

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

FKG

Support person present: Yes.

1. My full name is FKG My date of birth is 1950. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Background

2. I have no child care qualifications. I am a qualified and time served horticultural mechanic. I left school at fifteen and worked on a farm for a year before serving my time as horticultural engineer. That was between the ages of sixteen and twenty.
3. I then worked as a mechanic before getting a shepherd's job at a sheep farm near Stirling in 1972. I remained at the sheep farm working as a shepherd until about 2000 when I went self-employed. I then worked with Falkirk Council doing fencing, maintaining and installing children's play parks, and a bit of everything really. I retired in 2017 when I was told I had Parkinson's Disease and all this was happening as well.

Becoming a Foster Carer

4. I first became involved in foster care when I was married to my first wife FKA I'm not at all sure about dates but I think that was around 1978. We had a big house with plenty room and it was a lovely place to stay. FKA was a good cook and organiser and we just thought it would be nice to do something good to try and help out some less fortunate kids.

5. We also had our two sons and daughter at the time. One son was always in the house with his computers and the other became a shepherd at fifteen. He's a fencer now and we've worked together over the years. The house wasn't spotless but we had kids, there was toys everywhere and it seemed a good idea. I wish we hadn't now.
6. FKA dealt with all the paperwork so I really don't know much about the process. I was a shepherd and that's a seven day a week carry on. I never had a Christmas Day or New Year's Day off in twenty four years, which is just the type of job farming is. Even when I could take any of the children to my work I was still working.
7. I couldn't tell you who FKA contacted but I presume it was Stirling Council. I don't know the names of anyone that was involved. I think we had a meeting with some people who came to see us at our home but that was forty three years ago so I'm really not sure.
8. I'm not aware of any checks or assessments by Stirling Council. I'm not saying checks weren't done but I was on the farm and working away from home as well. On average I'd be away from home between one and three days a week.
9. I do believe references were obtained, I think FKA's sister gave one. I haven't got a clue how long the process took. To my knowledge no one came to the house to carry out any checks or assessments.

Training

10. We didn't receive any training at all. That's something that we should have had but there was no training offered. We had no training on child protection issues or discipline and I feel we should have had training on discipline and been genned up on what these kids had been through and why they were in care.
11. We didn't have any qualifications but, as far as I remember, because we had kids of our own that was good enough. Personally I do reckon common sense brings up bairns, you don't need a degree.

Foster Care Arrangements

12. I don't know if we signed up to any particular arrangement for short or long term care. I do know we had two sweet wee girls whose mother was going into hospital for an operation. She was on her own so the girls needed to go into care for just the three nights she was in hospital. I remember taking them to school for the three mornings we had them, so that was short term. We also had the [REDACTED] children, FKO [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] which was long term.
13. In relation to the legal side of things I would say we were self-employed as a couple as foster parents and foster caring was a vocation. We didn't get much of a say in the foster care arrangements. We would get a phone call to tell us, sometimes it could be that night and sometimes it could be they were coming in a few days or the following week.
14. We got three babies on three separate occasions, which were all at pretty short notice, as far as I remember. They were possibly pre-adoption, but I don't know. My wife would deal with the phone calls. I think she could have refused a child, they can't make you take children, but she never did, why would you?
15. We never knew the circumstances of any of the children we fostered but I definitely think knowing would have made a difference. To my mind it would have made a big difference.
16. We had social workers, there were different social workers with different kids, but to my knowledge we didn't have one for ourselves. The only social worker I remember is Jim Roberts, he stuck out, and we got to know him. He was there for the kids and for us but I don't know if being there for us was what he was meant to be doing.
17. That was the only support we had from Stirling Council. Thinking back I would say we definitely needed some help but at the time I thought I was a good father and could bring up kids. That was all I wanted to do when I was at school, be a dad.

18. Looking back I would say we definitely needed more support. You shouldn't be able to fill in a form, have somebody come look at your house and you become a foster parent. I don't know what kind of tests you would need to sit.
19. I had a kid of my own that was ten years old and he was doing alright so I knew I could bring a kid up to that age. I didn't know how capable I was in bringing them up as teenagers because that's a different ball game entirely but until you've brought them up you don't know.

