing / bathing

22. We had a bath about once a week, on an evening in the week. There was one bath between five children, and we went in quickly one at a time. We didn't get fresh water and we weren't in the water for long. I can't recall the temperature of the water. My older sisters helped bath me when I was younger. When I was older I was able to bath myself. There was no privacy when I was younger, but there was more privacy when I got older.

23. With regard to bedtime routines, no one showed us how to brush our teeth. I didn't have a clue, and neither did anyone else. We had terrible teeth as a result and always had tooth ache. I have had a lot of work done on my teeth as an adult to rectify the damage done in the early years.

Clothing / uniform

24. We had a school uniform to put on in the weekday mornings after prayers. Our school uniform was made up of second hand stuff that the school gave us from former pupils. We changed clothes after school into more casual clothes and our recreation clothes were everyday items. They were just whatever you were given. The staff washed them for us and we got the same clothes back. I don't recall my clothes being tagged with my name. You might have just worn what you were given back after washing. The clothes we were put on our beds for us and you just put them on.
25. All the clothes we had were second hand, including our shoes. Sunday best was a dress and that was for chapel. You would only have something different to wear if your family gave you an item of clothing for your birthday. When I was there, everything I wore was second hand unless it was a present. Everything was taken off my sisters when they got to Nazareth House and it was shared around amongst the other children.
26. We had to wear the same pair of second hand shoes until we grew out of them, even if they had holes in them. I have always had bad feet and blame that on the shoes I had to wear. I have clawed toes as I was wearing shoes that were too small. I remember always having sore feet when I was at Nazareth House. When I came out, my Auntie [REDACTED] saw my feet and took me to see a doctor and he said the only solution would be to break my toes and re-set them. I didn't want to do this.

School

27. I spent primary one and two in Lourdes Primary School that was on the opposite side of Paisley Road West. [REDACTED] was to look after me and [REDACTED] and we walked to school together. One day, [REDACTED] had me on her shoulders and I fell off. I hit my head on the pavement and split my head open. I can recall sitting on a bench in the reception of the convent, my uniform covered in blood and not really knowing what had happened, but feeling excited at the attention. I remember sliding up and down the wooden bench that wasn't polished. I had skelfs in my backside as a result, and they had to be removed by the doctors when I got to hospital for treatment on my head wound.
28. We didn't stay in school for dinner and instead went back to the convent to eat. The Angelus bell would ring at 12 noon and you had to stand and be quiet and say a prayer when this happened. This bell was not rung at school. After dinner we tidied up, washed and dried the dishes and went back to school and finished at 4 pm to go back to the convent again.
29. At school I got the belt as I was cheeky and always talking. Getting the belt was commonplace at that time. Despite that, I liked school and wanted to go there in the morning. At first we went to Lourdes Primary, and then Glasgow Corporation decided it was too dangerous for us to cross the road and they built a new school around the corner of Nazareth House on the boulevard. It was besides Lourdes Chapel and called the Lady of the Rosary School. I went there from primary two onwards until I left. On my first day at school I remember I drew a picture on the wall instead of in my book. There was a piano and I told the teacher that I could play it. I couldn't and all I could do, as she soon discovered, was hit the keys at random. Despite the corporal punishment I had a positive experience of school.

Religious instruction

30. We said prayers in the morning as soon as we got out of bed. The Angelus bell would ring at both 12 noon, and straight after dinner at 6 pm. There was too much religion for young children. There were many saints days to celebrate throughout the

year. I always remember being in church for the benediction and the rosary. For the Angelus bell you stood wherever you were to say the prayer and then move on.

31. Confession was once per week. Sometimes you'd be in chapel more than once per week and always there on Sunday. In Lent there was mass and rosary every day. I think all the children in Nazareth House were Catholic and I wasn't aware of any being non-Catholic. There were prayers in the morning and at night, and before every meal. Everything was in Latin, even from a young age, hymns were sung in Latin. It changed to English when I was older. Now, I go to church services for weddings and funerals or to mass if I want to when I want to and not because I have to, but I'm not a practising Catholic. I usually go and say a prayer for mum and dad if I am visiting a church, but that's about as far as my religion goes.

