

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

LZZ
[REDACTED]

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is LZZ [REDACTED] and my date of birth is [REDACTED] 1971. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Background

2. My parents, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are both dead. I had one younger brother, [REDACTED], but he died of a drugs overdose at the age of 34. I have two sisters: [REDACTED] aged 47 who is older than me, and [REDACTED] who is younger, aged 37.

Life before care

3. I went into care because my dad beat me up. My social work records go back to when I was two years old and there is mention in my notes about me running away. At some point my dad broke my nose and beat me up with a knuckle duster. I went to court as a witness when I was about five or six years of age and I remember my doctor took me. I was there to give evidence against my dad but I just froze in the witness box and I couldn't speak. My dad was violent to me and my mum and I remember he even threatened the social worker, May Neilson. He hated her because she was trying to help me.
4. When I was eight years old my uncle, [REDACTED], sexually abused me several times until I was about nine years old. This uncle abused me when I was visiting my

grandparents, when I was living there in between children's homes. He was abusing my cousins as well. He was charged by the police but a week before the criminal trial, which was about five years ago, he committed suicide.

5. I believe I was in care from the age of eight up to sixteen years old. I always thought that the first home I was in was Larchgrove Assessment Centre but according to my files I was in a few different homes first. It is all mixed up in my records and I don't know what home I was in first. I know that before I went to Larchgrove there was a children's hearing and the decision was that I would go to Larchgrove.

Larchgrove Assessment Centre, Glasgow

6. The first home that I remember being in was Larchgrove in Glasgow. The windows were metal and I was locked in there. It was like a jail. I don't know what age I was, but my records indicate that I was in Larchgrove sometime between the age of thirteen and fifteen. There were only boys in there. I can't remember who was in charge or the names of any of the staff
7. The dorm I was in had six beds and was for boys only. We would normally get woken up and go down for breakfast at 0900 hrs and be finished by 0920 hrs. We would then go in the recreation room where the pool table and the TV was and we would be there until lunchtime. There was also a gymnasium that had a trampoline.
8. I don't really remember washing at Larchgrove and in fact don't think I bothered and the staff didn't make you. I never went to school when I was there and you were never forced to go. I think it was when I was in Larchgrove that I started sniffing gas. I never got out and there weren't any trips or days out or anything like that. When I was at Larchgrove I think I ran away maybe seven or eight times. Although we were locked in there I managed to either break out or sometimes I would run past people who were coming in at visiting time. When I was caught and taken back I would get beaten up.

9. I never got any visitors when I was at Larchgrove. Some of the other boys got family coming to visit them but nobody ever came to see me. I didn't go home at the weekends. I can't remember if anyone ever came to inspect the place.
10. My social workers when I was in Larchgrove were two women: May Neilson, and later Pat Curran. They were both from Closeburn Street, Possilpark. I remember both of them. I only ever saw them when I ran away because they would sometimes take me back. I never told them anything about what was going on in Larchgrove.


Abuse at Larchgrove

11. I think it was the second day I was in Larchgrove, probably about eight o'clock at night. Everyone else in my dorm was told to leave and go to the recreation room. A male member of staff held me down and a female member of staff sexually abused me. She took my penis out and started playing with me. This lasted about twenty minutes. This happened a couple of times but I can't remember the staff members' names. The female was 35 to 40 years of age and had brown hair. The man was 50 to 55. I know the same thing happened to another boy who was in my dorm because we talked about it, but there is no way that he would come forward to speak to you. I can't remember any of the staff members' names there.
12. I know that the same thing happened to other children in there because they had things done to them by the same couple. It was usually the man would hold the child down and the female would touch you.
13. In Larchgrove the staff would beat me up for being loud. They would drag me by the hair and severely beat me up with their hands or fists. It was usually to my legs or to my body. This happened regularly and that is why I ran away. I was mentally abused when I was in there too. They would call me names and they would tell me that I was useless just to keep my spirits down.