Financial Support

20. I think we got so much money per child from Stirling Council. I don't have a clue how much that was, FKA dealt with all of that.
21. As far as I remember the money was put into the pot of everything for the household. That would be for holidays, Christmas everything. The money that went into the pot came from household money and foster money and was equal for all members of the family.
22. I don't remember any other support, like clothes or toys, there was nothing like that. We treated everything as a family, that's what we were doing, giving the kids a family.

Foster Home Household

23. In the household there was me and FKA our three children and the foster children we were looking after. When we started fostering my children were about three, nine and ten.
24. The foster home was a farmhouse near Stirling. It was a big conventional farmhouse on two stories. We had a kitchen, living room, hall, wee bedroom and big bedroom on the ground floor and upstairs we had two bedrooms, a toilet and a bathroom. It was a traditional farmhouse with big rooms. I wouldn't say it was in great condition when I

left as my boss wasn't putting anything back into the farm or the house. He was in his eighties and knew he was retiring. It was clean and decorated but badly needed some insulation in the attic. I was always trying to get that.

25. My children went to a local primary school. If the foster children were of school age and going to school they went to the same school as my children. That must have been taken into consideration when they were getting placed in foster care.
26. There was no preparation given to my kids for foster kids coming to live in our home. My kids always seemed quite happy about it though. We took the children on as an extension to the family and they had to adhere to all the comings and goings of the house.

Children Fostered

27. I'm really not sure about dates but I think we first started fostering children around 1978, about a year or so before the [REDACTED] children came to stay with us. We fostered about nine kids and I know we had none after the [REDACTED] so about three years in total.
28. All our foster children were allocated by Stirling Council. We had the three babies, we had two girls who were about seven or eight, a wee boy called [REDACTED] who was about four, another wee girl who was ages with my daughter and then the two [REDACTED] kids. We didn't ever change the names of any of the foster children.
29. [REDACTED] and FKO [REDACTED] came to stay with us in 1979 and stayed with us for 16 months. I didn't have a clue about those dates, I only know now because it's written down on the documents I've received from the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry. There was another wee girl [REDACTED] staying with us when the [REDACTED] children arrived who was about the same age as my daughter.
30. We weren't given background information about the children we fostered, not officially. Looking back now I feel we weren't given sufficient information about any children we

fostered. I learnt more about FKO reading the documents the Inquiry sent to me than I ever knew before. We didn't know he had been abused by his father and step-father.

31. One social worker once told us unofficially over a cup of tea that a wee boy who had once been in foster care was in care because his mother had stabbed his father with a fork and the kid had seemingly witnessed it. We would never have been told that kind of thing officially but we should have been and I feel that was the case with FKO but that could be the case with many fostered children. I don't know if that still happens but I would hope not.
32. I would say the foster parents should know what the foster children have been through. I don't think it's a good idea for the foster parents to get to know the parents of the foster child too well. I sometimes think you're better to have nothing to do with the parents of the foster children as it can muddy the water a wee bit. A lot of it depends on the family background.

Placement Preparation

33. I don't remember us receiving any written guidance or any handbooks. As far as I remember when the kids came in they just fitted in to the routine of the house. I just treated them the same as my own kids. What was good enough for my kids was good enough for them. That isn't strictly true though because they may have needs after what they might have been through psychologically.
34. We would usually get about two or three days' notice. I think the children were matched with our children because they were of similar age. They were about the same age as my two sons. We weren't given any notice of any known problems, nothing like that was passed on to us. We received very little background information. They did seem to settle in quite quickly though and it was a good place to stay at the farmhouse.

35. I've no recollection of the [REDACTED] children visiting us prior to them staying here. It's the same with the other children, they all just needed somewhere to stay, so they were brought to the house. There was never any prior visits for any of the children, not that I remember.
36. I don't think any of the children we fostered had been in foster care previously, so we didn't meet any other foster parents.

Daily Routine and Sleeping Arrangements

37. If it was a school day everybody had to be up and ready at the road end for half past seven and it was half a mile to the main road from the farmhouse. After school if I was around I would pick the children up, but if the sun was shining they would just walk.
38. When the kids got in it was homework first then they would have a play or go outside with a dog. My lads would do their homework or go on the computer.
39. They all had chores to do, especially on the farm. Feeding the hens was a chore but they all loved that. They also fed the dogs, did the dishes, chores like that, not exactly work and they were all shared out between all the children.
40. I thought the boys were in one room and girls were in another but I believe it might have been my boys in one room, my daughter and [REDACTED] were in a room and the two [REDACTED] children in another room. That probably made more sense as they were brother and sister and it would be good for them to discuss things.
41. I can't think of any of the foster children ever wetting the bed, I don't know.

