

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

### Witness Statement of

GJA

Support person present: No

1. My name is <sup>GJA</sup> [REDACTED]. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1963. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. I was born in Edinburgh. My dad, [REDACTED], was Polish. He was born in 1915 and died in 1985. He was a tailor. My mum was [REDACTED]. She was Irish. She was born in 1941 and died in 1976. My eldest sister is [REDACTED], now [REDACTED], and she was born in 1960. Then there's my brother, [REDACTED] born in 1962. I was born in 1963 and my brother [REDACTED] was born in 1964. My half-sister, [REDACTED], now [REDACTED], was born in 1966. I found out later that my dad came to Scotland during the war and was married with two children before he met my mum.
3. We were brought up in a flat, in Tollcross, Edinburgh. There was a balcony you walked along past all the houses. I remember [REDACTED] being on the balcony in a big, Silver Cross Pram. My dad was the one who put us to bed and made us meals, my mum was a drinker. She died of cirrhosis of the liver when she was 35 years old. Social work reports, obtained when I was placed in care for the second time, say we had a chaotic life but I don't remember any arguments, except one. I was about four years old. My Aunty [REDACTED], my mum's sister, and my Uncle [REDACTED], came up to the house. They got into the house and tried to grab my sister, brothers and me. There was a lot of shouting and swearing and my uncle smashed a window. There were a few guys standing

there. My dad was fighting with them and the police came. I don't know if that kick-started social work involvement.

4. From records obtained by [REDACTED] I know that [REDACTED] and I had been together in Clerwood Children's Home, in Edinburgh, for a year. I have no memory of that. I was about two and a half years old and [REDACTED] was one and a half. We must have gone home after that because I remember [REDACTED] being older in the house at Tollcross.
5. [REDACTED] was born in hospital. My mum walked away and left her there. My mum's mum had died two days before [REDACTED] was born. [REDACTED] was taken to Smyllum. I never knew [REDACTED] as a child. I later found out that [REDACTED] wasn't my dad's child. [REDACTED] was taken away by my mum, leaving [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and me in the house. Then mum came back and that was when all the carry on started. The police came, with social work, and we were taken to Smyllum. I remember [REDACTED] and I had on red coats with a collar. I never saw my mum again.

#### **Smyllum Orphanage, Lanark**

6. I was five when I went to Smyllum with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], in 1968. I don't remember anyone telling us where or why we were going. We were there for a year and a half, until 1970. We came out and then went back in for two weeks, sometime around 1970 or 1971, because my dad was in hospital. The records obtained by [REDACTED] show that we continued to stay in Smyllum until the age of sixteen but we didn't.
7. There was a big driveway with fields, a big courtyard and big gardens. The gardens were beautifully done, with flowers. There was a big turret with pillars and big, double white doors, that was the main entrance to Smyllum. We were never in there. We had a big playground.
8. There was a fire exit with metal stairs up to Kentigern House, the house we stayed in. There were four or five different houses. You weren't allowed to go into the different houses. If you were caught sneaking in, you'd be caned. Kentigern House was an

extension to the original Smyllum building. Underneath Kentigern House were the gardens. When you went into Kentigern House, there was a piano on the left. There was a couple of couches and wee plastic chairs. There was a narrow corridor and at each side, all along it, there were bedrooms. There were four beds in each room, two at each side and a space in the middle. I was in the first bedroom that you came to, when you came in.

9. At the end of the corridor, you turned right to the bathroom and to the left there was a room that had pegs on the wall. The pegs had names and towels hanging on them. You walked through that room to get to the toilets. Each child had a toothbrush and a cup and a towel. There was another corridor with a cupboard where they put all the laundry. At the very end of that corridor there was a kitchen and breakfast room. The kitchen was small, with a small cooker that had four burners.
10. In Kentigern House, there were 24 children, boys and girls. The children aged thirteen to fifteen were kept in another house, in a different part from us. In the whole of Smyllum, there might have been two to three hundred children, from babies up to about seventeen years old. It was a big, busy, place. You were just a number to the staff.
11. My dad put money into Smyllum to pay for [REDACTED]. Later, we found loads of receipts in dad's house, saying "[REDACTED], £12, [REDACTED]." [REDACTED] continued to stay at Smyllum after my siblings and I left.

#### *Staff At Smyllum Orphanage*

12. There were about twenty to thirty nuns in Smyllum, and priests as well. I didn't have much to do with the priests. There were about twelve lay staff.
13. Sister <sup>GWG</sup> [REDACTED] was <sup>SNR</sup> [REDACTED] of Kentigern House. She was about 45 or 50 years old. She would disappear from the house. She always had her black habit on and a

big, wooden crucifix hung round her waist on a rope. You never saw her hair, I couldn't say if she had red hair or brown hair.

14. Margaret Hughes was a day worker, not a nun. She was about 25 years old, tall and skinny. Margaret had a stern face. She was left with 24 children to look after. She was there when we had breakfast. IAN worked at Smyllum. She was in her thirties. She had bobbed blond hair. IAN wasn't a nun, she was some kind of support worker. IAN was mostly there at night.
15. There was a handyman called GWH and he was in his forties. GWH was around a lot. If a shelf came down, he would come and fix it.
16. There was a lovely older lady with white hair. Her name might have been Peggy. She did all the washing of the clothes.

### **Routine at Smyllum Orphanage**

#### *First day*

17. and me were put into a police car to be taken to Smyllum. There was a police officer and a lady, I don't know if she was a social worker. We were all crying. To quieten us down, the police officer asked did we want him to put the horns on. I remember my dad was screaming outside the car and trying to pull the doors open. He gave me a teddy to give to . I was told I was going to see my wee brother. I didn't know who was. My dad never said we had a wee sister. and were already at Smyllum.
18. We went up the big driveway. I was still crying. The woman in the car was trying to pacify me. I remember her pointing to two donkey's, Neddy and Kate, in the field and saying it was a lovely place. There was a big fire exit with metal stairs that two nuns came down. One of the nuns was Sister GWG. The nuns waited on us and we were

taken up the fire exit into Kentigern, the house we were to stay in. The people who had brought us in the car stayed outside. We waved to them from the stairs.

19. I went running in. There was a big piano but there were no toys, just couches and things. I had the teddy in my hand and I said it was for my brother, [REDACTED]. Sister <sup>GWG</sup> [REDACTED] said, "There's no [REDACTED] here." I said there was a [REDACTED]. Sister <sup>GWG</sup> [REDACTED] started shouting, "There's not a [REDACTED]" I said again that there was a [REDACTED] and I had a teddy for him from my dad. Sister <sup>GWG</sup> [REDACTED] was still shouting. Margaret tried to calm me down.
20. Sister <sup>GWG</sup> [REDACTED] and Margaret took me away from my sister and brother into the bathroom that had wee pegs on the walls. Sister <sup>GWG</sup> [REDACTED] kept screaming that there was no [REDACTED]. Sister <sup>GWG</sup> [REDACTED] grabbed the teddy off me and ripped it apart. She took the head off it. I was screaming. Sister <sup>GWG</sup> [REDACTED] had a wooden crucifix attached to her waist, she took it off and hit me over the head with it. I kept on screaming. I was hurt and had a lump on my head.
21. Margaret kept telling me to be quiet. She was trying to enforce that there was no [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was screaming, she must have heard me crying. [REDACTED] was trying to get through to the room I was in. [REDACTED] was brought through. She said that we did have a brother [REDACTED] and he was at Smyllum. [REDACTED] and I were pulled apart by Sister <sup>GWG</sup> [REDACTED] and Margaret. I was hysterical.

#### *Mornings and bedtime*

22. In our room were [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and me. We were locked in the room at about 6:45 pm and not allowed out to go to the toilet. The other girls in the room told me that. You were told to shut up and go to sleep. You knew, if you asked to get out, you'd get belted. I never asked to get out to go to the toilet. No-one checked up on you during the night. If you were talking, and <sup>IAN</sup> [REDACTED] or Sister <sup>GWG</sup> [REDACTED] passed, they would bang the door. Margaret had her favourites and would let some of the older ones stay up, at night, mostly the boys. You didn't have anything except a bed in your room, not even clothes. There were no pictures. It was clinical.