Chores

32. We all had to do chores to some degree. The nuns did nothing by way of household chores, and the children did everything. The younger ones in the group did work to some degree as they had to make sure their bed was made and tidy. We had to clear away the tables after breakfast and wash and dry the dishes to be ready for the next meal. There was always cleaning to do, irrespective of age apart from in the nursery. We had to clean toilets. Things started to change when staff came in to work after Sister [REDACTED] LHA came in to run our group. We stopped having to do a deep cleaning on a Saturday. This had involved tasks like cleaning and washing the walls, doors and the windows and stripping the beds and making the beds completely.
33. The floors in the hall were laid with parquet, the older children had to kneel down with rags to apply polish to the floor. Other children then polished the floor with big sticks that had a heavy metal thing on the bottom that polished the floor. Younger kids had rags on their feet, and it was fun for them to slide themselves along the polished floor. Doing chores was part and parcel of life at Cardonald.

Leisure time

34. We were able to watch TV in the living room after school and we watched things like The Magic Roundabout. We also watched TV in the living room after dinner and the Angelus bell at 6 pm, Top of the Pops etc. I don't recall doing any homework. There were boxes of toys for us in the living room.
35. There were three different play areas at Cardonald and each of them had swings for us to play on, and the area you used depended on your age group. Predominately there were swings, and there was a big field nearby with cut grass that we could play football on and games of tag. There were no organised sports. I don't remember staff coming out to supervise us. We also had toys to play with indoors and there was a TV in the recreation room. We watched it until 6.30. maybe 7.30 in the summer. The routine was that we came home from school, dinner, then TV, then TV off and go to bed. There were also books and magazines available, although I didn't read much as I preferred to be outdoors.
36. We got weekly pocket money, it was about 10 pence as I remember and you could spend it as you wanted to. That was when Sister [REDACTED] LHA was there, and I don't remember it with Sister [REDACTED] LFL. We queued up to get the pocket money. We used to spend it in the wee shop on the corner.
37. In the later part of my time at the convent, we had the freedom to go out to play in Bellahouston Park and also a small swing park across the road, as long as we told someone where we were going, so we weren't restricted to just being in Nazareth House and it's grounds. I also recall I used to visit one of the old ladies in the old folk's area. She was Mrs MacGregor who was a retired school teacher. I used to sit with her and she would tell me stories and tell me about my time as a baby when I first came into the convent. She was an amazing woman. I loved going to visit her.

Trips / Holidays

38. There were brilliant trips. The Glasgow taxi corporation used to take us once a year to Ayr or Troon, via George Square. The taxis would turn up, there were hundreds of

them, beating their horns and the taxis had balloons in them and the drivers were dressed up. Everyone would wave at us as we went past them. Every care home in Glasgow got to ride in the taxis.

39. I remember going to Fairlie on the Ayrshire coast, to a big house the nuns had. It was not a Nazareth House and it was not religious. We'd be there for two or three days. There was a donkey in the garden. When I smell seaweed now, I think of Fairlie as the seaweed on that coast is especially strong.
40. There was another trip when British Caledonia offered a flight around Scotland for the kids in Nazareth House. I went on that trip, it was just one hour in the air and back again.

Birthdays and Christmas

41. I loved Christmas. In the run up to Christmas there were outings to Arnotts or Lewis's on Argyle Street for a party. Also, we were taken on a bus to see the lights and were given little white mice sweets to eat on the bus. There were loads of kids taken out to the party and not just Nazareth House children. We'd come home with a shoe box full of sweets. They would be taken off you when you got back to Nazareth House and the shoebox was hidden, and the contents would be given back out to us slowly. We only got one present at Christmas. It was an adventure at Christmas, the staff would hide the presents in the green group playroom for us to find. If you found someone else's present, you would hide it again for them to find. The staff used to hide Easter eggs for us to find ourselves too.
42. I remember in the dormitory area there was an office in the middle section between two dormitories and this was where the nuns kept their stores. This was also where the boxes of sweets were kept. We climbed up on wardrobes to jump over the partition wall to the offices and went in there to find the sweets and then threw them over the partition wall to our friends to catch them.

43. I think birthdays were celebrated, but I'm not sure. I can't recall my younger birthdays at Nazareth House, but later on we would get cake at dinnertime and sing happy birthday. You'd only get a present if it was given by your family at a visit. If your family sent in a present otherwise, I'm not sure that we got them.