Washing and Bathing

42. We had quite a big bathroom but it was basic, nothing fancy. There was a shower over the bath so you could have either. All the children could use the bathroom as they wanted and it had a lock for privacy.

Clothes

43. I believe we paid for the clothes, but maybe we got a clothing allowance from Stirling Council, I don't know. My wife, FKA [REDACTED] washed and ironed all the clothes. Everybody had their own clothes.

Mealtimes

44. We all sat down at the table for our meals. There was no sitting with it on your knee watching the television. The food was all good, FKA [REDACTED] was a good cook and did all the cooking.
45. The foster children had to eat what was put down in front of them, just the same as my own kids. If any of the children didn't like the food then they didn't get anything else or maybe they wouldn't get a pudding. You had to finish your main course to get a pudding and that was the same for everyone. They were all treated the same and they all ate the same.

Leisure Time

46. I took all the children swimming once a week. We also had a sand pit, lots of books and toys and we had a television in the living room. All the children got to watch the television.
47. There was a garden at the farmhouse and I would actually say it wasn't as safe as it could have been. You went out onto the grass and there was a dyke at the top of the garden that should really have had a fence around it. There weren't any accidents though.
48. I would take the children shopping on a Friday or Saturday if they needed anything. I don't remember any of the children going to any clubs.

49. None of the foster children who came to stay with us ever came with a lot of possessions. The [REDACTED] were with us for longer but they only had a couple of carrier bags each with them. When they went away they had that much stuff we took a photograph.
50. I honestly can't say whether any children got pocket money, either my kids or any of the foster children. If there had been any pocket money everybody would have got the same.

Trips and Holidays

51. I remember taking the children to Butlins in Filey near Scarborough, that was pretty good. We didn't have one bit of bother the whole time we were there. We all went, FKA [REDACTED] and myself, our three kids, the two [REDACTED] kids and wee [REDACTED]. It was hard work but it was an amazing holiday.
52. My parents and FKA [REDACTED]'s parents all lived in Edinburgh and we tried to visit them once a month so we did take all the children to Edinburgh as well. That was our children and all the foster children and we managed to do that most months.

Schooling

53. We did foster two girls, before the [REDACTED] kids, that were of school age. They went to a different school from my children and I remember I took them to school two or three days a week.
54. The only other school age foster children we ever had were the [REDACTED] children. They would have changed school but I don't know what school they were originally at. I presume it was Catholic, as they went to the same school as my children.
55. I wouldn't have thought their education would have been affected by changing school. I'm not aware of any of the foster children we ever had having any kind of special needs.

56. FKA and myself would attend parent nights if we could. If it was something during the day and I was working or away anywhere then FKA would go herself but I would go if I could.
57. FKA helped the children with all the homework as she was quite clever. It was done in the living room or in their own rooms.

Healthcare

58. If the children had any health problems we would just phone our regular doctor. I'm not aware of any regular health check that needed to be carried out. I'm not aware of the children having any records or of us having to keep any records relating to the foster children's health.
59. I imagine the foster children would be registered with our doctor but I don't know. The same for the dentist I think the foster children just went along with our children to see the dentist.

Christmas and Birthdays

60. We had a Christmas dinner just the same as everyone else and Santa Claus came. We decorated the house, had a Christmas tree, it was all just the same as for our kids. We made sure all the piles of presents were the same for all the children. I made sure every child got much the same. That was my recollection.
61. Birthdays were the same, our foster children were treated just the same as our children. We would get them all a present on their birthdays. How it was decided what they were getting I don't know. I suppose we would just have found out what they wanted. I'm not sure about a party but there would be a cake.

