

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**Witness Statement of**

LCK

Support person present: Yes

1. My full name is LCK or LCK I am known as LCK LCK My contact details are known to the Inquiry. My date of birth is 1932. I am 84 years old.

Birth and family details

2. I was born in in Aberdeen. My father's surname was and that should have been my surname too. Instead my maiden name was was my father.
3. I have 6 children, 3 boys and 3 girls. My daughter is present and I am content that she is able to hear what I have to say. I see my other children regularly. I also have 17 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren.
4. I was an illegitimate and unwanted child. When I was about 2 or 3 weeks old I was put to and in Glasgow. They must have been friends of my mother. The when I was only a few months old I was put into the home at Nazareth House, Aberdeen.

First memories of Nazareth House

5. I am showing a photograph of a group of children including me at about 4 and a half or 5 years of age. A few of the people in the photo are dead now. I am the tallest girl. One of the girls beside me in the photo is [REDACTED]

The fire at Nazareth House – My friend, [REDACTED]

6. In about 1937 there was a fire at Nazareth House. When the News of the World spoke to me, I asked them what about the fire at Nazareth House? This is the earliest memory that I have. There was a girl called [REDACTED] [REDACTED] who slept in the next bed to mine. She is next to me in the photo I have shown. She was about the same age as me. The fire happened at night. We were all taken down stairs out for the building in our nightclothes and carrying our clothes in a bundle. I remember [REDACTED] was sent by a nun back to the room. She was sent back into the building which was on fire to get her clothes. I never saw her again after that. I think she went back to her bed and died in the fire. We were all coming downstairs with our clothes in our arms. She was my partner. A nun stood on a platform thing. She said "where's your clothes?". [REDACTED] panicked and she ran back. I think she went back to her bed and was burned to death and nothing was reported. The fire was in the early morning. We hadn't yet had breakfast. No one has ever investigated this matter. The News of the World did not know anything about this. I remember this clear as day. I mind going down those stairs. I am certain that this happened. It wasn't a home. It was a prison.

My sister

7. My sister was older than me. I was due to join her in the older girls' room. She had rheumatic fever and was always in the sick room. She died when she was 26 years old. Her name was [REDACTED] and her date of birth was [REDACTED] 1931.

Constipation and treatment

8. I do remember when I suffered from constipation, a woman would put me across her knee. She would squeeze and squeeze and squeeze on my stomach until I passed a bowel motion. This was before the fire. She would squeeze round my buttocks. This was when I was about 3 years old. Lots of children got that. I was always constipated. They didn't like soiled pants. Epsom salts were used as a laxative. There were never enough toilets.

Corporal punishment

9. If you could not get to the toilet you were battered. You were belted with a belt. They pulled your gown up over your head. Then it was twisted so that your arms were trapped and you couldn't save yourself or anything. Then you got belted. Many a time I got belted.

Polishing floors

10. There were polished wooden floors. We had to kneel down in a line and sweep with a cloth, left to right, down 2 inches and repeat. Each of us had our own cloth. I was only about 7 or 8 years old.

Permanent damage to my left leg

11. On one occasion a nun said we were to do another floor after we'd finished polishing one. I said "not another one". She heard me. She pulled me by the hair of my head. A large wood splinter from the wooden floor went into my lower left leg. I still have the scar and I am showing it now. My leg was bandaged but I got no other medical treatment. They used to rip them off and it was sore. Every 2 days. They were very rough.

Absence of kindness

12. There was no kindness shown by the nuns. Epsom salts were given in a tablespoonful thrown down your throat. They were not even given in a glass. That would make us run to the toilet. If you soiled yourself you were belted.

I had a number, not a name

13. My number was [REDACTED]. That's what I was called. I wasn't called my name. My sister was number [REDACTED]. We had to line up on a Friday. We had to put our pants down on the floor for inspection. We were terrified because you got battered if you made even a small mark on your pants. One nun hated me. If she could have got away with murdering me she would have. My pants were numbered with my number [REDACTED]. The nun took them away to the toilet and wet them. The toilet had not been flushed. She came back and asked who was number [REDACTED]. I said, "I am". She said, "how did you wet your pants?". I said I didn't. I accused her of wetting them. I was battered for answering back. I must have been about 9.

Running away and the punishment

14. I ran away for the first time aged 10. I found out where my mother lived. Me and [REDACTED] did it. My mother lived at [REDACTED] Aberdeen at the time. I went to my grannie's. She said what are you doing here lassie? I was pulled back by the nuns. I was put in a broom cupboard. It was smaller and narrower than the door in my living room. I was kept in there for 24 hours. I was not given any food, nor allowed to go to the toilet. I was made to stand. There was no light. That was my punishment.