Visits / Inspections

44. My dad used to visit and so did Auntie [REDACTED]. He was quite regular when I was younger. I went into Nazareth House in [REDACTED] 1962 and mum visited us there before she died in the [REDACTED]. Afterwards, dad came quite a lot to visit and often outside of normal visiting time. He paid money to Nazareth House every month for our keep and as he was paying we were kept together and he was able to visit when he wanted. I don't recall my brother [REDACTED] ever visiting us but that's not to say he didn't I just don't remember if he did.
45. Dad bought a puppy for the family, called [REDACTED] and brought him to the convent one day and that day he took us to the beach at Ayr, so his visits were not restricted to walking round the grounds of Nazareth House. He didn't take us out on occasions.
46. Visits took place in a big hall with a stage at one end. There were lots of little tables with a couple of chairs set out for the visits to take place. The doors would open to the hall and the children would run in to see their parents. You were also able to take your visitors around the buildings. Visiting was usually once per month on a Sunday.
47. When I was in Nazareth House, a woman called [REDACTED] used to take me to her parent's house with her boyfriend. This happened every month over about a two-year period and I think they were hoping to adopt me, but I didn't know this at the time. They bought me presents and we watched TV over the weekend. This was from Friday to Sunday when they took me back to the convent after mass. I think my sister [REDACTED] LBI realised what was going on and told dad, and he put a stop to it. I liked [REDACTED] and I enjoyed the trips, but I also looked forward to going back to the convent on the Sunday as I did not want to be away from my family and friends.

48. With regard to official visitors, I wasn't aware of any. Priests came in quite a lot. One came into the TV room to sit with the kids, but I don't know who he was. I don't recall having to put on my best clothes for a day that wasn't Sunday just to meet someone important. We wore our Sunday best on every Sunday. Visits happened on a Sunday and once a month, unless permission was given for it to take place on another day.

Healthcare

49. Dental care was available and we had access to a dentist. I had rotten teeth. I still have a fear of dentists now. I have numerous plates and crowns and only two natural teeth left and I put that down to Nazareth House. We were never taught to look after our teeth. We were given a toothbrush and most kids wouldn't bother to use it. There was no supervision when cleaning teeth. The dentist that we saw was a butcher and he never used anaesthetic to pull out baby teeth. All you got was the pink coloured liquid to swill your mouth with before he removed a tooth or filled them. I think the dentist had his own room in the convent, but I can recall going out of the convent for treatment too.

50. We had medical care from a doctor. I think he was called [REDACTED] LKQ? He was lovely. He had a room just past the church. He gave us routine jabs. If there was a more serious health issue we would be taken to hospital, and I was taken to the Southern General for stiches in my head wound when I fell off my sisters shoulders. I still have a scar from the stiches. I have second scar from an incident in the play area in the middle of the convent. There was an injured blackbird on the ground and hundreds of children ran to look at it. I was at the front of the crowd and bent over the bird to get a closer look. I fell face forwards into the bird and it pecked me and made a hole in my forehead that poured with blood. I got stiches for that too.

Discipline

51. I do recall being slapped around the ears for being a cheeky child and occasionally getting the cane. Sister [REDACTED] LFL did that, but I don't remember Sister [REDACTED] LHA [REDACTED] LHA doing it. I wasn't punished very much though.

52. Some kids got humiliated in Nazareth House and slapped or strapped. Serious discipline from the nuns meant the cane and that was when someone did something wrong such as bedwetting, or didn't do what they were told. I got it once or twice when I very young and I didn't remember why. I don't remember getting it in Nazareth House when I was older. Instead, you'd lose your pocket money or sent to bed early as a punishment. I think this demonstrates the difference in attitude between Sister [REDACTED] LFL and Sister [REDACTED] LHA. If you didn't eat your dinner it would be there the next day for you, and that to me was discipline. I was sent to bed early more than any other punishment, and that was in Sister [REDACTED] LHA time.

Running away

53. I don't know much about this. I didn't run away, but kids did run away from Nazareth House. I never asked any of them why they ran away. They were probably punished for it, but I don't really remember.
54. There were lots of kids from lots of difficult backgrounds. My family situation was unique. My family was in Nazareth House not through choice but more through circumstances and my dad paid them money for us to stay, and it meant that we were kept together. If our situation was different, my time in Nazareth House might have been quite different. There were kids there with parents who had separated or died, and from abused backgrounds, but we were different and we weren't split up.
55. Kids in Nazareth House from different backgrounds could have been treated very differently, I can't be sure, or they may have simply been naughtier, and as a result, sent to bed and hit with the cane. I got the cane and I know that other children got it too. I knew some kids were humiliated over things like bed-wetting. I was not force fed, but my leftover food was put back in front of me and in front of other kids too.