Discipline

62. Bearing in mind this was a time when teachers were going around giving kids the belt and it was a different era, I would have given FKO a kind of clip round the ear now and again. It would probably have been in response to cheek or swearing, it wasn't willy-nilly. To me, back then a quick skelp round the ear could do a lot more good. If I had known the lad had his face bashed by his dad and step-dad the last thing I would have done is give him a skelp round the ear.
63. Discipline was also things like keeping the kids inside when they were wanting to go outside. That would be long drawn out stuff that needed a discussion about what had been done and that it was wrong, why they were being kept in and what should have been done. As a result of that punishment they could be told they were staying in all week.
64. Any discipline was very rare though. With my own two boys I just had to give them a look and that was enough. They had seen me all my life, working outside and manhandling things so I think there was a lot of respect there. There was no record kept by FKA or myself in relation to discipline.
65. I didn't receive any rules or guidelines about how to discipline the foster children, but nobody ever gave me any on how to discipline my own kids either. My dad never laid a finger on me his whole life. He just had to look at me. The respect I had for him made you stop what you were doing.
66. I have read about punishment in the documents the Inquiry has given me. The word punishment is used a lot so I asked my children what they thought punishment was when they were being brought up by us.
67. My younger son said getting kept inside because he hated that as he loved to be outside all the time. My older son said being made to feed the dogs as he had to get his boots and coat on and go away outside.

Relationship with Foster Children

68. As far as I was concerned I was just a dad to the foster children we had stay with us. I would give cuddles and show affection. Wee [REDACTED] was one of the foster children and I quite took to him, he was desperate for cuddles. I remember he once came through to the kitchen and asked FKA [REDACTED] and me if he could call us mum and dad. We said we weren't his mum and dad but if it made him happy he could. After that he never stopped calling us mum and dad right up to the day he left.
69. My wife FKA [REDACTED] was just the same, she was like a mother to the foster kids and got on fine with them.
70. My children always seemed to get on well with the foster children. I know that with the [REDACTED] because they were matched in ages with my two sons. Like all kids, they fell out now and again, but that's all part of growing up, they were all just like brothers and sisters.

Contact with Family (other than siblings)

71. The mother of the [REDACTED] kids did come to the house about once a month. She had a cup of tea at the kitchen table and spoke to the kids.
72. As far as I remember all the foster kids had visits from family members. Sometimes they would be with a social worker but I don't remember anything regular. Visits were all arranged by the social work with FKA [REDACTED]
73. I was sometimes there when family visited the foster children. I do remember the [REDACTED] mother visiting and speaking with her, she seemed alright. No one ever said the parents couldn't telephone their children but I'm not aware of that ever happening. I don't remember any kids phoning home and I don't remember any letters ever being sent or received.
74. We were never given any instruction by the social work about contact. It was never asked for and refused that's for sure. We would always have allowed contact between

the foster children and their families. I feel any contact between parents and children was very easy going.

Visitors

75. I don't remember any visitors other than the [REDACTED] social worker, Jim Roberts, when he brought their mother to see her children. That was about once a month.
76. I would speak to the social worker if I was there. I don't think we discussed the welfare of the kids I think it was just general stuff, but I can't remember to be honest.

Review of Care/placement

77. I have no recollection of any reviews being carried out or of any care plans. We didn't attend any Children's Panels or anything like that. I don't remember any conversation with the social work or any of the children about the children's views on being in care.
78. Day to day if we were to notice the children were unhappy or if we thought something was wrong we would have spoken to them but I can't remember anything like that.
79. The only children that were of an age where they could speak and be listened to were the two [REDACTED] children, who were nine and ten. They didn't have a lot to say and were quite quiet but I didn't know why at the time. I obviously know now.
80. I do think children's views should be listened to anyway, whether they are in foster care or not. The [REDACTED] children were treated the same as our own children so if there was something they wanted to get across I would have hoped they would have managed to get it across.

Records

81. We had no written or verbal guidance on the keeping of records and to my knowledge we didn't keep any records for any of the foster children that were in our care.

82. I've now learned a lot from this process, from reading the documents sent to me. I think records should be kept, especially information you would want to know about the children's' background. I didn't even know they had brothers and sisters for example.
83. With hindsight we should have wanted to know more and asked more, but we should also have been told more, it's a bit of both. We just dealt with what was in front of us. You feel like you're being nosey asking questions about the children. We didn't know and certainly weren't provided with any records or details about the [REDACTED] children.
84. We knew they were longer term and that they would be with us as long as they needed to be but I didn't know how long that would be for and I can't remember the circumstances surrounding why they were with us. I now know that ended up being about sixteen months.

Leaving the Care System

85. With most of the children we fostered they were only with us for a short period of time and there was no need to prepare them for leaving. The children already knew when they were likely to be leaving.
86. There was no process I was aware of for preparing the [REDACTED] children for leaving us after sixteen months. As far as I was concerned when they went [REDACTED] was being punished and wasn't to get to go on a school trip. Stirling Council then got involved and they let her go on the trip. That totally undermined any discipline that we had administered.
87. We had already told the school she couldn't go on the trip, and that it was a punishment, or discipline as I prefer to call it. [REDACTED] then went to her social worker and complained. The social work then decided that she could go on the trip, so we said that if they were doing that they could just keep her. That's my memory of what happened.

