

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

HFE

Support person present: No

1. My name is HFE. My date of birth is 1948. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in the family home at Armadale, in West Lothian. My parents were and . My oldest siblings, and , died in infancy. There is , , , , me and . There is a large age gap between my two oldest brothers and me. There is about five years between me and my sister, .
3. My father was a miner who worked in Easton Colliery in Bathgate. My mother was a housewife. I don't recall her ever having a job. My father had a relatively good job so we were better off than some families. We were brought up as Catholics. My mother was deeply religious.
4. I do not have a very clear memory of my childhood. However, I have some specific memories of certain events which occurred when I was growing up.
5. In 1956, we moved to a larger house in Armadale which had three bedrooms. It was a similar house to the one in . The street was known as 'after the American prison due to the number of people living there having been in prison. There were lots of factories there but they're all gone now. The area is

residential. The new house had a larger garden to the rear of the property. My dad was a keen gardener and managed to cultivate it to a high standard with rows of small flowers and a large area for a vegetable patch.

6. By the time I started school in the Autumn of 1953, my two older brothers were both working. Therefore, I do not have much recollection of them being a part of my life until later years. I started at St Anthony's in Armadale. On my first day, my sister accompanied me. It was normal practice that your mother would take you to school on your first day, but in my case, it was my sister. It might have been because she was already attending the school.
7. I didn't like being at school because most of the teachers were very scary. I found it difficult to take in much of what they were trying to teach me. I was terrified most days. I was scared of being asked to recite prayers and the times tables. I found them difficult. The teachers would often belt me with the tawse for not learning things correctly. They did the same to others too. It was quite traumatic receiving the belt every day for not remembering times tables or prayers.
8. We were given what was called a 'play piece' by our parents. It was usually a sandwich and a biscuit which you would be allowed to eat during the first morning break. Sometimes I would be given some money from my mother which we were allowed to spend it in the convenience shop on the way to school.
9. Most playtimes, my 'tormentor', a boy called [REDACTED], would take my biscuit from me along with my money. If I didn't have any money or had eaten my biscuit, he would grab my arm and give me a Chinese burn. It was very painful. The boy bullied me for a while before moving onto someone else.
10. The school was a Catholic one which was run by the council. It was next door to the Protestant school. As the years went on, I became less and less enamoured with school and started to miss it. It was called 'plugging' school. It wasn't long before the truant officer became involved and after a meeting at school, it was decided that I would be given a position of minor responsibility to give me an incentive to attend. As

a result, I had to report to the headmaster's office every day in order to collect the school register and take it round each class for the teachers to complete. After the task was completed I had to sort out the school milk delivery into class sizes and then with the help of another boy deliver the crates to the relevant classes.

11. The strategy seemed to work for a while to improve my attendance. However, the headmaster and teachers failed to recognise that the time I spent doing these tasks had impacted upon my capacity to learn and be educated properly.
12. In the summer prior to starting secondary school, I was sexually abused by one of my school friends. I had been out with him and another friend in the industrial estate behind one of their houses. As we were crossing a field to get back home, the bigger of my two friends came up behind me and pulled my trousers down. He pushed me down onto the ground and forced himself on me. The other boy didn't try to stop him and said it was "just a bit of fun" and "not to bother about it". In those days, things like that weren't spoken about so I didn't mention it to anyone or speak about it again. After that, I didn't want to associate with either of the boys who were actually both due to be starting the same secondary school as me. Bizarrely, I don't recall either of them being at secondary with me for some reason.
13. I was eleven when I started secondary school, in 1959 or 1960, at St Mary's in Bathgate. I sat my eleven plus exam while I was still at St Anthony's. I was quite a shy and timid boy which made me susceptible to being bullied by other children. I was also very small compared to other children my age.
14. The headmaster at St Mary's was called Mr Glancy. There was also a headmaster, Mr Fenny. I think they were from Bathgate. The headmaster's sister, Miss Fenny, taught us the 'four instructions' which was about not speaking in class and sitting with our arms folded.
15. I found the change from being in the same classroom with the same teacher all day to moving around six or so different classes and teachers difficult. I was belted in every

classroom for something or another. It was more severe and viscous in St Mary's. I was always on the palm of my hand. It was usually six times.