23. One night, a baby was put into our room. The metal cot was just placed in the middle of the room. The baby was about nine months old, he was standing and was able to jump up and down in the cot. The baby stayed for about two weeks and we were left to look after the baby. We could speak to him but we weren't allowed to take him out of the cot. IAN told us not to lift him. We used to play with the baby. The baby woke up in the night and jumped up and down in the cot. He wanted someone to pick him up, he was crying and going round the cot. He could see us all. No-one came in to see why the baby was crying. IAN would bang the door and shout something. The baby only wore a nappy and a t-shirt. He had nothing in the cot, no pacifier or toys. After two weeks, the baby disappeared. We asked what happened to him. They said he was a blue baby and God had taken him. That happened a lot at Smyllum, with different babies.
24. The doors were opened about 6:45 am by IAN. Sister GWG came in and flipped the mattress over to see if you'd wet the bed. If you had wet the bed, you'd be pulled through to the bathroom. Once the people who had wet the bed were finished with, you took your toilet bag off your peg in the bathroom, went to the washroom, combed your hair and cleaned your teeth. There was hot water and carbolic soap. It smelled horrible.
25. There were two bathrooms beside each other. Sister GWG would be at one and Margaret at the other. They would shout if people were mucking about. At all times, boys and girls saw each other naked. Boys and girls had to line up to go through to go into the bathroom, your nighties were left in a basket and you had to queue up naked to go for a wash. You could be waiting for five or ten minutes. When you got a bath you then came out naked and you had to go and get your clothes. The only time you weren't lined up naked was at lunchtime, when you washed your hands before lunch and brushed your teeth after lunch.
26. You got a bath once a week on a Sunday. Bath time started just after lunch because there were so many children. You hardly got any time in the bath. You were two at a time in the bath. The water was warm but it never got changed, the bath water would be used twelve times. There was a shower but we never used it. Everyone pushed

and shoved to get in the bath. They didn't want to be the last person in because the last two people in the bath had to clean the baths and the sinks. You just knew that's what you had to do, it wasn't an instruction.

### *Bed Wetting*

27. I wet the bed in Smyllum. I hadn't wet the bed before I went there. I said to Sister **GWG** when she came in that I had wet the bed. You didn't think anything was going to happen to you. Sister **GWG** grabbed me by the hair and pulled me through the corridor to the bathroom. She told me to take my nightie off. There were other children there, three or four of us, who had all wet the bed. We were naked and we were told to put our hands behind our back. Sister **GWG** lined up all the other kids who stayed Kentigern and the kids mocked us for wetting the bed. The kids chanted 'dandelion' or 'wet the bed'. They were encouraged to shout at us by the nuns.
28. Then, Sister **GWG** caned us for wetting the bed. She told each child to come forward one at a time and we were hit about two or three times, across the back of legs. Sister **GWG** went down the line of us. It was sore. The other children were watching. It was all planned, Sister **GWG** and **IAN** had cold baths ready. **IAN** told two of us to jump into a freezing cold bath. The other two children were put into another bath. It didn't matter to them if it was boys or girls in together. Sister **GWG** came through and ducked us under the water.
29. The routine was the same every time you wet the bed. There were times I hadn't wet the bed when I watched this happen to other children and shouted. You had to. You probably would have been caned if you didn't do it. The boys got a smack around the head if they didn't chant. Someone had always wet the bed, so the chanting went on a lot.
30. There were big pipes going along the floor. Kids would try and dry their sheets on the pipes, so they wouldn't get battered. The staff knew you'd wet the bed because the sheets were stained. If you got caught trying to dry the sheets, you'd be caned.

### *Mealtimes / Food*

31. The food wasn't cooked in Kentigern, it was brought up from another kitchen on trolleys. The food was alright. We got porridge in the morning. The leftover porridge was poured into a drawer and cut into pieces. You would get a slab of that, as well as the porridge. It had gone hard and no-one would eat it. People would try to dispose of it, by breaking it up and putting it down the toilet. If you got caught trying to dispose of it, you'd get battered. You'd get hit over the head or get the cane from Sister <sup>GWG</sup> or Margaret. Margaret never hit me.
32. Somebody made the toast. There was a wee laddie or lassie sitting on the worktop, constantly putting the toast in. They liked doing that because they got their porridge first.
33. We came back from school at lunchtime. You got soup and sandwiches but the soup was like water with hardly any vegetables in it. We had tea about 5:00 pm. They would give us things like stovies and custard. We only got juice on a Saturday.
34. If you didn't like the food, you'd be force-fed. That happened to my sister [REDACTED] and other people. It happened quite a few times. Sometimes [REDACTED] put things in a napkin. If she got caught doing that, she'd get caned. I ate my food. It wasn't hot. You weren't allowed to share meals. I couldn't leave something and another child eat it. Kids were hungry.

### *Chores*

35. People had to set the table with plates and everything. It was a bit like the film Oliver. You had to hand your plate up to have food put on it. The plate you had had at your place would end up away round the other side. You ended up with someone else's plate. Somebody had to do the dishes. The older ones would set the table up for the next day.



36. I'm not sure if the children had to make a cup of tea for the nun. There was a laddie who got a massive burn down his face and his shoulder from hot water. I don't know what happened to him. We didn't hear any screaming at the time. He never said what happened. I don't know his name. He was about eleven or twelve years old.

#### *Leisure time*

37. When we came back from school, we washed our hands and played. Then it was teatime. After tea, we'd play around until bedtime. We did most of our playing at the weekend. We mixed with the other houses at the playground and the cinema. There was a cinema in Smyllum. We'd go to that and I remember going to it twice. We got chalk and played hopscotch outside. We had to get buckets of water and a scrubbing brush to wash the chalk away after. We also went down to feed the donkeys.
38. In the playground, there was a 'Witches Hat' that you could stand on and it turned around. There were two tyres that were swing things. Nobody had bikes, scooters or bats and balls. There was nothing like that. The only time I saw a bat and ball was when we had a sports day. We had a sports day once in the time I was at Smyllum. We got put into teams and your team name would be your house name.
39. Someone, I think it was an outsider, sometimes brought in magazines like The Beezer, The Beano and Twinkle for the children. The boys used to fight over the magazines and get a slap on the head. You didn't have any personal possessions. I never saw a toy at Smyllum. You never saw a child with a photograph of their parents or their family.

#### *Trips / Holidays*

40. About twelve of us went to Girvan for the day. There were certain kids picked to go. I was about six years old. The nuns had a mini-bus that we went in. There was a big pond with paddling boats to go out on. We never got to go out on one because it cost money.

41. We got pocket money and once a month we were taken to the sweet shop in Lanark. It wasn't a lot of money, you got a lollipop or something. To get your pocket money, you had to clean.

*Clothing / uniform*

42. We got handed down clothes, maybe charities handed them in. I had a gingham dress with a white collar. Some girls had a green one, some had red. The colour wasn't specific to your house. You had to stand in a line naked to get your clothes every day. You got clean clothes every day. There was a long bench that you could sit on. The seat opened up and there were towels and things stored in it. Sometimes, someone might take the clothes laid out for you if they thought it was a better thing. Peggy came in with a bundle of clothes and put them out, the clothes weren't specifically chosen for you. The trousers were always too short. You could wear something one day and the next, someone else would be wearing them. It wasn't unusual to be given a boy's duffle coat to wear.
43. Boys and girls all had hard plastic sandals. We called them 'beanie shoes'. Everyone in Kentigern had blue shoes, other people had pink or green. I think the nuns could identify our house from the colour of our shoes. We got blisters on our feet because there was a buckle going over and we were never given socks to wear. There was a sweetie shop that we went to and four or five of us would go at a time. We had to buy our sweeties in that shop. We later found out it was Margaret's future father-in-law who owned the shop. The local children saw us and shouted, "I'm nobody's child" at us. I'll never forget that. The children made a fool of our shoes as we were identified by our shoes.

*School*

44. School was in Smyllum and we didn't wear a school uniform. You marched in two lines, boys and girls, up the field by the cinema to the school. There was no playground at school. By the time you'd gone back to Kentigern for lunch and cleaned your teeth, there was no time for playtime. The teacher was a woman called [IXT]. The ages

were mixed and there could be fifty kids in a classroom. The tables were wide and two people could sit at it. Other tables were single. [REDACTED] was four years older than me and was in my class.

45. We did English and maths. The teacher came round and belted children with a ruler on the knuckles if you were talking, shouting out or cheating. I never got that. I don't have much memory of school. We never had a book to take away to practise reading. We weren't read to by anyone. It wasn't a good education. When I went back home, I was kept back a year at school.

#### *Healthcare*

46. There was a club called the Tufty Club for brushing your teeth. A woman came in and checked your teeth. You got a sticker with a squirrel on it. That's one thing that I remember is that the dental hygiene was good.
47. I never saw a doctor. Once, I had a really bad cough and I got shouted at for coughing. I later found out from records that [REDACTED] got that it was whooping cough. I wasn't immunised against the usual childhood diseases, like mumps, measles and rubella. That only came to light when I was pregnant with my first son. I never had an eyetest.

#### *Religious Instruction*

48. There was a chapel within Smyllum and the priest would be there. We had to go every Sunday and on the likes of St Andrew's Day and St George's Day. There was no choice. Easter Sunday was made a big thing of. You had to give something up. That was forced on you. What could you give up? Kids would say they wouldn't eat soup or toast, or wouldn't have their juice on a Saturday. We didn't get Easter eggs. Kids who were old enough would get holy communion. We got religious instruction in school. You had Grace before meals. Sister <sup>GWG</sup>[REDACTED] would say a prayer for the day.