88. The two [REDACTED] children never came back after that. We decided, as a result, that we would stop foster care. To me discipline was important especially with six kids running about and Stirling Council had effectively taken the parenthood out of our hands. All discipline had been lost in my eyes.
89. There was no further contact with any of the children we fostered other than when we bumped into them in Stirling. We did that with the two wee girls, who were lovely lassies and with wee [REDACTED] who called us mum and dad.
90. All the children, other than the [REDACTED] and the three babies, went back to their mothers. I didn't sit any children down and explain what was happening, there was no need as they all knew what was happening with them. The only children that might have stayed on with us would have been the [REDACTED] but that obviously didn't happen.

Complaints

91. The main issue was that [REDACTED] had been caught stealing chocolate bars, which sounds trivial, but it was still stealing. I then discussed disciplining [REDACTED] with Jim Roberts her social worker. I told him I had decided she wasn't getting to go on a school trip. It was my decision, I told him she wasn't to go and he agreed. That was a couple of days before the trip.
92. Then it was all changed and she got to go on the trip. I don't know who authorised that but it came from the social work department. We then told the social work department to keep both the [REDACTED] children.
93. As a result of that [REDACTED] FKA [REDACTED] did write a letter to the social work department complaining about their action and telling them we had finished with foster care. I don't think we ever had any response to that.

Police Involvement

Arrest in 2017

94. I have no criminal convictions at all however, at six o'clock one Sunday morning in June 2017 my now wife [REDACTED] and I were going on holiday when I was stopped at the baggage area at Edinburgh Airport by two policemen. They told me I was under arrest and I had to go with them. That was it, we were told nothing else. [REDACTED] was left standing there in the airport, she didn't know what to do. I found out later that it was for charges of abuse that were made against me by FKO [REDACTED] from when he was in our foster care around 1979.
95. I was handcuffed, put in a van and taken away to Livingston Police station. Then I was put in a stinking cell and I had to give fingerprints and DNA. I remember there was somebody else's toenail clippings all over the floor of the cell, it was disgusting. I was kept in that cell from the Sunday morning until the Monday morning when I was taken to the court in Stirling. I was appointed a duty solicitor, Mr McCready, and he read out the charges in court. I denied the charges in court and I was bailed that Monday afternoon. I didn't ever go back to work after that.
96. The police had something like 42 days to find me with that warrant and I had lived at or within three miles of the farm for fifty odd years. My son has also always lived in the area and I have been on the electoral roll for all of those fifty odd years.
97. I did go to court for that but the case was dropped. I don't know exactly what it's called, but because the allegations were from so long ago everybody that could say FKO [REDACTED] was in good health and was well looked after by me was dead. That's why the case was dropped. As far as I was aware that was the end of it yet here we are with it all happening again.

Allegations of Abuse

Awareness of Abuse

98. As a foster parent I was not aware of any behaviour that I would consider to be abuse. No children I have been caring for have needed any kind of medical attention as a result of any punishment or discipline.
99. In my opinion, as a foster carer, there was no punishment or discipline or other practice carried out that I would consider to have been abuse. At that time teachers were going about belting children in schools.

Reporting of Abuse

100. No concerns were ever raised with me or FKA [REDACTED]. The children did get visits from their mother with Jim Roberts the social worker so there were opportunities for the children to report abuse.
101. In the documentation I received from the Inquiry there is reference to a break down in communications between Mrs [REDACTED] and ourselves. I don't remember that but if that was the case the social worker was always at our house with Mrs [REDACTED] so there were opportunities to make a report of abuse. As far as I'm aware nothing was ever reported.
102. [REDACTED] and FKO [REDACTED] had been in and out of care their whole life, which I only know because of the documentation the Inquiry sent me. I would have thought they would be well equipped in how the system worked and how to talk to a social worker, if they needed to.
103. To my knowledge [REDACTED] and FKO [REDACTED] never raised any concerns to me of possible abuse at our family home. I feel it also depends on what you call abuse, it's written down that FKO [REDACTED] fell out with one of my sons who stabbed him with a tent peg. FKO [REDACTED] then punched him back. This is two kids at ten years old, I would have punched him as well, I think their age is relevant.
104. If concerns were raised with me the only person I would have been able to speak to was the social worker Jim Roberts. I had more experience in dealing with children than

Jim Roberts did mind you. I didn't ever report anything, things were just dealt with, it's called bringing up kids.