Reporting of abuse at Larchgrove

14. I never told my social workers when I was at Larchgrove because I thought the staff were allowed to do what they did. There was no one else I could tell. I could never figure out why I kept getting sent back to my dad's house at weekends because the social work knew that I was getting beaten up at home by my dad.

Flemington House, Uddingston

15. Secondary Institutions - to be published later
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- 18.
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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Foresthall Hospital, Springburn, Glasgow

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

22. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

23.

Park Lodge Children's Home, Shawlands

24. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

25.

Blairvadoch Children's Home, Helensburgh

26. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

27.

Strathaven Children's Home, South Lanarkshire.

28.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Lawmuir List G School, Jackton Campus, East Kilbride

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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47. After Lawmuir I went to Kerelaw List D School. It must have been the social work that made the decision for me to go to Kerelaw. I can't remember if there was a children's hearing or not. I don't know why I was moved.

Kerelaw List D School, Stevenson, Ayrshire

48. The last place I was put was to Kerelaw List D School. A list D school is where you get sent if you are bad and is the last place before a secure unit. It was split into four units and there was also a separate secure unit but I wasn't in there. It was only boys that were in Kerelaw.
49. Each dorm maybe had eighteen to twenty beds, and there were maybe three or four dorms in each unit. They were all full of boys. There was a massive gym and there were playing fields outside. Downstairs was a mini kitchen and a pool room, and then the showers and a staff room. There were staff on duty all the time and there were usually four or five on at any one time. I think I would have been in there for a year and I got out just before my sixteenth birthday.

Routine at Kerelaw

50. We got up had our breakfast then walked the short distance to school which was in the grounds. I sat my exams at Kerelaw and I was waiting for my results but they told me that they hadn't sent my exam papers away.
51. In Kerelaw we had to wear a stripey shirt and I wore my own trousers.
52. There was a television there but it was really difficult to concentrate on what was on because you were just waiting for your next beating, or you could go outside to play.
53. When I was at Kerelaw I got a paper round delivering papers just so that I could get out of the home for a while.
54. Apart from one time we walked the Pennine Way I didn't go to any other trips. Others trips were organised but I refused to go because I was too frightened about being assaulted again.

55. I would be at Kerelaw most weekends so if Matt George was there that weekend I would run away just to avoid him because I knew what would happen. When I ran away I was taken back and John Muldoon would batter me. Sometimes I would be away for a couple of days to a week or so, it just depended when the police caught me. I didn't go to my parent's house; I just slept rough in Glasgow.
56. I lost some of my teeth because my dad knocked some of them out. I lost others because of neglect. I used to get taken to the dentist when I was at Kerelaw. I have now got false teeth but I can't wear them.
57. I don't remember celebrating Christmas or Birthdays at Kerelaw but I didn't want to celebrate it anyway. I never got any visits from anybody not even a social worker when I was there.

Abuse at Kerelaw

58. There was a member of staff, John Muldoon, who used to get a couple of the older boys to beat us up. I can't remember their names. He stayed in our block. We didn't have to do anything. He would just tell the older boys to beat the younger boys up. He would tell them what to do and he would watch when they did it. He used to beat us up as well. It was just the same kind of beating that an adult would give me. When I ran away and was taken back John would batter me.
59. He had a taxi and sometimes he would take us in it to Stevenston. He also took us to a gun shooting range. It was round the back of Stevenston near Arden, I think. He had a licence for a pistol. John was maybe forty to fifty years old and was very tall.
60. Matthew George was an art teacher. The first time he did anything was in the classroom, because there was a school in Kerelaw. He took me into the store cupboard and he made me touch him. The class was full of other children and they would have been aware what was going on. I have seen him coming out this storeroom with others and they told me later that Matt had abused them. After that he caught me

in the shower and got me to touch him down below. This happened a few times in the shower. Every time before he made me do things he would hit me in the stomach with his open hand first so it took the wind out of you, and it was his way of saying you better do what I tell you. He did karate so knew what he was doing. We always used to check the staff rota and if we saw he was on we used to run away.