16. We did our prayers first thing in the morning and the catechism. We also did a prayer before and after each break during the day. It was the same prayer every time.
17. The PE teacher, [REDACTED], used to enjoy beating me with a cricket bat or sometimes a tennis bat. He was a big, muscular man.
18. We were required to go swimming once a week as part of the curriculum. On one occasion, I saw some of the other boys jumping into the water so I did the same. The water was deeper than I had thought and I started to panic. I was flailing about and needed some help in getting to the shallower end. Mr [REDACTED] was angry with me for not telling him that I could not swim. I thought we were going there to learn to swim. He lined up all of the children who couldn't swim along the shallow end and told us to hold onto the hand rail and start jumping up and down putting our heads under the water to get used to it. As I did this, my swimming trunks slipped down to my ankles. I was scared to go under the water to pull my trunks back up so I climbed out of the pool and ran back to the changing room. The rest of the class found this highly amusing which was mortifying. After that, I always stayed off of school on the days we had swimming.
19. Around this time, I became more boisterous and was absent from school frequently, preferring to spend my time in the briquette making factory down the road from my house. I used to go and help load the lorries instead of going to school. I wasn't paid for doing this but my willingness to help afforded me access to the premises when it was closed. My friend and I would take briquettes and sell them round the doors at night. It wasn't long before I was caught.
20. On another occasion, I was caught selling cigarettes at school which I had stolen from breaking into a shop. The teacher who caught me reported it to the police. I got into an argument with the teacher and took one of the pupil's bikes from the bike shed. I tried to cycle home on it but was caught by the police before I got there.

21. As a result of these incidents, I had to go to court. My mother told me what the outcome might be of going to court. However, I didn't take it all in at the time. I wasn't aware that I was going to be sent away. I appeared in the juvenile court in Linlithgow. My mother came to court. My mother was frequently in and out of hospital throughout these years with various illnesses.
22. I was taken straight to St Joseph's in Tranent by two probation officers. They were called Mr Barkhouse and Mr Fleming.

St Joseph's Approved School, Tranent, East Lothian

23. I was placed in care at St Joseph's from [REDACTED] 1961 to [REDACTED] 1963. At that time, the school was operated by the De La Salle order. I was eleven or twelve.
24. There were eight brothers, two medical staff, five lay teachers, two handymen, a night overseer and an administrator. Brother PAF was SNR [REDACTED] and Brother GRE was SNR [REDACTED]. There was Brother HYK [REDACTED], Brother LUU [REDACTED], Brother GWM [REDACTED], Brother HHT [REDACTED], Brother LVD [REDACTED] and Brother MJG [REDACTED]. The lay members of staff were Mrs Reynolds, Mr MJK [REDACTED], Mr Burns, Mr GVX [REDACTED] and Mr GW [REDACTED]. Mr MJL [REDACTED] was the administrator/school secretary. Mr MJL [REDACTED] had a big office. Brother PAF [REDACTED] also had his own office.
25. There were approximately 120 male pupils in the school which were divided into four separate houses. The houses were, St Andrew, St Joseph, St Patrick and St Jean-Baptiste De La Salle. There were thirty boys in each house. The boys were mainly from Glasgow and Edinburgh but some were from further afield, like Hawick.

Routine at St Joseph's

First day

26. When I arrived at St Joseph's, I was met by My **MJL** the school secretary. He seemed pleasant enough. He took me to the yard where other boys were playing football. He picked one of the boys and instructed him to accompany me round the school to be kitted out with items which I would require while at the school. I can't remember his name.
27. I spent most of the first day with the boy, who made me aware of most of the rules and regulations. He explained that infringement of any of the rules would incur various forms of punishment, depending on the severity of the misdemeanour, such as, the tawse, or 'strap' to the hands, or deprivation of privileges like pocket-money fines, or being locked in cupboards. I was allocated to St Jean-Baptiste and given an identification number which was .
28. Brother **PAF**, who was **SNR**, was a decent but strict man. I had my first encounter with him on my first night. I was told that all new boys had to be interviewed by him so that he could assess them and record details of them and their family. I was instructed to go from my dormitory and stand in a queue on the stairs leading to his office. I was standing on the stairs along with four other boys. We were summoned individually into his office. I became aware that these meetings were a nightly occurrence to allow boys to discuss their problems or issues.
29. When I went into the office, Brother **PAF** told me to come round beside him and stand next to him. He put his arm around my waist and pulled me close to him. He caressed my upper waist for a few seconds before letting me go. He proceeded to write down my details. He asked me about my family and my previous school.
30. After a few minutes, he told me that I was finished and sent me back to the dormitory. I discovered later that the practice of holding a boy, and caressing his waist, was called "edging". A few of the Brothers, namely Brothers **GRE** and **GYZ**, did this

occasionally. Similarly, the term “edger” was also given to boys who became favourites of members of staff.