15. A couple of months later I ran away again. I was warned that I would not be taken back if I did it again. I would be sent home to my parents. I did run away again. Nazareth House would not take me back. I am not sure if I

was better in my mother's care. I got fed at Nazareth House. At home I had to fend for myself. I was about 12. But I could fight.

16. I was a difficult child. I would say something was black although it was white.

Bed wetting at Nazareth House

17. If you had wet the bed, you had to lie on the springs of the bed if the mattress was wet. In the mornings children had to stand in the middle of the floor. The wet sheet would be put on their heads. We would all circle around and say things like swim little fishes. Making a fool of them. They would be thrown into a cold bath in the morning. The same bath was used by 12 children. The water was never changed, never heated up.

Separation from boys

18. The boys were in a different building. We never got to look at them. They never got to look at us. If you did, you were battered.

Sister **LDZ**

19. I remember Sister **LDZ** was a swine of a woman. She was big and stout and carried a mallet under her cloak.

The Vault containing dead bodies

20. I was in a big fight in the playground. There was a playground with a big pole with big swings to swing round. Next to it there was a vault. It held coffins of dead nuns. As a punishment I was put into the vault with the dead nuns in their coffins. It was quiet and dreary in there. I took the lids off the coffins and swapped them. I mixed them up. Under the lids were dead bodies. Their skin was like prunes and there was a terrible smell. I was belted for that. I was about 11 at the time.

Living with my mother

21. After I went back to live with my mother she put me to St. Peter's school. I was living with my mother from when I was 13 onwards. Eventually she moved to [REDACTED] in Aberdeen.

Number of girls at Nazareth House

22. At Nazareth House there were 100 or so girls. There were groups of 10 to 11 year olds; 12; 13; and 14 year olds, with about 12 to 15 in each group.

Absence of information about identity in Nazareth House

23. My sister was a year and a half older than me. I didn't know she was my sister. My mother came once to see us both. We looked at each other. I wondered who she was. My sister was a weak child. I used to look out for her although she was older.

24. I didn't know when my birthday was until I was 14 years old. I never had a birthday cake in my life. I made sure my 6 kids did.

25. I shudder when I see a bairn going into a home. I didn't find out who my father was until I was 14 years old. I had known him as Uncle [REDACTED]. I got a smack round the lugs from my mother when I said he was more to me than just my uncle. He turned round then and said, "I am your father".

Clothing and personal care in Nazareth House

26. All of our clothes at Nazareth House were home made. Even the pants we had to wear. They were made of calco. I never knew what an ordinary pair of pants were until I left Nazareth House. Girls had to use a piece of calco cloth as a sanitary pad when they had a period. They had to wash it out themselves and use it the next month. I was too young to have to do that.

Enforced sleeping pose

27. We had to sleep with our hands crossed on our chests. A nun would check us at night. There was a great big dorm with about 50 to 80 beds. So there were about 50 to 80 girls in it. A nun would look through a window to check on us. You couldn't rise in the night for the toilet.

Taking the blame for bedwetting

28. I took the blame once for another girl having wet the bed. Never again. I was put in a cold bath. I was given 2 Epsom salts as a new starter. I can't mind the name of the girl I took the blame for. It was terrible. I never did it again.

Food

29. Sometimes at dinner we were force fed. We called fat on the meat "judge". We were force fed judge by having it put down our throats while your nose was held. It made you sick. Sometimes I was lying on the ground when this was being done to me.

Being left handed

30. I was left handed. My left arm was tied behind my back with a bandage. I had to use my right hand to write. A left handed child was a devil's child.

Education

31. For schooling, we learned in the home. We did not go out to school. So I was a dumb cluck. The boys went out to school but the girls did not. There was a teacher who came in called [REDACTED] LKZ [REDACTED]. We called her "swan neck". When she was angry her neck went red. So we called her swan neck. I was battered for calling her that once, all over the place. I am a

bad reader but not a bad writer. I wouldn't say I was educated. Myself and my husband taught me. I can sew and crochet and knit now. I am skilled at that. I am showing some of the items I have made recently.

32. We had to darn socks for the boys. I'm a lovely darter. The girls were educated in one big classroom. It was partitioned to alter the size. All of the girls were educated together. I was hopeless at school. Even when I went to St. Peter's after I ran away from Nazareth House. I left school at 14.