### *Birthdays and Christmas*

49. At Christmas, the nuns took us to a big town hall place, to a children's Christmas party. There were only certain kids chosen from Smyllum to go to the party, it was more for the younger ones. I went but [REDACTED] wasn't allowed to go. There were other kids there, they knew who we were because of our shoes and things. We used to feel that. We were given a present at the party. I got a doll. The boys got books. We played with the presents in the hall. We got cakes and a goody bag with sweets and biscuits in it. The presents and the goody bag were taken off us before we got off the bus back to Smyllum, we weren't allowed to keep them. I don't know what happened to them. The cakes and goody bag were put on a tray for everybody, which was fair enough.
50. I can't even remember getting a Christmas present from the nuns. There was a small, plastic blown up Santa and Rudolph. It sat on top of the piano all year. They had a Christmas tree. I don't think there was a special Christmas meal. We made paper chain decorations.
51. Birthdays were certainly not celebrated. No-one knew when it was their birthday. No-one got a birthday cake, although [REDACTED] talks about [REDACTED] getting a birthday cake. Once we were out of Smyllum, we found out that my dad sent us birthday cards, Christmas cards, money and letters. Once, he sent us a parcel but we never got them.

### *Visits / Inspections*

52. My dad came up to Smyllum to see us once a month on a Sunday. We all sat in the big kitchen at the table. We were never left alone with my dad. My dad brought lots of fruit, sweets, biscuits, cakes, a big Polish cake for the nuns and a big cake for the kids. We never got that cake and all the other things were shared amongst all the children.
53. I threatened to tell my dad about being caned. Sister <sup>GWG</sup>[REDACTED] threatened that I'd never get to see him again if I did. Margaret and Sister <sup>GWG</sup>[REDACTED] told my siblings and I that we had to be quiet.



54. My mum never came to visit. I know from [REDACTED] social work records that mum wasn't allowed to come. She had come with a gang of people and tried to take [REDACTED] one day.
55. People came to visit. I don't know if they were members of the public. I never had any encounters with them. We never saw any social workers. Nobody came and asked us how we were or how we were coping.

### *Siblings*

56. [REDACTED] had gone to Smyllum when she was three weeks old. I wasn't aware [REDACTED] was related to me when I was at Smyllum. My dad never spoke about her because she wasn't his daughter. Later, when we found out about [REDACTED], my siblings and I thought [REDACTED] was my dad's. It wasn't until [REDACTED] got his family tree from Future Pathways that we found out [REDACTED] wasn't my dad's. We found out then that my mum went on to have another two daughters who were taken into care as well.
57. I've heard from [REDACTED] that Margaret treated [REDACTED] as her own child. Margaret wanted to adopt [REDACTED] but not [REDACTED]. Sometimes Margaret would walk through Kentigern with [REDACTED] in her arms. When we saw them at Smyllum, we thought [REDACTED] was Margaret's child. When [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and I moved back home, [REDACTED] was transferred to Kentigern.
58. [REDACTED] was in another house. He was never in the same family group as me at Smyllum. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] saw [REDACTED] at Smyllum and recognised him because they were older. They were told not to speak to me about [REDACTED]. I think it was brain washed into me that [REDACTED] wasn't at Smyllum. I don't know if my dad went to visit [REDACTED] when he visited us. We didn't see my dad together as a whole family, with [REDACTED]

### *Running away*

59. There were three [REDACTED] all in different houses. Me, [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and another [REDACTED] ran away. The older [REDACTED] brother said he knew somewhere we could go. I was crying and I wanted to go back. I was frightened because I knew we were going

to get battered if we didn't get away. The man who owned the sweetie shop was driving past. He saw us, put us in the car and took us back. We were all caned by Sister **GWG**. The older ones got the blame for running away.

### **Abuse at Smyllum Orphanage**

60. Sister **GWG** caned us. The cane was about a metre high. You would get three whacks on the side or back of the legs. You had to keep your hands behind your back. Some kids wouldn't put their hands behind their back so Sister **GWG** or Margaret would tie their hands behind their back. It didn't happen to me but I saw it happen to others. That happened to a boy called **■■■■** a lot. The cane was kept where the piano was. It had a leather handle that Sister **GWG** could put her hand through. The handle would go around her wrist and she had a grip of the cane. The cane didn't draw blood but kids would say, "welt legs" because of the visible marks that the cane left. Sister **GWG** also hit us with the wooden cross which was kept on a rope around her waist.
61. You had to do chores. I remember **■■■■** cleaning a picture of a church and he knocked it down. I don't know if he did it deliberately but Sister **GWG** and Margaret grabbed **■■■■** and caned him because the glass had smashed. I never saw him being caned although I heard him screaming.
62. You had to called Sister **GWG**, 'Sister', or you would have got a smack. Children used to call her **GWG**. If a wee kid told on you or you were overheard, you'd be smacked. If you swore, your mouth was washed out with carbolic soap. I saw that happen a few times. Once **■■■■** and a girl called **■■■■** were arguing. **■■■■** was saying the F word. Margaret held him down on the floor, forced his mouth open and Sister **GWG** put the thick bar of soap into his mouth.
63. Once, when the baby was in our room and had woken up in the night, we put the light on. **IAN** came through and caned us over the back of the legs with a cane for putting the light on.

64. Margaret clipped the boys around the ear and smacked them about the head. She didn't tend to do this with the girls. My brother [REDACTED] has told me he was battered a lot by Margaret. She ended up being his house-mistress.
65. We hadn't been at Smyllum for long when, one lunchtime or dinnertime, we were all sitting around the table. Sister **GWG** was on one end and Margaret on the other end. [REDACTED] couldn't eat custard. Sister **GWG** and Margaret were telling her to eat it and she wouldn't. Margaret pulled [REDACTED] head back, pulled her nose back and Sister **GWG** scooped the custard into [REDACTED] mouth and [REDACTED] vomited.
66. Sister **GWG** and Margaret told her to eat the vomit. The kids were chanting, "eat it, eat it" and banging their forks and knives on the table. It seemed like the chanting was something the kids had done before. Sister **GWG** force fed the vomit to [REDACTED]. Then, Sister **GWG** grabbed [REDACTED] top and pulled her out of the room and down the corridor. We heard [REDACTED] screaming, so I take it they caned her. [REDACTED] and I were crying. We were told to sit down. The force feeding and chanting happened regularly because a lot of the time we were given custard to eat. [REDACTED] was about nine or ten years old when this incident happened. I saw other children being force fed and children chanting.
67. I was wetting the bed a lot. You knew if you wet the bed, you'd get caned three times. One morning, I told [REDACTED] I was frightened because I'd wet the bed again. [REDACTED] said she would change sheets with me. When Sister **GWG** got [REDACTED] through to the bathroom, she knew [REDACTED] nightie wasn't wet and mine was. I got caned and [REDACTED] got caned by Sister **GWG** because we had lied. I was thrown in the cold bath. I hadn't even got dressed, when Sister **GWG** grabbed me and locked me in the laundry cupboard. I was in there for what felt like an hour. I was screaming and Sister **GWG** would bang on the door and tell me to shut up.
68. I had been at Smyllum for about six months when, in the playground, we saw a nun hit a boy on the side of the head with a golf club. The boy had had the golf club and the nun took it off him. There were about forty kids on the witch's hat. He had the golf club and was trying to stop the hat from going round. He tried to get away but the nun

got him. I don't know the nun's name. The boy went down to the ground and went a wee bit underneath the witch's hat. He might have been hit by that as well and I remember he was bleeding. I don't the boy's name. He was ten or eleven years old, a wee, skinny boy with ginger hair who answered back to everybody. He was Glaswegian. We were all put inside. An ambulance came, we watched it coming from the window. Other people saw the boy being hit. The other children were screaming. We never saw the boy again after that. We were told he'd died a month or two later, not because of what had happened but because he had a cold or pneumonia.

69. You had to go and get your own t-shirt and things. One day, I took a t-shirt that was laid out for someone else and I put the t-shirt on. Sister **GWG** must have known it wasn't my t-shirt. She grabbed me by the hair, took me to the bedroom and told me to get on the bed. Sister **GWG** put a pillow over my face. She was pushing the pillow on my face and putting on pressure. The beds were small and she was leaning over me. I was screaming and kicking, saying I couldn't breathe and trying to turn around. Sister **GWG** was calling me a thief and a liar and holding me with her hand so that I couldn't get up. Eventually she let me up. I was sick. She made me mop all the sick up. Another time, after wetting the bed, Sister **GWG** put a pillow over my head because I was crying that much.
70. On the trip to Girvan, we were sat at the beach and a man, lady and two kids came up. I was speaking to them. The wee girls had ice-cream and I said to them that I would have liked an ice-cream. The man asked if we were getting ice-cream and went to speak to Margaret and a few nuns who were there. He gave Sister **GWG** money and said to buy all the kids ice-cream. The only time I saw Sister **GWG** smile was when she was speaking to the public. She called us 'God's children', when she spoke to the public. We were God's forgotten children. You didn't mean anything to the nuns.
71. We all had to say thank you to the man. I kept asking where my ice-cream was. Sister **GWG** kept telling me to be quiet. We were all put back in the van to go back. The man came over and asked if we'd liked our ice-cream. Everyone on the van stayed quiet. I said we never got the ice-cream. The man spoke to Sister **GWG** but I don't know what she said.