31. There were four dormitories, two fairly large and two smaller, which were all on the top floor of the school building. The larger dorms accommodated forty to fifty boys, and the smaller ones ten to fifteen. The dormitories were separated by individual, single-occupancy, rooms which were the Brothers’ living quarters. Three of these separated the dorms, and there were four more at the end of the corridor. Two of these overlooked the playground, and the other two overlooked the front grounds and gardens of the school.
32. Brother PAF occupied the first of the two rooms overlooking the front gardens. I wasn’t in any of the other rooms next to Brother PAF but, during some of his bouts of ill health, I was often sent to Brother PAF quarters with the newspaper or a drink. I would knock and wait for him to tell me to come in and leave whatever I had brought for him by his bedside.

Mornings and bedtime

33. The Brothers woke us around seven in the morning by clapping their hands. If you were going to Mass, you would be woken up an hour earlier. If you were going to Mass, you tied a belt, called a ‘snake belt’ around your bed so that the Brother knew you had to be up earlier. The first thing we did when we got up was the morning prayer. It was called the ‘Morning Offering’.
34. After praying, we put our clothes on and went downstairs. The first thing you did when you got downstairs was go to your station. Everyone had a job of some description which involved cleaning. The boys cleaned the offices, the stairs, and the showers. My job was cleaning the stairs. The cleaning took place between seven and eight o’clock. After we had finished, we got washed, brushed our teeth and went for breakfast. After that, we lined up outside and waited to be classed into our class.

35. At night time, the Brothers supervised until the lights went out. After that, there was a night watchman who would be on duty. The dormitory next to mine was for the bed-wetter's. They had to get out of bed through the night to go to the toilet. If anyone had wet their bed, they had to strip the sheets. Everybody knew that they were the bed-wetter's.

Mealtimes/Food

36. We had our meals in the refectory. The food was okay. I can't remember it being particularly bad. However, we weren't allowed to leave anything. We used to be given bits of curled butter on a plate. The other boys at the table made me eat the butter.. If you didn't eat everything, you were belted by whoever was on duty. The Brothers carried their belts with them. I didn't leave any food very often out of fear of being belted. I saw other boys getting the belt for not finishing their food.

Washing/bathing

37. We had communal showers. We showered every night between nine and ten. There were rows for towels. There were three or four blocks of showers. I think there were twelve showers so you had to queue. We wore trunks. Sometimes if Brother **PAF** was in a bad mood he would come in and make you strip and wash your body parts in front of everyone else.

Clothing/uniform

38. Each house had its own colour of tunic to distinguish it. There was a red/maroon for St Joseph's, blue for St Andrew's, green for St Patrick's and yellow for St Jean-Baptiste de la Salle.
39. The Brothers wore a cassock with a long, white bib. They carried the belt with them.

Leisure time

40. There was a large area, about the size of three football pitches where we could play football. We played cricket there too. There were teachers and Brothers who took those activities and oversaw us in the playground to make sure we were behaving.
41. I joined the Pipe Band practice evenings on Tuesdays and Thursdays. It was taken by Brother **GRE**, who was a teacher by day and oversaw band practice and craft work in the evenings. He taught me to play the side drum and the bagpipes each Tuesday and Thursday. A man from Musselburgh would come on a Thursday and teach us extra side drum skills, along with the bass and big drum, carrying and tossing the mace. Brother **GRE** used to drive us in the school bus to several fetes and gala days in East Lothian in Spring and early Summer.
42. There was a large room in the school which housed a model railway. Brothers **GRE** and **LUU** would take the boys who were interested in the hobby to build and operate models. I spent many happy nights in there taking part in this pastime.
43. Everyone was allowed to go to Winton cinema in Tranent, every week, on Saturday afternoons. Occasionally, we were taken a long walk on a Sunday to Longniddry and allowed to run about the beach.
44. Once a week, Brother **GRE** would drive to the post office in Tranent to carry out some form of business. I cannot recall specific details, but he would always take one of the boys to help him carry mail and money bags. I was taken on several of these trips in the school minibus.
45. On one occasion, when I went into the post office, I found two five-pound notes on the floor. I picked them up and handed them to the cashier. When I returned to the minibus, I told Brother **GRE** about it and he said that I done the right thing. However, a week later, Brother **PAF** called me into his office and told me I had received a five-shilling postal order from the woman who had lost the two five pound notes.