Bed Wetting

56. This happened to me only once as I recall, and don't know if it was anymore. I woke up in the middle of the night and I wasn't sure if I was dreaming it. I was in fear

because other kids did it and it was a 'no-no', they were made to stand in the corner. My sister [REDACTED] was in the room and I woke her up, she took my sheets off the bed and hid them behind a cupboard. She found clean sheets for my bed. You'd always know who the bed-wetters were as they would be standing or sitting in the corner in their pyjamas or nighties. This was in my younger years when Sister [REDACTED] LFL was in charge.

Abuse at Nazareth House

57. Looking back, a lot of what was considered discipline was clearly abuse, be it physical such as slapping and caning, I recall in school the leather belt with tongues at the end. I was strapped on my hand with it. I had to hold one hand out to be hit and put my other hand underneath it. I got that all the time at school for being naughty. It was all that I knew.
58. I was institutionalised and I didn't have any other kind of upbringing to age ten. I had no mum to guide me, and no maternal love. The nuns were not maternal at all. My older sisters had left Nazareth House by the time I was old enough to talk to them about how their lives had been, and we didn't have that sort of conversation until I had left the convent. All I knew to age ten was the children's home.
59. As I see it there were two eras at Nazareth House, Sister [REDACTED] LFL time and Sister [REDACTED] LHA time. They were like night and day to me. They had their favourites and I might have been one of them. Sister [REDACTED] LHA was so much softer and maternal, and did not give out nearly so many of the hard chores as Sister [REDACTED] LFL. From the civilian staff at the time, I remember Ann Monaghan, Faye and [REDACTED] LKB [REDACTED] LKB looked after me and I still visit her today if I'm in Glasgow. Ann adopted or fostered one of the boys from Nazareth House and moved out to live in Dennistoun and she was living there when I left Nazareth House myself. I don't remember any of these staff disciplining me other than maybe sending me to bed early, or having my pocket money taken away. I know that [REDACTED] LKB keeps in touch with some of the children that were at Nazareth House while I was there. She has loads of lovely pictures of our time there.

60. With regard to the running of other colour groups, I don't know if there was the same shift in attitude towards children. I can't now recall the names of any of the Mother Superiors when I was there, but do remember one of them took a shine to me and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was a stunning looking child and appeared to be dad's favourite, and a favourite of the nuns too. She was angelic and in their eyes could do no wrong.
61. There were problems in other groups and other kids got strapped, but we didn't really mingle and I didn't know much about it. We didn't focus on it and just concentrated on being in our group, but there were bullies in our group too, as well as friends, and we'd fight like any group of children would in the playground. I remember the [REDACTED] the [REDACTED] and the [REDACTED]. They were big families and had different personalities within their own family groups as well.

Leaving Nazareth House

62. I left Nazareth House at the same time as my sisters [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was aged fifteen or sixteen and the convent was too busy. She had reached an age when it was time for her to move on. I'm not sure of all the background. [REDACTED] hated the convent and will have a totally different outlook from me, she has bad memories of the convent. [REDACTED] will probably have different views again, but I have many fond memories of living in Nazareth House, it was all I knew.
63. Either my dad or the nuns thought it was time for [REDACTED] to go home, and she was old enough to take care of us. We went back to the family home in Dennistoun and my gran was nearby. I spent a lot of time with gran in her house after school as my dad was still working when I went home and he continued to drink heavily.

Life after being in care

64. After leaving Nazareth House I continued in the same primary school, Our Lady of the Rosary for about a year. I had to take two buses to get there. My dad didn't know

how to enrol me at the local school. My Auntie [REDACTED] put a stop to it and decided I was going to the local school, St Dennis's. My aunt bought me the uniform and got me enrolled. I was put back a year as they couldn't work out what schooling I'd had. I had to do Primary 7 twice. Then I went to another school, Our Lady of St Francis, in Charlotte Street. It was known more informally as Charlotte Street.

65. I did well at Charlotte Street. I wanted to be a PE teacher, but I wasn't good at English and couldn't get into Dunfermline College of Physical Education unless I passed my Higher English. Instead, I started working at [REDACTED] Swimming Baths in Dennistoun for Glasgow Corporation. Then I moved to [REDACTED] Sports Centre as a swimming instructor and a lifeguard. I was ambitious to do better. Two local police officers came into the Sports Centre regularly and used to talk to me, they were very friendly. I was asking them what it was like being a police officer. I looked up to these two officers and decided I want to become a Police Officer. I applied to every force in Scotland and some in England, as well as British Transport Police (BTP). I got half-way through the Strathclyde Police Force entrance test, but they wouldn't take someone who wore glasses. Then I got an interview with BTP and was accepted. I spent my first five years working for them in Glasgow, and did the rest of my 30 years' service with BTP in London. As I was ambitious I worked my way through the promotion process and rose to the rank of [REDACTED] by the time I retired two years ago. I still work and I am currently employed at [REDACTED] Newquay.