61. Another time one night we were playing football in the gym and Matt came in and made us all stand in a row. When he came in I was shaking because he was capable of anything. He then made us all strip completely naked, and then started hitting golf balls at us. He did it for about ten minutes, and then started kicking green cloth footballs at us. He just liked to control us.
62. A few times Matt George took me to his house in Largs. One time when he took me there he took a video camera out and Matt filmed me doing sex acts on three men who were on the couch. At one point I was made to suck one man's member while another was anally raping me. They all took turns and it went on for hours. It must have lasted about two hours. Matt didn't abuse me that day. I had never seen these three men before. They were probably between forty and their late fifties. Matt George gave me a teddy bear for that.
63. There was one time I saw LYY arriving at Kerelaw in the minibus He was outside and was speaking to Matt George and I wondered why LYY would be there and why they would be speaking to each other. Matt George came in and told me I was to go with LYY in the minibus. LYY took me out in the minibus to some country roads and he abused me. He 'bummed' me. Matt George and John were very close too but John never did anything sexual with me. Other staff would have been aware of me going out in the minibus with LYY LYY
64. There was another member of staff called LYW who was an English teacher. He might have been about forty years old. He was very knowledgeable and was barred from a lot of pubs because he emptied a lot of the quiz machines. One time he took me to a church in West Kilbride and he sexually abused me on the stage.

He made me suck his member and anally raped me. About four times LYW took me to his house in West Kilbride. His wife used to walk about completely naked. LYW used to play with himself and pleasure himself and made me do things to his wife, like lick her. Her first name was HSH That church is a house now. I don't know if he did this to any of the other boys.

65. LYW took some of us on holiday as well. I was with a group and we were walking part of the Pennine Way. LYW gave me vodka and he made me do a sex act in a tent. He made me suck his member and he anally raped me. After that they went to the pub, leaving all the kids playing in the field. I felt really bad after it and I got a wee pet lamb from the field and just cuddled it in the tent. He did the same thing that he did to me to another boy called [REDACTED]

Reporting of abuse at Kerelaw

66. I went to the headmaster at Kerelaw, I don't know his name, and told him about me getting beaten and all the sexual abuse. He just said that I was telling lies. I asked him if he was going to do anything about what I had told him. I said that I had had enough and couldn't handle it anymore. He said "No". I gave up trying to tell anyone else about it. The abuse continued after I told him.
67. I tried telling the social work for sixteen years from when I was 16 years old about what had gone on with me in care but they just said that they didn't believe me. I told Denis McNeill and George Walker. They were social workers at Closeburn Street, Possilpark. I regularly went in and told them about what had happened to me. I definitely told them about Kerelaw because that was the last place I had been. They said I had a mental illness.
68. After I got out of care the social work refused to help me. They even asked me to look after my brother and sister because they were getting abused at home.

Leaving Kerelaw

69. Because my birthday falls [REDACTED] I was still fifteen when I got released. I got dropped off in Glasgow city centre and just left there. I was homeless. I didn't know where to go and had no social worker or anything. I had nothing. I went to the social work department in Closeburn Street and told them I had just been put out of the home and asked if they would help me. They said no.
70. After I was sixteen I lived for a short time at a Catholic Church place on [REDACTED] Pollokshields in Glasgow. I can't remember what it was called. It was a big fancy house and they used to make furniture in there and sell it up the town. I don't know how long I was there for. They got paid for me being there and they got me in touch with the social security and I got a payment book but they took that off me. There were nuns who came from a place in St George's Road, Glasgow but they were really good to me. Nothing really happened to me in there.
71. When I was at this church I got involved in an incident and got hit over the head with a trophy with a stone base. When I got to the church someone called for an ambulance and I ended up getting involved with the police.