Trips and holidays

46. During the winter months, Mr MJL would take eight or ten boys to Murrayfield Ice Rink in Edinburgh, in the school minibus every Monday evening. Different boys were supposed to go each week but, after a few weeks, I seemed to be picked most weeks, along with one other boy. I don't know why I was selected, but it might have been because we were both better at skating than most of the other boys and as such, Mr MJL didn't have to spend as much time teaching us as he did other boys.
47. We went berry picking to Forfar every year. We went for about six or seven weeks. We were given pennies for doing the picking.

Schooling

48. The schooling was very basic. We were in classrooms almost every day, all day but I can't remember learning anything. I didn't achieve any qualifications there. However, I learned some useful life lessons. For example, there was a tailoring teacher called Mr GVV. He also looked after the pipe band uniforms. I was taught how to cut and sew cloth for making suits, and how to operate a sewing machine. There was a French lady who her own department next to the sick bay. She was a seamstress and arranged the laundry.
49. I was taught metalwork by Mr MJK. It was basic skills like filing, using a hacksaw and grinding on a machine. There was lathe work but very few of the boys were allowed near the machine. There were woodwork classes which were taken by Mr GVX. He was a jovial character who also drove the school bus to Forfar each year for the summer camp at Turin Home Farm.

Healthcare / medication

50. There was a nurse and a matron who ran the sick bay. They also took us to see the doctor. I can remember the matron took me to see a doctor in Dundee while we were

berry picking but I am unsure of the reason. They didn't tell me why I was going and because I was young I didn't ask about it.

Religious instruction

51. As St Joseph's was a Catholic school, there was a great deal of religion and many religious practices. There were quite a few Saints' days called 'Holidays of Obligation', where we went to Mass, regardless of the day of the week. On these days, we didn't have lessons and would be given small treats such as sweets and pop.
52. The church was within the school building, on the second level above the recreation hall. There was a TV room next to the chapel which was used as a classroom during the day. The recreation hall was on the ground floor. Some of the classrooms were on the first floor. Mr ^{MJL} office was above the classrooms.
53. Mass was said every day by priests from nearby Drummohr Monastery. The mass wasn't very long during the week, it would be about half an hour. A number of different priests came to St Joseph's but I can only remember the name of one of them; Father John Byrne. We were allowed to call him Father John. He was much younger than the other priests and considerably friendlier. He was Irish. He got me interested in becoming an altar boy. This wasn't an easy task as it meant having to learn the Latin Mass by heart and having to get up an hour earlier in the morning than the other boys.

Personal possessions

54. We received pocket money each week. It was kept in the sweetie cupboard in the recreation hall. We weren't allowed to smoke. My sister-in-law, [REDACTED], used to send me something for my birthday every year. She was the only person who sent me anything. Birthdays weren't celebrated there.

Visitors

entrance gate to the front of the school. All the boys were lined up along each side of the drive in their Sunday suits. It was one of the best, most memorable days I had there.

56. My mother came to visit me once after I had been there for about six or seven weeks. She became very ill and was unable to visit again. I didn't receive any visits from my probation officers while I was there.

Family Contact and Home Leave

57. The best of the privileges was to be allowed home for a weekend. Most boys were allowed to go home. Every Friday morning, a notice would be posted on the bulletin board with the name of boys who were allowed home for the weekend. The practice was that the selected boy wouldn't have any lessons but instead would change into their Sunday suits to travel home. The boys would then report to Brother ^{PAF} office to be given money for bus fares, and then sent on our way. I think I went home on about three or four occasions. I used to get the bus from Tranent to Edinburgh and then from Edinburgh to Armadale.

Running away

58. I ran away on two occasions. There were lots of boys who ran away from St Joseph's. They were always caught. On the first occasion, I was punished by Brother ^{PAF}. However, on the second, I was not, I think, because my mother was very ill.

59. There was a lot of bullying between the boys. One of the larger boys, was actually alright with me. He was related to me, I think, his name was ████████.

Discipline

60. The most dreaded form of punishment was 'tartan pants'. This was usually administered for absconding or one of the more serious crimes, which was known as 'mauling'. 'Mauling' was the term for play-fighting, an activity indulged in by most boys

of that age. However, in St Joseph's, grappling with another boy was usually misconstrued as something else.