105. There was no written or verbal guidance or instruction given to me on reporting of abuse by children or other members of my household. Even with the benefit of hindsight I do not feel I saw or became aware of anything that I think should have been reported.
106. I have never been the subject to any other complaint of abuse towards children. I am not aware of any abuse of foster children in my care ever being reported to the police. The thing is, it says in the documentation from the Inquiry that the [REDACTED] children ran away from our home on numerous occasions, got caught by the police and brought back to the house. They say the abuse was reported to the police and the police did nothing. The police never once brought those children back, because they never ran away. We were eight miles from the nearest town, so where were they going to go?
107. A check should be made of the police records because those children never ran away and were never reported missing. I don't believe they reported anything to the police concerning any abuse.

Allegations of Abuse for which there has been no Criminal Conviction

108. The only allegations that have been made against me are the ones I'm speaking to the Inquiry about. The ones that are in the documentation the Inquiry sent to me and were made by FKO [REDACTED] and these are the same ones that I was arrested for in 2017 which were all dropped at court.

Prior Statements

109. I have not given any other statement to anyone in relation to what I'm speaking about with the Inquiry.

Specific Allegations Against you that have been made to the Inquiry

FKO

110. FKO has given a statement to the Inquiry and it includes the following allegation " couldn't eat a Brussel sprout as she couldn't cut it up. She put the sprout into her mouth in one go and started to gag on it. I watched FKG looking at her. He then hit her with the back of his hand and knocked her off her stool. She fell to the floor and continued to gag on the Brussel sprout which was still in her mouth. I couldn't believe what I was seeing. I had not seen violence of this nature since my stepfather had beaten up my mother. I thought I was in foster care and would be safe from violence. I was in shock at what I had seen"
111. FKO was a wee quiet laddie and I now know why. After he was there a wee while he started to smile. I had a brilliant job for taking children with me and giving me a hand with things. As far as I could see he fell into the whole thing and I was sure he was quite happy. I didn't know he was having those thoughts at the time.
112. He wasn't a bad lad, but he would have been punished in some form in the 16 months he was with us. No doubt he got a clip round the ear at some point, but as I say he wasn't a bad lad.
113. It would have been me that punished him but I would not consider what I did abuse, I did not abuse him.
114. My response to that allegation is that the lassie was choking. I don't know where she was sitting but she choked and I grabbed her and skelped her back and the sprout came out. That's all I can remember about that.
115. Sometimes the passage of time can affect my recollection about what is alleged, but not with the likes of that. I don't remember the detail about how she was sitting but I remember the specifics of what happened because she was choking.

116. I cannot explain why he would say it happened the way he has described and I would accept that it would have been abuse had it happened that way.
117. FKO also alleges in his statement *"I remember thinking that the mother of the house should be the person to help a child but she didn't do much to help. In fact as it turned out FKA would become the worst abuser. Both FKG and FKA were particularly cruel to I witnessed what they did to her on many occasions. I can remember FKG passing her door at night and knocking on it just to waken her up"*
118. I didn't knock on the bedroom door. I wouldn't knock on the door because my own daughter was in the room, I wouldn't have woken her up. I have no recollection of anything like that.
119. I do accept that would be abuse, if that kind of behaviour was carried out as it's stopping a child from sleeping. I don't know why that is being said.
120. He goes on to say *"FKA-FKG children then started to get in on the act. They started leading us into traps where we would get the blame. I remember on one occasion when we got off the school bus at the road end. We had to walk about a mile up the road to get to the house. I must have been about 8 or 9 years old when and suggested that we swear all the way up the road. and I joined in and when we got to the house we were punished for swearing while FKA-FKG children got off 'scot free'. They knew that they could wind and I up and deliberately did so to get us punished. We were like their play things. I never saw any of the FKA-FKG children being punished"*.
121. That's just four kids falling out with each other and teasing one another. Both of my sons, have since told me that the children got away with more than they did.
122. The passage of time has possibly affected my memory but I just don't remember that incident at all.
123. I don't know why these things are being said.