Daily routine at Nazareth House

33. The daily routine involved getting up at 6.30 to 7am. Then breakfast. We got an egg on Easter Sunday. I never tasted a chip until I went to my grandma's. For breakfast we had a plate of porridge. Dinner was at 12 noon with soup to start followed by stew with judge. After breakfast we had to go upstairs, make our beds and tidy up. There were 3 beds in the sick room down the stairs. I would make my sister's bed if she wasn't in the sick room.

34. At 9am we were in the classroom. We were there until 12 noon. There was no morning break and no playtime. We were allowed to play from 4pm until 5.30pm. We didn't do any qualifications at all. Supper time, then bed, was at 6pm. Everyone was put to bed at the same time. There was silence at night. The dorm was dark with black curtains. You didn't know what a party was or a birthday. We never got out to parties outside Nazareth House.

I was a spirited child

35. When I ran away I climbed out of the window and down the drain pipe. I was not an angel. I was a difficult child. I did it my way.

36. We had no choice but to polish the floors until you could see your face in them. At weekends we got out to the playground. When someone taunted my sister I battered her. Then I got battered for doing that.

Compulsory attendance at church

37. On a Sunday we were made to go to church for about 2 hours. We also had to go on a Friday evening maybe. I wasn't a proper catholic. You had no choice but to go to church. On a Sunday we had breakfast then church. Dinner was later and we got to play for half an hour. In the evening there was benediction and then bed at 7.30 to 8pm. We had to go to confession, with a minister behind a mesh. That was once a week. I wasn't interested in any of that.

Assault on my sister in church and beatings

38. Once a nun threw a set of keys at my sister's ear in church. It was Sister LDZ Blood was pouring down my sister's face. I said, "I'll have you for that". A nun said they would get me. I've never had such a hiding like that in my life. I was strapped down with my hands restrained so I couldn't resist. I couldn't use my feet or my hands. I was beaten and left like that until I calmed down. I was about 11 or 12 years old at the time.

39. We were beaten in a way that would not leave marks. I blame them for having had to have a hip and knee replacement. I was always hit on the left side. That was where I suffered the leg injury. That was the only time I was badly hurt.

Communal shoes

40. I never knew what it was like to have new shoes. You just got anybody's shoes. They were picked out from a row of shoes. If they fitted you, you wore them.

New born babies

41. Sometimes I could hear a baby cry in the mornings. I'd wonder where the baby came from. Then I saw a little new born baby in the nursery. I only

saw babies on 2 or 3 mornings. I think now these were nuns' babies. Babies stayed in Nazareth House. They'd be in a cot in a special room. Once they left the nursery they never went back again. I don't know what happened to them.

Trouble and beatings

42. I was always in trouble. I was always in the middle of it if there was any trouble. Probably every second day I was punished. I would be made to do without shoes or a meal. I would also get belted.

43. I am asked about sexual abuse. I was not sexually abused and I do not know of any sexual abuse having taken place.

44. I saw others being beaten, for example for walking about at night and getting caught. Once another girl and I decided to take a walk at night. We were taken upstairs. We were belted outside the toilets with a big belt. We were hit around the body and on the backside. We were hit without clothes on.

45. I heard about others being beaten. I saw children bleeding and shivering out of baths. It was sister **LDZ** Sister **LJJ** was a gem. She had us when we were baby girls. She worked in the nursery and then she was transferred.

The effect of my childhood experiences on me as a mother

46. My daughter **██████** confirms that I was unable to be demonstrably affectionate as a mother towards my children. I blame this on my own experiences in care at Nazareth House. For example there were no cuddles, no love and no affection. However, my children were well looked after, protected if they were in trouble and given the best of everything. They were never slapped. I was a good mother to all of my children. I wouldn't hear a bad word against them.

No privacy

47. When we were getting washed at Nazareth House, we had to strip together. At about age 8 or 9 or 10, we would only be able to change our underwear on a Friday night. You could wear the same clothes for a fortnight if your new clothes were not ready.

Christmas

48. On Christmas day we were given a gift each. On Boxing Day they were taken away for distribution the next year to those a year younger, for example a doll or the like. I didn't even know what a pair of slippers were.

My marriage

49. I was married at age 17. My husband was a butcher. His name was [REDACTED] We were happily married for over 50 years until my husband died in 2001. We had 6 children. He played football [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I am showing photos of my husband in his team line up. We got married after he completed his national service.

Hygiene at Nazareth House

50. There was a row of sinks in one place at Nazareth House. There was a toothbrush and a tumbler at each sink.. We shared them. I had Gibbs toothpaste in a round tin. I had imperial leather soap. My mother would bring me these. As soon as my mother went away they would take them off me.