61. 'Tartan pants' involved being sent to SNR office, stripped and instructed to put on the tartan pants which, when one was belted on the backside with the tawse, didn't leave a mark on the backside. It was, however, an excruciatingly painful experience. The tartan pants were tartan patterned and made of a fine material similar to that of boxer shorts. They were kept in Brother PAF office. It was done in private in his office. You had to lean on the desk while the Brother smacked you with the tawse, usually six times. It was one of the more severe forms of physical abuse used in the school and left you quite unwell for some time after it. I was threatened with this treatment on numerous occasions.
62. The Brothers all had belts which they kept on their cassocks. I didn't ever see Mr GVX, Mr MJL or Mr GVV using the belt on anybody. It was the Brothers who belted us. However, I did receive the belt from Mrs Reynolds once. She hit the boys on the tips of the fingers.

Abuse at St Joseph's

63. There were several more forms of abuse practised by the Brothers and lay teaching staff which were of varying degrees of severity. One Brother would catch a boy under the chin with the nails of his forefinger and thumb which caused acute pain.
64. Another Brother, whom I recall to be Brother MJG, would take his wrath out on a boy by punching him to the ground and kicking him, while the boy would be crawling under desks and chairs to try to escape the beating. Unfortunately, this would only infuriate the Brother, and make the beating last longer. I saw this happening on a number of occasions. I was on the receiving end of this treatment once because I had asked to go to the toilet. He said that I was being disruptive in class. He was eventually transferred to St Ninian's school in Stirling.

65. On a different occasion, after I had been at the school for some time, one of the Brothers, who I do not wish to name, banged me on the side of the head with the inside of his fist for asking to be excused from PE because I was not feeling well. He told me to go and get changed into my PE kit and join the other boys. Shortly into the lesson, I collapsed with a high temperature. It transpired that I had contracted German Measles, and was put in the sick bay for over two weeks. No one mentioned anything about the incident.
66. I was given the 'tartan pants' treatment by Brother PAF once because I had absconded from the school. I only got as far as Musselburgh before being returned by the police the same night.

Sexual abuse

67. The first time I experienced sexual abuse was upon returning to school after being sent home one weekend. On this weekend in March 1963, my name was included in the dozen or so posted on the bulletin board. After spending the weekend at home, I duly caught the bus from Armadale to Edinburgh, however, I missed the connection to Tranent and was quite late in getting back to school.
68. When I arrived, everyone was upstairs in the dormitories, so I had to go up and find who was on duty, to be allowed into the room for changing back into my day clothes. The night overseer met me at the dormitory and told me that Brother 'X' was on duty. He said that Brother X was in the kitchen.
69. I went to the kitchen and told Brother X about missing my connection and returning to the school late. He accompanied me to the suit changing room, and told me that I would be in trouble because I had not phoned the school to let them know. After I changed, he took me back to the kitchen and told me that he would give me a hot drink before I went to bed, since I had missed the evening sandwiches. I told him that I did not want a drink and would rather just go to bed because I was on altar duty in the morning and had to be up early. However, he took me to the kitchen anyway and made me a drink.

70. While I was drinking it, I noticed that he had undone his cassock and was masturbating. He told me I would have to finish him off with my mouth. I refused to do it. He warned me that I would get the 'tartan pants' if I didn't do it. So, rather than be beaten, I did what he asked. He beat me anyway because I spat his semen onto his cassock. It angered him so he hit me.
71. I could not fall asleep that night because I kept thinking about it. I expected to be sent for by the headmaster for being late, but it wasn't mentioned by anyone again. I assumed that Brother X had not told the headmaster about my lateness.
72. The same thing happened again about five times over the next few weeks. Brother X had one of the single rooms that separated my dormitory from the small one next to it. After the night overseer had woken the boys in the small dormitory for the toilet, Brother X would come and take me to his quarters to give him what he wanted, and then send me back to bed. The abuse from Brother X stopped when another boy came to the school. The boy used to brag about what he was doing with Brother X. I do not wish to name Brother X.
73. During this time, there was an incident of a similar nature with another Brother, Brother Y. I was caught fighting with another boy in the recreation hall because he was taking my turn at the table tennis. Brother Y separated us and told us we would be taken to SNR office for 'tartan pants'.
74. Once we arrived at the office, however, Brother Y ordered the other boy to return to the recreation hall. He then took me into the office and told me that I had to give him oral sex or I would receive the tartan pants beating. So, I complied. It didn't happen again with Brother Y. I do not wish to name Brother Y.
75. Around this time, Brother X stopped making his demands on me. I was very relieved. I can remember that it was around the time of year when the school went to Forfar for the annual berry picking season. After the trip, if you were eligible you were allowed to go home for a few weeks leave. If you were a habitual badly behaved boy, then you

weren't allowed to go home after the trip or you had a week or two taken off as a punishment.