124. FKO also alleges "One night we were all watching the film the Poseidon Adventure. Someone farted and FKG and FKA asked who it was. No one said anything. You could feel the tension in the room. I didn't want the film to end as I knew that someone was going to get it. and I went to our room and FKG and FKA came in shortly after. They told us to take off our pants and let them inspect them. They also said that none of the other kids had been responsible as they had denied it. FKG then set about me while FKA set about They were hitting us all over our bodies. FKG was lying on top of me on the bed. was the victim of a frenzied attack from FKA and even FKG had to stop her as was cut and bleeding. She was thrown about like a rag doll"
125. FKO was a wee eight year old he wasn't a big lump of a laddie. If I had punched and kicked and slapped him in a frenzied attack I could have killed him. I was much stronger in those days. If we had done that, they would have been in a right mess and our kids would have seen it. The bus driver for the school runs would have seen them, school teachers would have seen them, maybe other parents would have seen them. I don't know what else to say, other than that did not happen.
126. The passage of time has not affected my memory and I just don't know why these things are being said.
127. I do accept that would be abuse, assault is what it would have been but it didn't happen.
128. FKO also alleges "One time I was out in the field with FKG during the lambing season. I was fine helping till we came across a sheep that was having difficulties. There were two lamb's heads appearing and the sheep was struggling. FKG said that he would have to cut off one of the lamb's head so that the sheep and the other lamb would survive. I was horrified and tried to walk away. FKG brought me back and made me sit down and watch while he cut of one of the heads. I tried to look away but he wouldn't let me. I was traumatised by this"

129. I did have had to do that now and again. When you're lambing six hundred sheep every year for twenty four years that can happen, but I've only seen it about six times in all that time. The chances of FKO seeing that are very rare. My son sometimes helped me, and he was the same age as FKO. He would no doubt have glorified it when telling FKO about it and describing exactly what was going on. FKO might have seen it as he was encouraged to help on the farm and was keen to help but I feel he was more likely told about it. As I said it can happen.
130. The passage of time has possibly affected my recollection but I don't know why he is saying that. I do believe that would be considered to be abuse.
131. FKO goes on to allege *"During the winter there was a very heavy snow fall. There were snow drifts the height of the farm house. We were unable to get to school as the road was blocked. We were all confined to the house. I was wearing a pair of shorts and a polo neck sweater. It was nice and warm in the house. The front door of the house was not used as we always went in and out a side door. FKG and his son shouted for me to come to them at the front door. I was living on my nerves at this time and suspected that something was up. FKG grabbed me and threw me into the snow drift on at least three occasions. I tried to laugh it off but then they locked the door and wouldn't let me in. I was starting to feel the cold and was banging on the door. FKG then opened the door and threw a bucket of water over me and again closed the door. I remember passing out and that is when they let me back in. I had a very bad cold for weeks afterwards"*
132. Depending on what you read it's either FKA and me or me and my son that throw FKO out the door. The charge on the petition document claims it was FKA and me that threw him out, yet the documentation the Inquiry sent me says it was my son and me, so one of them isn't right. The story about the bucket of water isn't right either. It's more likely that he was thrown into a snow drift fully clothed like you would do having fun throwing someone into a pool when you're on holiday. That's the only explanation I can come up with as I have no recollection about that at all.

133. I don't know why these things are being said and I do agree it would be abuse if it happened as is being said.
134. FKO alleges *"This led to another problem. When I was sitting at the dining table I couldn't breathe because of all the mucus. I was having to constantly blow my nose and was very embarrassed. As a result one day I came down to the table and my place was not set. I was told that because of all my snorting and blowing I would have to eat my dinner in the small toilet in the back of the house. It was a very old fashioned toilet and I was made to eat my dinner of the toilet seat. It was not even on a plate. It was because I was not fit to sit at the table. Strangely I liked being in the toilet because it meant that I was safe and away from the pressure being applied by FKG and FKA and I had peace to eat my food"*
135. There was an old outside toilet which was used for people who were outside working with their wellie boots on. The chances of it having a seat are pretty slim let alone a lid so I haven't a clue what he's talking about. As far as I am aware that did not happen.
136. I have no recollection of that and I don't know why these things are being said. I do accept that would be abuse if it happened as is being said.
137. FKO goes on to say *"FKA-FKG children were not particularly friendly and could inflict more misery on us by telling tales. I recall one night camping out in a tent in the garden. In the morning and I had a disagreement he stabbed me with a tent peg and I punched him in the face. I ran away and managed to avoid everyone for most of the day. I was eventually caught by the police and brought back. During the search for me the day I ran away after the camping incident FKA-FKG found a pile of dirty socks under my bed. I had put them there because I was getting a row for putting too many dirty socks into the wash. FKA confronted me about the socks and she made me give a full explanation as to why I had left the socks there. The real reason was she was a cruel bitch and had told me not to put the socks into the wash but I couldn't say that to her"*