72. When we got back to Smyllum, Sister **GWG** went mental. Sister **GWG** hauled me out of the van and up the stair. She pushed me into the bedroom. I got stripped naked, caned and put into the cupboard by Sister **GWG**. I was caned on my back and the back of my legs, six or more times. Sister **GWG** was shouting abuse at me, shouting that I was a greedy, bad child.
73. At the back of the park and playground, there was a cinema. Films were shown on a cine camera. We would be outside, playing, and the priests would be up in the cinema bit, at the wee windows. The priests had cameras pointing down onto the kids, filming us. The priests shouted to us to do somersaults and handstands. Now you would say it was abuse. **GWH** would be up there as well, shouting down. **GWH** shouted to the kids to take their pants off and do a somersault and a handstand against the wall. I never did that but other kids did. The priests cheered. One of the priests was Father **HAC**.
74. After I threatened to tell my dad about being caned, my dad didn't come for his visit. I was six years old. Sister **GWG** got my siblings and me in a room and said, "Your dad's died." Just like that. She said to me, "and you've caused this." I screamed the place down. She was saying I'd caused my dad's death because I was going to tell about the caning. My siblings were all told dad had died by Sister **GWG**.
75. About a month or two later, my dad came back up to visit. I burst out crying when I saw my dad, I was hysterical. My siblings and I were all crying. Sister **GWG** was in the room. Dad asked me what was the matter. I told dad that Sister **GWG** had told us he was dead. Sister **GWG** said nobody had said that he was dead. My dad looked at her. He was vocal and angry. Dad was upset because my siblings and I were upset. My dad was a Catholic and he believed the nuns all the time. He was all for the nuns and thought there was nothing better than them. In **██████** social work records, it says my dad had kicked off one day and had been told not to come back. It was probably that day. He did come back.

76. I got caned for telling him that we were told he was dead. Sister <sup>GWG</sup> told me there'd been a mistake and my dad hadn't died. We had all been crying for weeks. Margaret had asked what we were crying for but she didn't even say he wasn't dead. Life had gone on as normal. I still wet the bed and got caned for it. <sup>GWG</sup> was told by Smyllum, for a period of ten years, that our dad was dead when our dad was still alive.
77. Me and my sister had really long hair. After you brushed your hair, Margaret had us counting and you had to brush your hair thirty times. If you didn't brush thirty times, you were caned. I don't know what I did but I'd obviously done something. We were outside playing and I was hauled up the fire escape stairs. Margaret held me down and Sister <sup>GWG</sup> cut my hair short. They had the scissors ready. <sup>GWG</sup> had her hair cut as well. I was devastated.
78. We were called by our last name at Smyllum. The staff used to say <sup>GWG</sup>. I said that wasn't my name. We would say it was <sup>GWG</sup>. Margaret taunted my siblings and I by saying, "<sup>GWG</sup>".
79. <sup>GXD</sup>, was a sailor. He came in and picked Margaret up. Every six weeks, on a Saturday, three or four men would turn up with <sup>GXD</sup>. I saw them a few times. The kids would be lined up and the men would pick kids, boys or girls, to go with them. The men would take the kid away for the day and bring them back about 6:30 pm. The kids were aged ten or eleven years old. I never went with the men. The staff were there when this happened. My brother, <sup>GXD</sup> told me those kids were sexually abused by the sailors. <sup>GXD</sup> was taken to a ship by them. He never spoke about it but I think he was sexually abused by the sailors. <sup>GXD</sup> took kids as well.
80. <sup>GWG</sup> saw Sister <sup>GWG</sup> without her head wear on. He came running through, saying he saw the nun without her helmet on, that's what we called the headwear. <sup>GWG</sup> said she had a white skull cap on her head. Margaret grabbed him and swung him round the place. He was screaming. He was taken away and battered. We never saw <sup>GWG</sup> for a day. When we saw him, he showed us big welts on his back, legs and chest, he told us that was where Sister <sup>GWG</sup> and Margaret had caned him.

### **Leaving Smyllum Orphanage**

81. A female social worker came to Smyllum with another woman to take us home. I was about six years old. Nobody had told us we were leaving until we were getting our clothes on. There was no planned exit. My dad had got another house. I suppose he'd been to Children's Panels and been investigated by the social work department. We put on the clothes that we had come to Smyllum in. They were too wee for us. We were laughing and jumping up and down with excitement. We had to go home in the plastic shoes.
82. My siblings and I were sitting in the back of the car. Sister <sup>GWG</sup> and another nun came out to see us off and we were making rude gestures with our fingers at them. The nuns were staring at us. I said we'd better watch because we might end up back there.
83. When we got home, my dad took us all out for shoes. We had great joy, my dad had a coal fire and we all threw the plastic shoes into the fire. I never spoke to my dad about the abuse. He was all for the Church. He was a staunch Catholic. It was a big part of his life.

### **Respite Care at Nazareth House, Bonnyrigg, Midlothian**

84. When I was nine years old, my dad had a stomach problem and was taken into hospital. It was a sudden thing. We had a home help but she couldn't keep us, she had her own family. We didn't have any family to go to. My siblings and I were sent to Nazareth House for about two weeks. A social work person took us up there. I think dad had always had some social work involvement. We were afraid of what it was going to be like.
85. There were nuns there, maybe about twelve. One was called Sister Bernadette and there was a Sister <sup>zLJD</sup> and a Sister <sup>GXE</sup> Sister <sup>zLJD</sup> was of normal build

and about 35 years old. There was a priest, but there were more people like workers. There was a worker called Carol who was really nice to us. Carol brought Polo mints in and said not to tell the nuns. At night, there were night staff. There was a woman called Elizabeth and she was nice. She put Polo mints under the door for us when we were in our room at night.

86. There were over 100 children. There were boys and girls aged from two to fifteen years old. There seemed to be a lot more staff. There was a dining-room that was set out more like a school dining-room.

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

#### *First day*

87. We went by car to Nazareth House. The staff were nice to us. Carol met us and said they'd take us to see our dad in hospital but that never happened. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and I were together in the same building.

#### *Mornings and bedtime*

88. Me and [REDACTED] were in a room together, there were five girls, plus me. It was the same sort of routine as at Smyllum. You had to kneel down and say a prayer. The doors were locked at night. We were in our room from 7:30 pm to 7:00 am. Nobody was allowed out of the room to go to the toilet.
89. One of the girls had a bad nosebleed. We were banging on the door but the staff weren't interested. They came to the door and said to go back to bed. The girl didn't get any attention.



### *Mealtimes / Food*

90. The food was better than Smyllum. They gave us pizzas and lasagne. There was breakfast cereal or porridge. You did your prayers and said Grace. Then you ate. In both Smyllum and Nazareth House, it wasn't like a family setting where you sat and spoke and discussed things. It was eating in silence. The nuns didn't like people speaking, they would tell you to shut up.
91. Nazareth House seemed okay when we arrived. We were given custard to eat after about two days there. It was the same situation with [REDACTED]. She didn't like custard and she was force fed it. Two people pulled [REDACTED] back and Sister GXE [REDACTED] force fed the custard. I can't remember the names of the other people. [REDACTED] vomited and was made to eat that. Nobody was allowed to leave the table. There was another boy who was force fed when he didn't want to eat something.

### *Bedwetting*

92. After [REDACTED] was force fed the custard, I started wetting the bed again. It was the same as Smyllum. The staff checked the beds in the morning. You'd wake up in absolute fear when you realised you'd wet the bed. You were waiting for the key turning in the door. If you'd wet the bed, you'd be stripped and belted twice on the back of the legs by Sister zLJD [REDACTED]. If you tried to defend yourself, you'd be hit again. It was a thin, leather belt. It split in two at the end, like a snake's tongue. There was a civilian that did that too but I can't remember her name.
93. You were then standing naked in the bathroom. There would be six or seven of us lined up in the bathroom. I was nine or ten and there were boys of fourteen in the bathroom. You were thrown into a cold shower. Sister zLJD [REDACTED] made sure you stayed under the shower.
94. You were made to sleep in the wet bed sheets and pyjamas. I don't know how often the staff changed the bed sheets but the same wet sheets were kept on until they were changed. Some children had a wet pillowcase put on their head, like a hat, for wetting

the bed. That happened in the bathroom although that didn't happen to me. All the kids knew that you'd wet the bed. You would see the kids who had wet the bed in the washroom. You just tried to ignore them.