66. I was considered my upbringing to be institutionalised due to being brought up in the convent and some would say the police force is an institution too. I met my, now, former husband when we were in BTP in Glasgow and we both ended up working in London. I still miss the job and the people and especially the front-line policing.

Impact

67. I didn't have my mum to bring me up, my daughters don't have a gran and no granddad now. I didn't get on with my dad, I loved him to bits, but I had to get out of the house as soon as I could as he was so strict and was a heavy drinker. He had his own fixed views of how kids should be. When we went home after Nazareth

House, we didn't really know what to do and we had no one to look over us and tell us what to do, and we made a mess of the house.

68. In the main, I have no problem with my time spent living in Nazareth House. I have a strong personality due to my upbringing. I am very close to my sisters and my brother, probably closer than most families. I only got to know them properly after we left the convent. My older sister [REDACTED] LBI [REDACTED] was, and is, very protective of us and made sure that we were ok. My Auntie [REDACTED] is on dad's side of the family and is part of our close family unit. I think she was a little bit blind to what happened at the convent. I can understand why my sisters have different memories of Nazareth House to me. Yes, I got the strap and the belt when we were there, and at school, but that was commonplace at the time. I would never have lifted a hand to my own children.
69. Looking back now, some of what happened at Nazareth House was abusive, both physical and emotional. My sister [REDACTED] had the worst experience of all of us. She had a bad eye and wore thick National Health glasses that did nothing for any child's appearance and made her look glauk, and when she was young the nuns played on that a bit. She was separated from her older sisters from the start in the convent as she was in the nursery, and they were in the green group and they never got to see each other that often for play or recreation. When I was in the nursery she was never told I was her baby sister she was too young to understand. She used to see [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] as part of their chores was to help in the nursery, and for a while it was the only time [REDACTED] got to see them.
70. I recall one incident and I am sure it was [REDACTED] that told me about one occasion when the nuns told her to get some hymn books from the church. It was an evening in winter time, and it was dark outside and she was working by a bit of moonlight only. Something caught her eye in the church and she saw an open coffin containing a dead nun. There were four candles lit and placed around the coffin. She ran away and freaked out in front of the nuns. I think they did it deliberately and so does she. They would have known she would see the coffin when she was sent to the church, but it was a tradition to display a body in an open coffin.

71. We had no homework that I can recall, but there were different people who came in and taught us traditional dancing and the how to play the [REDACTED]. The Scottish country dance teacher was Miss Docherty and Irish country dancing was taught by Mr Kelly. The [REDACTED] teacher was [REDACTED] LKN I was cheeky at the time and some kids were rebels, but we were made to do these lessons that we didn't want to do. We didn't want to learn [REDACTED] and I remember one time that three or four of us ripped up our [REDACTED] and were sent to bed at 5 pm every night for one month, for me it was terrible as it was summer time and I wanted to be outside.

72. It's hard to sum up those ten years of my life. It was a strict upbringing, but there were still lots of happy memories. With my personality, I tend to focus on the positive and don't think about the negatives. I prefer to forget the bad things and not dwell on them.

Records

73. I have never tried to obtain my records from my time in care and do not know if there are any records to recover.

Lessons to be Learned

74. I think we missed experiencing a more caring attitude. The nuns then did not have the time to spend with us or maybe even they had the desire to care for us as children. If you're going to look after kids, you must have some maternal instinct to show caring and they didn't really show that side. The caring side came mainly from the staff, they were strict with us but they also showed more caring.

75. Staff need to have some training in child care and learn about child health, welfare and education, and learn how to sit down with them and communicate on a one-to-one basis. There was never any one to care for you as an individual. The ratio of staff to children were way off what they should have been. The children who come out of care should have a plan made for them about how to move on with their life

and how to cope with life after an institution. When I left Nazareth House, I just knew how to get to school and how to get to the swing park. I knew nothing else about practical living, but my father forced us to be independent at a young age. I had my own flat at aged seventeen, and at that age I only knew Dennistoun and Cardonald and not much else of Glasgow.

Other information

76. 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.

LTO

Signed

Dated

21-05-2018