138. I haven't a clue about that. I have no recollection of that and don't know why it's being said. I accept that would be abuse if it happened as is being said.
139. FKO also says *"There was another occasion when I came into the kitchen and FKA was making the dinner for that night. I asked her what was for pudding and she told me it was chocolate mousse. I told her that it was one of my favourites. That night she gave me an extra helping but it tasted of bleach and I struggled to eat it. I don't know what was put into it but I couldn't leave the table until it was eaten. It took me three hours to eat it. It was just another episode of her cruelty"*
140. FKO was somebody that was supposedly frightened to talk up. Yet he walked into the kitchen and asked FKA what was for pudding, that doesn't make any sense at all to me. If he did eat it and it was bleach he would have had a bloody sore stomach. I wasn't there though so I don't know about that. I don't know why it's being said and I accept that would be abuse if it happened as is being said.
141. FKO says *"We had to call FKA-FKG Uncle FKG and Auntie FKA which I did not like either. FKA was constantly leading us into a situation that she was manipulating to enable her to turn on us and punish us for our reactions to that situation. She would also try to turn and I against each other"*
142. I have no recollection of that but it's meant to be happening in the same house that wee was calling me dad. I don't know why that's being said. I accept that would be abuse if it happened as is being described.
143. FKO alleges FKG and FKA used to tell me to lower my eyes. I did not understand what they meant by this. FKA used to scream at us to lower our eyes and until she explained what she meant we were being constantly punished. She used to slap us and tell us not to look at her but to keep our head down looking at the ground"
144. That just doesn't make any sense to me. I don't have any recollection of this at all. I don't know what else to say.

145. I don't know why that's being said and I would describe that as abuse if it happened as is being described.
146. FKO goes on to say FKG *used to take me into to my bedroom to punish me. The curtains would be closed and the lights would be off. He would just be sitting there. He would ask me what I had done wrong that day and would say that I needed punished. He would tell me to feel his hand and explain to me that his hands were very hard as he had been working on the farm all day. He would tell me to take down my trousers and pants and tell me to lie across the bed. He would just sit there in the chair and watch me. Then he would hit me across the buttocks and punish me for something I may or may not have done"*
147. I don't think that justifies any comment from me other than to say it's not true. My memory has not been affected by the passage of time and I really have no idea why that is being said. I accept that it would be abuse if it happened as is being described, but it did not happen.
148. FKO says *"Although I was not aware of any sexual assault on me I have since thought about these incidents. I now wonder what FKG was doing behind my back and why he behaved in this manner. I suspect that there was some sort of sexual implications but as I say I was not aware of any sexual assaults on me"*
149. I don't think that justifies any response from me either as it's simply not true. My memory has not been affected by the passage of time and I don't know why that is being said. I accept that would be abuse if it happened as is being described but again that did not happen.
150. FKO says *"FKA-FKG were trying to cause trouble between and I so the only person I could speak to was a teddy bear that I had brought from a children's home I had been in. I spent a lot of time speaking to that teddy bear"*

151. I haven't a clue what that's about. My memory has not been affected by the passage of time and I don't know why that is being said. I accept that would be abuse if it happened as is being described.

152. FKO says "The only time that FKA was nice to me was on my birthday. She told me that nothing would happen to me that day. She was so nice I honestly felt I could have loved her. It was like the Christmas Day in the First World War when the soldiers stopped fighting and played football. But when it was over the battle started again"

153. That's rubbish. My memory has not been affected by the passage of time and I don't know why that is being said. I accept that would be abuse if it happened as is being described.

Lessons to be learned

154. After all I have just been through my first response to this is not to become a foster carer. Somebody does need to look after those children though.

155. This is all quite ridiculous when I think about it. I've been asked so many questions about fostering children and there is so much that I feel we should have been told that we never were told.

Other information

156. 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..... FKG

Dated..... 25-2-22