#### *General Routine*

95. There were more things for kids to play with than there had been at Smyllum and there were activities. There were big sand-pits outside for kids to play in, a basketball hoop, bikes, toys and a black and white television that was put on for an hour or so.
96. We all had black plimsolls, like gym shoes. You picked your clothes. There were bundles of girl's and boy's clothes.
97. You did the same chores you'd done at Smyllum, brushing, mopping or setting the table for the next day. I don't remember going to school.
98. We didn't have any visits in the two weeks we were at Nazareth House.

#### *Running away*

99. My sister was thirteen years old. She said we were going to run away. Me, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] ran away and we took a wee boy called [REDACTED], who was two years old, with us. I don't know why we took him. There was an older boy [REDACTED] who was ages with my sister. We walked along country roads and fields. [REDACTED] had [REDACTED] on his shoulders and we were singing 'It's a Long Way to Tipperary'. We got to the Royal Infirmary where my dad was. The nurses must have known we'd run away. We wanted to keep [REDACTED] we felt sorry for him.

#### **Abuse at Nazareth House, Bonnyrigg**

100. My brother [REDACTED] got the belt a lot from Sister <sup>ZLJD</sup> [REDACTED] and Sister <sup>GXE</sup> [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was belted by Sister <sup>GXE</sup> [REDACTED] for being sick.

101. Kids talked to my siblings and I about getting smacked and hit across the face, out of earshot of the nuns. We saw Sister <sup>ZLJD</sup> [REDACTED], Sister <sup>GXE</sup> [REDACTED] and other nuns smacking children across the face. Sometimes, the nuns would put their foot out and trip kids up.
102. There was a boy who rebelled against the nuns and he pulled the nun's headpiece off. The boy was carted out and belted. I don't know his name.
103. I saw a child being caned by Sister <sup>GXE</sup> [REDACTED] but I never got caned. I don't know what the child was caned for. Even if kids were squabbling, not even fighting, the nuns way of sorting it out was caning them.

#### **Reporting of abuse at Nazareth House, Bonnyrigg**

104. We saw my dad at the hospital when we ran away. We told him we'd been battered and [REDACTED] had been force-fed. I think my dad believed us. Social work and the police arrived. My dad said they weren't taking us back to Nazareth House. The hospital didn't want dad to sign himself out. We were taken back to Nazareth House but, not long after that, we got home.

#### **Leaving Nazareth House, Bonnyrigg**

105. Dad came to Nazareth House with the female social worker to get us. I was crying because I wanted [REDACTED] and we couldn't get him. We went back home. I was nine years old.

### Life at home before going back into care

106. When I had gone back to stay with my dad from Smyllum, I first went to St Peter's Primary School. Then I went to St Thomas's Secondary School in Lauriston Place. There was a nun at school, Sister [REDACTED]. She was also called [REDACTED]. She came from the convent which was next door to the school. Sister [REDACTED] was petite and about forty years old. Sister [REDACTED] taught religious education. I was twelve years old. We were talking in class, more about sexual abuse. She said if anybody had ever been abused to stay back. Nobody stayed back but I went to speak to her later. I told her I'd been in Smyllum. I started to tell her about the abuse. She slapped me, right over the face and told me not to repeat that. The nun asked if my father knew and said I'd go to hell, that the abuse never happened. I kept saying it did happen. From then, she picked on me the whole time. She would ask me if I'd told anybody. I would say I hadn't. I would never have discussed the abuse with my dad.
107. Before I got into second year, I had started skipping school because I didn't want to see Sister [REDACTED]. The nuns were the teachers and I felt overwhelmed. My sister would write me notes saying I was ill and couldn't go to school. Dad got letters about me skipping school. I never told him, or anyone else, what was going on with Sister [REDACTED]. I just said I hated school. Dad would take me to school, watch me going in and I would go up the stairs and away out the other gate.
108. I got sent to a Children's Panel when I was fourteen years old. They said if I didn't go to school, I couldn't stay with my dad. I went back to school and Sister [REDACTED] was still picking on me, so I started skipping school again. I only completed up to second year. I'd been put back a year. Things were okay at my dad's and he never hit us. He would shout at me for missing school.
109. My brother, [REDACTED], was taken away to St Joseph's in Tranent when he was eleven years old. He ended up in Wellington Farm at Penicuik. He was a wee rogue. He threatened my dad with an axe and stole bikes. We went to St Joseph's to visit him. Later in life, I learned that [REDACTED] had been sexually abused in care.



110. I had a Guidance Teacher at school. She was the guidance teacher for the First Year. I can't remember her name. I went to see her to talk her about the problems I was having. She said she didn't have the time. I went back a week later. All the time I was talking, she was tapping her pen as if she wasn't interested. The teacher asked if I didn't want to be at school because I had 'bunny teeth'. My teeth were protruding. I started crying. I started to tell her about Sister [REDACTED] slapping me. The teacher stood up, pushed me to one side and said I was telling lies. She told me to get out. I wanted to talk her about starting my periods. The teacher said I had a sister for that. You would think that she would have asked why I was not attending school and been more sympathetic, knowing my mum had passed away and I was living with my dad. If she had, I'd have told her what happened at Smyllum. I went to her to get help but she started abusing me as well. I wouldn't have spoken to a nun.
111. There was a Children's Panel because I was skipping school. My social worker at the time was Donald Dickie from Victoria Street Social Work Centre. The Panel put that down to my dad having no control over me, even though he was sending me to school and coming along the road with me to school. My dad was Polish and didn't have great English. He would try to express himself but the Panel weren't taking it in or picking up on what he was saying. Dad got angry a few times at the Panel. Nobody ever asked me why I skipped school or where I went. I was only twelve when it started. I could have been in danger.
112. When the Panel said I was going to Howdenhall, my dad kicked off and said I wasn't going. They took me into a room and a car arrived. I was in the car and my dad ran round. He was pulling at the car door trying to get me out. I was kicking the door, trying to get out.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

113. When I got home from Smyllum, I had nightmares. I'd be screaming at night, saying they were coming to get us. We had our own beds but I shared with [REDACTED]. I still wet the bed. My dad took me to the doctor and I was referred to the Sick Kid's Hospital. I

saw a man who I think was a psychiatrist. He gave me a teddy. I was examined by a nurse. The man asked if my dad had done anything or if there was something I wanted to tell them. Thinking about it now, they probably thought I'd been abused. I told the man I wet the bed at Smyllum and got battered. The man never did anything about it. I was put on tablets. I went to the hospital every two weeks. It took me six months to stop wetting the bed.

114. When I was about fifteen years old, the local priest, Father Hart, came to the door. He popped in a lot, the Church was just up the road from our house and he was friends with my dad. My dad wasn't in but I let the priest in and made him a cup of tea. We were sitting, talking, and the priest was going on about the church. I said that my siblings and I were abused in care. I told him about the abuse at Smyllum and about Sister [REDACTED] at St Thomas's. He knew Sister [REDACTED] because The Sacred Heart Church was the Church we went to from school. He asked if I'd told my father. I said I hadn't. The priest said to forget anything happened, don't open a can of worms. I said I wanted to go to the police but Father Hart said I didn't want to go down that road, I'd be taken back into care. That was it, I never said another thing. I felt Father Hart let me down

#### **Howdenhall Assessment Unit, Edinburgh**

115. I was sent to Howdenhall. I was thirteen or fourteen years old. It was a closed unit so you were locked in. I was in Howdenhall for six months before I ran away. There was no abuse from staff at Howdenhall. The staff were all good people.
116. There were about thirty girls in my unit. They were aged from eleven to fifteen years old. There was a lot of fighting between the girls and a bit of bullying. The boys were aged up to fifteen as well. Girls and boys were kept separate. It was one unit but a dining-room and doors separated the boy's and girl's units. You didn't mix with the boys.

117. There was a woman, who was maybe a psychologist, who asked you about what happened to you and tried to get a picture of your life. The staff were Mr and Mrs HBQ-HBR and Mr PAU. Mr HBQ and Mr PAU worked in the boy's unit.
118. You were listened to at Howdenhall. You had group chats with a couple of the girls and the staff. They got you into art and gym groups. It was structured.

### **Routine at Howdenhall Assessment Unit**

#### *General Routine*

119. The staff were strict but you got pocket money and got taken out to the swimming. Howdenhall was regimental in a way, in that everything had to be done. You had to put your own washing in. The staff were trying to teach life skills. You were schooled within the building.
120. There were four girls in one bedroom. You were locked in your bedroom but you could ring the bell if you wanted out to go to the toilet.
121. There was a girl's washroom. Everybody was naked and you had to wait to go in the showers. You never got to put a towel around you. There were three showers in a row with only a small wall between them. The person next to you could see you over the wall. You had to walk out of the shower and the towels were on the pegs. Mrs HBR or Elizabeth watched you having a shower. That wasn't very good. It was odd. I was fourteen and I didn't want people to see me in the shower. There were never any sexual advances. Elizabeth was one of the workers there.
122. You saw the boys at a café in Howdenhall. You could go to the café on a Thursday and buy sweets. I don't know where the money came from, my dad maybe sent it in because not everybody got sweets. The staff would shout your name and you would go and get your sweets.