Reporting of abuse at St Joseph's, Tranent

76. When I went home on this break, I told my mother about what was happening at school. She told me not to tell my father about it, but said she would take the matter up with Brother PAF. A few weeks later my mother became very ill and passed away. I was allowed home for her funeral. I never found out if she had spoken to Brother PAF.
77. I told Father John about the Brothers inflicting abuse on me while we were in the vestry in the chapel. He advised me that he was sorry but that he couldn't do anything about it and to tell my parents saying that he could not get involved. He stopped coming to the school soon after that. I considered speaking to the headmaster but other boys had told me that when they told him about it they were belted for telling lies. I didn't tell him out of fear of suffering the same punishment.

Leaving St Joseph's

78. A few weeks after my mother's funeral I was sent home permanently. I had turned fifteen. It seemed to come out of the blue. I was just told one day to go and put my suit on.
79. By the time I left, both my older brothers were married and had moved away. I went back home to live with my father in Armadale. My sister had just got married and was staying with her new husband in a room in the house. My sister told me that my father had not been working for some time and was relying on state benefit. He was drinking heavily and spending most of any money he had to buy alcohol.

Life after being in care

80. I got a job as a factory worker in Broxburn in a sack manufacturing company. My dad wanted to keep my wages and give me pocket money and my bus fare, so after a few weeks, my older brother told me to come and board with him, so I did. Over the next few months and years my dad's drinking continued and his alcohol dependence increased.
81. I met my wife, [REDACTED], and got married in [REDACTED] 1969. We have two children together.
82. I found out that my dad had been admitted to the psychiatric ward in Bangour Village hospital. After he was discharged, he came to visit me in Blackburn in 1969. I was living with my wife who was pregnant at my mother-in-law's house. He behaved inappropriately during the visit resulting in me not seeing again until the end of 1972. He passed away in hospital shortly after.
83. After I left St Joseph's, there were ample job opportunities in the area. I had six different employers over a period of five years. I worked in various factories and as a delivery boy. I got a job in a steel foundry in Bathgate which manufactured components, including shovels. I found the work a bit more interesting there and managed to stay there for a couple of years. Although I enjoyed the work, I felt the need to find a job closer to home. I thereafter got a job in the local chicken factory in Newbridge. It was better paid than my previous jobs. I have had a long working life and continue to work to this day. I also attended Bathgate Technical College.

Impact

84. I think I have been very lucky in that what happened to me at St Joseph's has not affected me. It hasn't stopped me from living my life. I have a great relationship with my family. They don't know about any of the abuse and, I don't want them to know. My sister doesn't even know about any of it.

85. I used to have dreams quite a lot but it's been over ten to twenty years. I have been affected by them since then.
86. Unfortunately, some people aren't as resilient as me and haven't been able to cope with what happened to them.

Treatment/support

87. I haven't told my family about any of the abuse I suffered at the school. I have confided in one other person who has knowledge of my experience at St Joseph's. Unfortunately, this individual experienced similar abuse while there and I don't want to provide their name. They do not wish to speak to the Inquiry either.

Records

88. I have tried to access my social work records from East Lothian council. However, they weren't very helpful. I have contacted the De La Salle Brothers in an attempt to obtain my records from my time there. I have been advised that they do not have any records regarding my time there. They advised me that the perpetrators are deceased. I am also trying to trace Father John Byrne who I believe lives in Ireland. De La Salle have intimated to me that there was no 'Brother MJG' there. I must have his name wrong but I have tried to remember it but I can't.

Lessons to be Learned

89. It would have helped if checks had been done. Most importantly, those in positions of responsibility should listen to what those in care have to say. In the 58 years which have passed, the events have remained clear and fresh in my memory. I regret not disclosing the abuse more forcefully at the time. Sadly, it is not possible to bring the perpetrators to account because they are now deceased. Although they may have

escaped justice, I believe there will have been a more powerful retribution awaiting them on their demise.

Other information

90. 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..... 

Dated..... 2 DEC 2021