51. We would have a bath maybe twice a month. Bed wetters would have a cold bath every morning. That wasn't the way to deal with the problem. There were 3 baths in a row. There would be a queue at each one. One person would be in the bath while a nun watched from a chair. There was no privacy.

Life after Nazareth House

52. When I was 14 until I was 17, I lived at [REDACTED] Aberdeen where my mother lived. I worked in a fish factory during the week in Aberdeen. Once my mother threw a black lead brush at me. I had black eye for ages. I didn't want to black lead the fireplace. I had just finished cleaning the stairs. I was about 16. I often had to do the dishes. My sister would avoid it by not having a meal. I got out of it by getting married.

My sibling and half-siblings

53. My mother had to take my sister out of Nazareth House when I ran away. My mother had to deliver the home's clothes back. She always cast it up to me for costing her a fortune. My stepbrothers and stepsisters were not in Nazareth House. They lived with my mother. [REDACTED] was my father and my sister's father. I was the youngest of 7 in total, siblings and half siblings. My half siblings were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. My mother was married then separated. Then she messed about with [REDACTED]. As an explanation for why I couldn't stay with my mother, I was told my mother had to work. She was going away to Stornoway to cut fish. I worked at that too when I was 14 to 17.

Final thoughts and memories of Nazareth House

54. My time in the vault at Nazareth House haunted me for a long time after it. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

55. The nuns wore habits, not cloaks. They carried sticks under their habits. All of the children were treated the same way. I was often told I was the ring leader.

56. Magistrates would come to Nazareth House. I would say now it was a lawyer. I was never seen on my own by them. But you would get to play anything you liked that day. It was not the normal routine. The nuns knew they were coming in advance. So the children were all happy that day. Our clothes were changed and we were tidy. Once the visitors were away we were back to polishing floors.

57. The only good thing that I learned at Nazareth House was how to sew. Not all of the girls were interested in learning. It kept me out of trouble. This is now my hobby. I make knitted and crocheted baby blankets by hand. I am showing examples to the Inquiry team. (They are beautifully finished to a professional standard).

58. I did complain to the nuns about things but others complained more than I did. The nuns told me I didn't have a mother who wanted me and that no one loved me. My mother did come to see us once a month from when I was about 7 years old. There was always a nun there when my mother visited so I could never tell her. My mother decided to put both my sister and myself into the home. That was even though [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in Glasgow wanted to adopt me. My mother didn't want to put just one of us into the home, so it was both.

59. I think the nuns were frustrated and they thought I could take it. My sister could not have survived beatings like I suffered.

60. I never went to the police. I thought about it but they would say I asked for it.

61. My daughter comments that I was a great mother to her. I was not an affectionate mother. I didn't know what it was as a child to get a cuddle and sit on someone's knee. Nor to have a special day. My kids always got that. That's why I'll help other people with money and food. I'd rather give food now than money to make sure kids and their parents are fed.

62. One time a letter was sent to my mother about my sister being ill. I was sent to deliver the letter. I must have been about 9. That was the first time I was out of Nazareth House. I was given instructions about how to get there. I had no trips and no holidays. I didn't even know what a cup of tea was. I had never tasted one. I had never been on a tram either.

Contact with INCAS

63. I saw a bit about INCAS in the News of the World newspaper. I answered the invitation to get in touch with them because the article was true. I think it was [REDACTED] She agrees with what I remember. She cries when she sees anything about Nazareth House. She was in Nazareth House too, but younger than me. INCAS contacted me after the News of the World article. I went to one meeting when I was able before my hip and knee were done. I stayed with [REDACTED] from Glasgow for a couple of nights. Frank Docherty of INCAS has written to me a few times. He's helped me a bit. I met 2 or 3 people from Nazareth House. I met [REDACTED] She came up and stayed with me for a couple of weeks. She died a few days after she returned to Glasgow.

64. [REDACTED] was punished. She fancied a priest. She was punished and put into some kind of detention because she fell in love with a priest. She told me about this. I went to Glasgow to her funeral. I was shown a video of her experiences. I didn't watch it. It was too upsetting. Everybody was talking about it. No one could understand why the government wasn't helping us.

65. I have never thought about looking for records of the time I was in Nazareth House. I have no concern about the Inquiry doing that. I have never taken legal advice about what happened. I would rather forget it. It would cause me to break down to talk about it.

66. It will be fine for me to read the statement over with my family when I am sent it by the Inquiry. I am content that it can be published with names redacted.

56. 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.

LCK

Signed.....



Dated.....

15 / 7 / 2016