123. My dad visited me every week at Howdenhall. I went back to the Panel for a review. The Panel said I wasn't going back to my father's house, I was going to Balgay School.

*Running away*

124. One time, I ran away. My dad wasn't in, so I went to a woman I knew. She let me stay there. I was away for about four weeks. Unknown to me, she was dealing drugs. The woman would get me to go to places, to take cigarettes or something to someone. There were drugs inside the cigarette packet. There were lots of people coming to the door. The woman had four kids and I babysat as she was out all the time. I'd be locked in with the kids because the woman didn't want the door opened. I didn't contact my dad because the woman said the police were looking for me and I'd be caught if I went there. The house was raided by the police when I was babysitting and I was taken back to Howdenhall.

*Discipline*

125. I never got disciplined in Howdenhall and I didn't see anyone else being disciplined. The only discipline you got if you misbehaved was you didn't get out in the courtyard or you didn't get your pocket money to spend. I was always quite wary, I worried in case I would get a smack. If kids went to run up the wall in the courtyard, to get out, they'd be dragged back down.
126. There was a detention room with a metal door. It was in a corridor beside the washrooms. There was a light outside the room and when the light was on, everybody knew someone was in there. It had nothing in it apart from a built in bed that couldn't come off the wall. I was kept in there for two days for running away. I was fed. You had to ring the bell to go to the toilet. There would have to be two staff to let you out. You might be put in the detention room for fighting.

### **Peer Abuse of others at Howdenhall Assessment Unit**

127. There was a girl [REDACTED] who I was friendly with. [REDACTED] said another girl sexually abused her. The other girl was put in the detention room for three or four days and moved to another unit.

### **Leaving Howdenhall Assessment Unit**

128. The Children's Panel probably thought I was a bit chaotic and they should get me out of Edinburgh. The social work did talk about sending me to St Katherine's, in Edinburgh, but there were no spaces there. I had to wait a month for a space at Balgay. I was sent from Howdenhall to Balgay School, Dundee. The Children's Panel said to my dad I was going to Balgay but they never said Dundee. The social workers were saying I would run away. My dad was swearing in Polish.
129. One day, I was told to get my belongings and told I was going for a meeting. There were two guys and a woman, they obviously thought I was going to run away. I was put into a car and driven to Dundee.

### **Balgay School, Blackness Road, Dundee**

130. I went to Balgay when I was fourteen years old and was kept in until I was fifteen and a half years old. Balgay was split into two units, A and B. There were about 22 girls in each unit. It was all girls. They also had a place called Duncan House. It was a more privileged place to stay. The girls in there got out more and it was more relaxed. The girls were moving on to different things from there. I was never in Duncan House. I wouldn't have been let in there because I would have run away.
131. The girls that were in with me were aged fourteen to sixteen. Some girls said they were there because they battered people, others said their mothers didn't want them or they were running away from school. There was a girl who was fifteen and pregnant.



There were girls in Balgay who'd been in there until they were eighteen years old. I was the only girl from Edinburgh, the others had Glaswegian accents.

132. SNR [REDACTED] was Mr GIS [REDACTED]. There were no priests or nuns. There were a lot of staff and there were four on at one time in the unit. There was a staff member called Shona, she was my housemaster and was about 26 years old. There was one called Carol.

### **Routine at Balgay School**

#### *First day*

133. The woman, who was with the two guys who took me to Dundee, I think was the same social worker I'd seen before. We drove over the Forth Road Bridge and I asked where I was going. We were driving past places like Perth. I was wondering where I was going. I was worried I was being taken back to Smyllum. I knew I was going to a List D School but not where it was. I didn't know how long I was going for. All I knew was that it was an all girl's school.
134. When we arrived, the school was all closed doors. I was met by Mr GIS [REDACTED] and a woman called Bernadette. They were really nice at that point. I was really upset. I was screaming and they were trying to pull me out of the car. Everyone that went into Balgay got their photos taken and got a file made up. They had a photo of you, so they had one if you ran away. It was a bit regimented.

#### *Mornings and bedtime*

135. There were four girls in a room. I was put in with [REDACTED], another girl called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] had really red hair. I can't remember their surnames. You were locked in the bedroom at night. At the weekend you got to lie in longer.

### *General Routine*

136. The food was fine. A girl would make a choice of what they were going to make that week and there would be cooking lessons. You'd make macaroni cheese or something. On a Saturday night, you got Chinese food or pizza. If you behaved you got privileges like pocket money to go down to local shop.
137. We went to the swimming baths with members of staff. We went out of Balgay to play badminton and played hockey with another approved school. The staff talked about keeping fit and healthy.
138. We never went on holiday but we had trips out to the cinema.
139. You were allowed to bring your own personal possessions with you. You got a grant from the social work. When you first went in, you got a bigger grant to get all the essentials you needed. Every two months you were taken down the town centre and you got to pick your own clothes.
140. You did your laundry yourself. There were two washing machines. You didn't have to be asked, you just washed, dried and ironed your clothes. You were old enough to look after yourself.
141. School was in Balgay. A teacher came in and you got subjects but you didn't get any exams or qualifications. There was a classroom and school was in normal school hours.
142. One of the girls, [REDACTED], said to me not to say I was a Catholic. She said people had had their head washed in the toilet by other girls for saying they were Catholic. The staff knew I was Catholic and they did ask if you wanted to go Church. They believed in letting you follow your beliefs. I could have gone to church with a member of staff but I didn't.

143. They made a big thing of your birthday. You would get a card and everybody got a Valentine's Day card and a box of chocolates. Christmas was a big thing. Everybody got to go home at Christmas weekend. I never because I had run away a few times.

*Visits / Reviews*

144. My dad came up once a month. After two or three months, I got home visits. If I had a home visit, Balgay had a bus that would take me to Edinburgh and drop me off at Corstorphine. School finished early on Friday and I'd get picked up on Sunday. If you didn't turn up to be taken back then you didn't get your visit for the next few months. That didn't happen to me, I knew by the time I got home visits not to do that. My brother had moved to Wellington Farm. I never saw much of him, no-one initiated a joint visit or kept up any relationship. I'd see my older sister at my dad's.
145. You had six weekly reviews with your housemaster. You could go to your housemaster at any time and say what was happening. The purpose of the reviews was to talk about where you saw yourself, where you wanted to get to and how you were coping. At first, I never said anything. I started talking after the staff told me I'd be sent down south if I didn't stop running away. I said what I wanted to do with my life and what I wanted to achieve. I wanted to go back to school.
146. After six or nine months, I went back to Edinburgh for a Children's Panel and they said I wasn't getting to go back home. I went back to Balgay and wanted to kill myself. I thought I was never going to get out of there. After that, I buckled down and stopped rebelling. I thought I better show I wanted to get out. Before that, my attitude had been that I didn't care and I wasn't interested. I was never cheeky to the staff.

*Running away*

147. I didn't want to be at Balgay and I ran away a few times. I just wanted to be home. I'd been in for six months when I ran away and made it to Edinburgh. My dad kept me. He didn't tell the police I was there. I stayed with him for a couple of weeks. The police came and my brother was in as he had got out of the secure unit. My brother let the

police in and I said I'd just got there. I didn't want to get my dad in trouble. The police took me to the assessment centre and someone came from Dundee to take me back.

148. One time I hadn't got home for my birthday, I can't remember what I'd done. My dad came up and gave me £20. I never told the staff I'd got it. I jumped on the train back to Edinburgh, I was scared to buy a ticket because I was quite young and small. I got taken back to Balgay.
149. Other times, I ran away with girls from Balgay. We'd hide in a tenement stair. We'd all get cold then someone would say phone the police and say there's lassies in a stair. The police would come out, find us and take us back to Balgay. I think they knew it was us phoning.

### **Abuse at Balgay School**

#### *Peer Abuse at Balgay School*

150. At first I thought the girls in my room were alright. One was from Perth, one from Blairgowrie and one from Glasgow. They were actually the bullies in Balgay. They would get other girls involved because the other girls were frightened of them. The other girls probably didn't want to go along with it but felt they had to. On the first night, the three girls were all talking and laughing. We went to our bed. I must have been tossing and turning and they said to me, what was I doing, playing with myself? They started getting nasty. I told them I couldn't get to sleep. The three of them got up and battered me and they pulled my by the hair.
151. The three girls all had tattoos. Three days later, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] held me down and [REDACTED] tattooed me. They put a cross, like a religious cross, with three dots within it, on my arm, using a needle and blue Indian ink. It happened at night when we were locked in the room. I was screaming and shouting. It was painful, a needle was getting stabbed into me. One of them put a pillow over me so the staff couldn't hear me. They said I'd better not say anything or they'd cut my hair.



152. When the girls tattooed me, I thought my dad was going to kill me. My dad had been tattooed by the Nazi's during the war. He had gone mad when my brother got a tattoo. I was told by the three girls to say I had come in with the cross. First of all, I told Shona. She asked if I'd come in with the tattoo. I said I hadn't and she should look at my file. Shona said she'd speak to Mr GIS. Mr GIS knew I hadn't come in with it and I told him the three girls had tattooed me. The girls said I'd come in with the tattoo and I said I never. The scar started weeping. I was trying to scratch it off thinking that if I picked at it then it would come off. That wasn't going to happen. A nurse examined you after you went in to check your heart, your ears and whatever. The nurse knew I never had it. Quite a lot of the girls had this cross. I don't know if you were part of their gang if you got it or whatever. I still have the mark now. I got it lasered off when I was sixteen or seventeen.
153. The three girls bullied me for most of the rest of the time I was at Balgay. At first they battered me, kicked and punched me quite a lot because I'd told on them about the tattoo. Then it was on a weekly basis. They called me "Bugs Bunny" and things like that. I was well spoken when I went to Balgay, compared to some of the girls. They called me, "snob". I wasn't conforming to how the three girls wanted me to be.
154. They picked on other girls as well. Everyone was frightened of them. If you had shampoo, they would take it off you. They took a coat from me. I didn't feel I could say anything to the staff. The three girls would have it in for you and batter you if you did. If I was asked about the bullying, I would say I wasn't telling, I wasn't a grass.
155. One of them broke my nose when she punched me. The septum went into the other part of my nose. We were left alone a lot, in the communal room. They'd kick you and trip you up. They made your life a misery. I'd cry a lot and I wouldn't let them see.
156. We'd sit down for a communal meal of pizza and the three girls would make sarcastic remarks. They would be told to stop it by the staff.

157. The three girls would pick on Shona, the housemaster, as well. She was young but her hair had gone grey. I wouldn't pick on Shona and the girls would bully me because I wouldn't call her names. My time in Balgay was frightening and stressful. It was organised chaos. I didn't know what was coming next. I didn't know what would happen if I didn't conform to what the girls wanted me to do or say.

*Abuse by <sup>SNR</sup> [REDACTED] at Balgay School*

158. When the girls had tattooed me, I was in Mr <sup>GIS</sup> [REDACTED]'s office to speak to him about it. Mr <sup>GIS</sup> [REDACTED] was saying that the tattoo hadn't happened in Balgay. I told him it had and he should check my file. The reason I knew the tattoo wasn't mentioned in my file was that the office had been open one day and another girl and I had gone in and looked at our files. I knew my file said, "No tattoos". It had a section for any distinctive marks or scars. It had in the file, "Prominent teeth". I told Mr <sup>GIS</sup> [REDACTED] the truth, that I'd seen my file.
159. Mr <sup>GIS</sup> [REDACTED] said I'd been bad and smacked me over the bum. He said that because I'd looked at the file I would have to be sent to a school down south. I was crying and saying I wanted to go home. Mr <sup>GIS</sup> [REDACTED] said if I did a sexual act, he wouldn't tell my dad and I could stay at Balgay. I had to perform oral sex on him. I went back to my room and I wanted to die. I couldn't do it because I was thinking about my dad.
160. After that, Mr <sup>GIS</sup> [REDACTED] would make excuses for me to go to his office whenever he could. Each time I would have to perform oral sex on him. Sometimes I would be physically sick before I went to the office. Sometimes, Shona would tell me he wanted to see me and I would make an excuse. I'd say I didn't want to go to the office. Shona would say I had to go. He was blackmailing me. I was frightened, thinking he had the power to send me down south. Mr <sup>GIS</sup> [REDACTED] said I could tell who I wanted but who would believe me. This went on for two or three months, until I left Balgay. It made the situation worse with the three girls bullying me. They started calling me a grass and saying I was Mr <sup>GIS</sup> [REDACTED]'s pet. They'd pull my hair and trip me up.

### *Abuse having run away from Balgay School*

161. Once, four of us girls had run away. We were between fourteen and sixteen years old. We were stupid and we hitched a lift to Edinburgh. I'd said to go to Edinburgh and my dad would keep us. The car we got into was an old, petrol blue, Ford Cortina. The driver gave everybody a cigarette and took us to a forest. He took his manhood out and told us to take our clothes off. I was in the front of the car and I jumped out.
162. The other three were in the back of the car. You had to put the front seat down to get out of the back. I was screaming and the man was shouting. He drove away and left me in the middle of nowhere. The man came back and let the other girls out. One of the girls said she'd had to perform oral sex on him. I had started trying to get to the road. We stopped a woman and told her what had happened. She got the police.

### **Reporting of abuse at Balgay School**

163. After the incident with the man in the car when we ran away, we were taken back to Balgay and then to the Police Station. I gave a statement and we were medically checked. We went through photos. I couldn't identify the man but someone else could. We never went to court. Our stories were conflicting. One of the girls said he'd pulled us into the car because they didn't want to get into trouble for getting into a man's car. Mr<sup>GIS</sup> told us later that the man had been jailed. That was an opportunity for me to tell the Police what Mr<sup>GIS</sup> was doing to me but I was too frightened. What if they didn't believe me? I have never told anyone about the abuse by Mr<sup>GIS</sup>, until now.
164. I told Shona about the abuse at Smyllum but nothing came of that.

### **Reporting of Peer Abuse at Balgay School**

165. I told Shona and Mr<sup>GIS</sup> that the three girls had tattooed me. Nothing was ever done about the incident. Mr<sup>GIS</sup> used it to abuse me. I'd have thought the staff would have

got the police involved. I got moved out of that room but the girls continued to batter me all the time.

166. You had an opportunity to speak to the staff but I never told them about the bullying. I think the staff knew it was going on. How could they contain it? I'm not saying they turned a blind eye but what could they do?

### **Leaving Balgay School**

167. I conformed, stopped running away and discussed why I didn't go to school with the psychologist. I was frightened of the consequences of running away and what Mr GIS might do. Why I didn't want to go to school was never taken on board. I said I was being bullied at school but I never wanted to discuss exactly everything about Sister such as her slapping me. I said I wanted to be a nurse and to help people.
168. I was on home leave and I went to a second Children's Panel. My dad didn't want me to go back to Balgay. They allowed me to go back home. I was fifteen and a half years old.

### **Life after being in care**

169. I went back to stay with my dad. I refused to go to St Thomas's School and was put into James Gillespie's School, a mainstream school. I had to agree to re-sit fourth year at school. Everything was fine at James Gillespie's. There were a few people I knew from Tollcross. I got on well there and sat my exams. I did quite well and got three or four qualifications. I left school when I was seventeen years old.
170. I got a job in an ice cream factory. I met a guy who I stupidly married, when I was eighteen years old. My dad wasn't happy because we wouldn't get married in the Catholic Church. He wasn't going to come to the wedding. I had my first son when I was nineteen years old and my other son after that.



171. My ex-husband was controlling. He'd say I wasn't to wear make-up or a skirt. We were married for eight or nine years, until we divorced. He had his problems too, he'd been abused in care. I met someone else but didn't marry them.
172. I worked for the social work department as a support worker for the homeless. I bought my council house and brought my sons up myself. I went to college and did my Higher National Certificate in Social Care and Working in the Community. I've worked in that area ever since I left college. I currently work as a drug support worker.

### Impact

173. When I was young, I didn't think about my treatment at Smyllum as being abuse. You think you are being bullied. I know now it is abuse. I'm claustrophobic. I have a fear of being locked in. It's not a nice feeling. I won't go in a lift and I'm always looking for the exit. I never shut my bedroom or living-room door. I don't know why the incident about the ice-cream at the beach upsets me but it does. When I go to the beach now, that always sticks in my mind. The nuns were not nice people.
174. Smyllum saying to me that I didn't have a brother, that [REDACTED] wasn't at Smyllum, took my brother away from me. For what reason? The nuns let [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] see [REDACTED].
175. I don't know why, but [REDACTED] invited Margaret [REDACTED] GXD [REDACTED] to his wedding in 1989. [REDACTED] never kept in contact with [REDACTED] after Smyllum but [REDACTED] took [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] put a lot of pressure on [REDACTED] to invite [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] came to the church but when [REDACTED] saw the seating arrangement for the reception and saw [REDACTED] at the top table, [REDACTED] walked out. [REDACTED] was angry at [REDACTED] for not putting [REDACTED] at the top table. [REDACTED] said [REDACTED] shouldn't have been there in the first place.
176. I was close to [REDACTED] but she was always for Margaret and Smyllum, whereas [REDACTED] wasn't for [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were close in the past but not now. He hasn't seen [REDACTED] for a year. [REDACTED] was in care until he was sixteen, then he was put into another

place, a hostel or whatever, until he was eighteen years old. When he was eighteen, [REDACTED] came back and met my dad. I am close to [REDACTED]. I let him stay at my house until he got a bedsit. [REDACTED] done well for himself. He is nervous and anxious. [REDACTED] has ended up spending a long time in prison. [REDACTED] has moved down south. She went to the drink and we fell out about that.

177. After my time at Smyllum, I hated the Church. We still had to get dressed up every Sunday and go to the Sacred Heart Church. I didn't like it. Dad got my brother [REDACTED] to be an altar boy, he hated that as well.

178. When I was fifteen years old and at Balgay, I wanted to kill myself and made preparations to do that. I did feel suicidal a lot but this particular time, I was at my lowest. I didn't see any way out. I kept thinking that no-one was listening or interested in me. I thought I was never going to get out of Balgay. [REDACTED] had said you could be kept until you were 21 years old. I couldn't kill myself because I was thinking of my dad and how he would have felt. I told Shona, my housemaster. She asked me why and it was documented but nothing else happened.

179. I could have had a better education. I'm clever. If I had had a normal education, I would have done better at school. I had to go to college and do a six month starter's course. My educational qualifications weren't up to the standard you need to do your first college courses. I did a National Vocational Qualification, a Scottish Vocational Qualification Level 3, then a Higher National Certificate.

180. I chose my college course because I wanted to help people. When I was younger I wanted to be a nurse but I decided I wanted to help the homeless. I wouldn't treat people the way I was treated in care. I presumed the care sector had changed by then. A lot of people I worked with as a support worker were eighteen or nineteen years old and had been through care. They were into drugs. They would tell me they had been abused in care. If they disclosed abuse to me then I would report it.

181. I was definitely not getting married in the Catholic church. It caused resentment with my dad and my mother-in-law, who were both Catholics. My future husband and I

went to see a priest about getting married. I told the priest I was pregnant, which I wasn't, so I couldn't be married in church. I lost faith as a child. I don't go to the Catholic church now.

182. I was protective of my two boys and didn't christen them, even though my husband was a Catholic. They didn't go to a Catholic school. There was no way they were going to a Catholic church. ██████████ Convent provided food for the homeless where I worked. The convent wanted me to do a talk for them but I refused to go. I didn't want any involvement with them. I told my manager a bit of why I didn't want to go. I can't look at the nuns. If I see a nun in the street, I cross over the road. I feel physically sick.

183. My dad died when I was 21 years old. We had to arrange the funeral. I didn't want my dad buried by the Catholic church but it was his belief so I had to go along with that. I found that very difficult. I would rather have had a humanist service. The night before the funeral, my dad's body was received into the church. The body stays there until the morning. I couldn't bear the fact my dad was lying in a church.

184. I never let my boys go away to school camp. I always had a fear they could be abused. The boys never got to stay overnight with anyone, except my dad or my sister. I let their friends sleep at our house.

185. Being in care has made me less trusting and wary of people. I'm more of a listener. When people talk about their childhood, what can I say? I discussed the abuse at Smyllum with my ex-husband. He was also in care at Wellington Farm.

*Applying for Kinship Care of my grandchild*

186. My younger son met a girl and they had a child. The girl started taking drugs whilst my son was working away. The social work came to me. They were from Randolph House in East Lothian. The house had been raided by the police when my grandchild was there. My grandchild, who was five years old, was placed in my care. My grandchild had been with me for two months, was at school and settled, when social work came to me again.

187. The social worker was French. He said I wasn't what he expected and that my grandchild's mother had painted a bad picture of me. He came with a pre-conception about me. The social worker asked me about my family life. Rather than tell him what happened, I said I had a good life and never told him about Smyllum or anything. I wasn't going to go into it. I never told him about [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] because I thought if he looked them up, he would see they were never part of the family but were in care.
188. Social work did a kinship carer assessment on me and my son's girlfriend's mum, who was an alcoholic. There was no way they were letting my grandchild go there. I had offered to take my grandchild's half-sibling too to keep them together. I didn't want them split up, I knew what that felt like. The social worker came back to see me. He slammed my file down and said I was a liar as I never told them about my time in care. The social worker had a look of glee on his face.
189. I tried to explain but he said again that I'd lied and that I wouldn't be considered for kinship carer because of that. The social worker said they could stop me seeing my grandchild because I wasn't a fit person. I told him to get out and that I'd not told him about my time in care because I was abused in care. He tried to discuss it but I told him to get out. I was really upset. The social worker did not recommend me for kinship carer. I wasn't allowed to be considered because I'd lied to social work. I felt guilty, what if anything else happened to my grandchild? I didn't want my grandchild to end up in care.
190. The social worker phoned me up. I think he'd thought about what he'd said and was worried I'd report him. The social worker started reeling off all this stuff on the phone, things like my dad had threadbare carpets. Very few people had fancy houses back then. What did that have to do with me being a fit person to look after my grandchild? Social work were judging me by how much money we had back when I was a child.
191. The social worker went on about me telling lies. I said I had told lies but for a reason. I didn't want the social work to know I'd been in care. They might have delved into too much of my life. By then, everyone knew what had gone on in Smyllum and I felt a



weaker person for it. I didn't want my care experience being used against me but it was used against me. I didn't want to be judged by my care experience and I was. I was crying whilst I was speaking to him. I told him he'd brought up a lot of crap and he didn't understand what he'd done. I should have reported the social worker.

192. I told the social worker I was abused in care. You would think the social worker would ask me if I had reported that or if action had been taken but he didn't. He didn't say he had to look into it or get the police involved. I wrote to East Lothian Social Work Department and said the assessment for kinship care had been unfair. I explained to them I'd been abused in Smyllum and I didn't want to discuss it with the social worker who had been assessing me. The social work department never wrote back or got in touch with me.
193. My grandchild ended up back with my son's ex-girlfriend. I don't think my grandchild should be there. My grandchild stayed with me again for three weeks because my son's ex-girlfriend was seen battering him in the street. My son's ex-girlfriend then knew I had been in care. No social worker should have told her that. If I hadn't been in care, I might have assessed as suitable to be kinship carer.
194. We went to a Children's Panel. A social worker asked if I was on drugs. I wondered if they knew about my time at Balgay and my thinking of suicide. You are judged by your time in care. I never say to anybody that I was in care. It isn't anybody's business. It wasn't my dad's fault we ended up in care.

#### *Counselling / Support*

195. As an adult I saw a psychologist at the River Centre. I had Post Traumatic Stress Disorder following a robbery at work. I had eye movement desensitisation and reprocessing treatment. I told the psychologist briefly about the abuse at Smyllum. I think the psychologist phoned the police to report what I'd said. At first I was annoyed but, at the end of the day, my counsellor was doing her job right. I thought, what is she going to do with that information, probably nothing. Anyone else I'd told hadn't done

anything, so why would my counsellor be any different? She was the only person who did listen.

### *Revisits*

196. Years ago, I went a drive with a guy. We went through Lanark. He didn't know anything about my time in care. Smyllum was now converted to housing. We drove through it. I never said anything. I felt physically sick as we drove down the driveway and I saw the big turret. I didn't want to be driving through Smyllum, it brought up so many memories.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

197. A year or two ago, the police came to speak to me. I think it was because I'd disclosed the abuse at Smyllum to my counsellor. The police came to see me twice and I gave a statement. They asked me about Smyllum but not about any other place. They never knew I'd been in Nazareth House. They asked me for my sibling's phone numbers. Margaret [REDACTED] GXD have been charged, as have a few nuns. I have said I would give evidence. [REDACTED] is standing by Margaret. [REDACTED] phoned [REDACTED] and threatened him because he'd spoken out against Margaret.

### **Records**

198. I haven't applied for my records, although I intend to. [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] have their records. When [REDACTED] got his, you could hardly read the writing. I think the records should be typed up before you get them.

**Lessons to be Learned**

- 199. Every child should have control of their life. Children in care need to be listened to. Too much is brushed under the carpet and children have not got a voice. Family contact should be encouraged. The nuns never said "Let's write a letter to your dad." The nuns should have allowed us to have time alone with our dad.

**Other information**

- 200. The nuns abused you in Smyllum. Other staff didn't. Why didn't the other staff come forward and say that what was happening wasn't right? Did any of those people come out of the system and tell people what was happening? Children who have been in care have gone to their doctors as adults and said what has happened to them. Why did no-one come forward and do something about abuse in care before now?
- 201. I hope the Inquiry findings are published and people listen to what is said about the treatment of children in care. People who have been in care have taken their own lives and have suffered a lot mental health problems. I'm not interested in money, it's not about money.
- 202. 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.

GJA  


Signed.....

Dated..... 9. 3. 20 .....