Other information

72. I have told you about some of the homes that I was in but in total I think I was probably in between 25 to 30 homes. Some homes I was in were just for very short periods until they found another home for me to go to. I can't remember all of them, basically because my head was a mess. I am not sure what order I was in these homes, what age I was or for exactly how long.
73. Quite often I would go to a good home and I would be perfectly happy there but I would mess it up for myself and I would become disruptive. It was stupid and I don't know why but I would always expect anything good to be taken away from me. The police

would be contacted and they would come and take me away and I would then get sent to another home.

Reporting of abuse - general

74. [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED] When I was in Kerelaw I told the headmaster.
75. After I left care I went to the social work department in Closeburn Street and I told Dennis Neill, a senior social worker, and George Walker, who was a social worker. They just told me that I had a mental illness. I told them about what had happened at Kerelaw but they just told me that they didn't believe me.
76. I told [REDACTED] my wife, about some of the abuse I had suffered but I couldn't and still haven't told her about some of the sexual abuse.

Reporting to police

77. About fifteen years ago the police came to my house out of the blue and they asked me if I had been in Kerelaw. They asked me if I had been sexually abused in there but I said no because my kids were sleeping upstairs. I gave them a statement. The police contacted me about six months ago and I have given another statement about everything that went on with Matt George and he is being taken to court again. I think it is called Operation Viper. I went to the police station a month ago and I viewed an ID parade and I picked Matt George out straight away. I also told them all about [REDACTED] LYY [REDACTED] LYY [REDACTED] LCE [REDACTED] John and [REDACTED] LYW [REDACTED].
78. Matt George was previously convicted but only served part of his sentence and is now out on bail. Somehow he has managed to get himself a taxi driver's licence and is working at [REDACTED] as a taxi driver.

Life after care

79. When I left Kerelaw I slept rough for a couple of years. Through my pal we went to the dancing and I met, my now wife, [REDACTED] when I was seventeen years old. She straightened me out and I managed to get a council house with the help of a social worker. I couldn't handle it because I hadn't had a house before. I wasn't eating and I just didn't know what to do so I lost that house. [REDACTED] left her granny's house and got her own house so I moved in with her.
80. I have been with [REDACTED] since I was seventeen. We have two children; [REDACTED] aged 27 and [REDACTED] 26. I have tried to work and went on a YTS but had problems keeping a job because of my health.
81. The police from Ayrshire came to see me maybe about fifteen years ago. In front of my boys they asked me if I had been sexually abused as a child. I said I hadn't. It then came out that other family members had reported sexual abuse by my uncle, the same one that abused me.

Impact

82. In my time at Larchgrove I always thought that it was because I was bad and that all the stuff they did to me they were allowed to do to me. I didn't know any better back then. I was quite disruptive when I was there.
83. [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED] I felt really lonely and that is probably where I first thought about committing suicide. After that I started sniffing gas. When I left Larchgrove I cut my arms [REDACTED] but didn't actually need medical attention. I felt I was missing love and I considered suicide. Every home that I went to I felt like I had a label on my head because every home I went to somebody wanted to do something to me.

84. What has happened to me has affected my own parenting. I sometimes still sit and play with toys because I didn't get a chance when I was a child. I only started cuddling my children when I was 38 years old because I just didn't know how to. I have never hurt my children and [REDACTED] does the discipline in our house because of what I went through. I just can't remember my childhood because of what happened to me in care, and I still feel guilty for letting these things happen to me, but those who abused me they were the authority.
85. I have tried to commit suicide several times. I have taken an overdose [REDACTED] but it didn't work. I was on anti-depressants at the time. I kept telling my doctor that it wasn't working and I ended up just overdosing [REDACTED]. It didn't work and the only thing I got out of that was a good sleep. I have threatened to jump [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and another time threatened to jump [REDACTED]. I was talked out of doing it these times. I have cut my arms too [REDACTED] [REDACTED].
86. One time I was admitted to Stobhill Hospital because I had tried to commit suicide and a community psychiatric nurse (CPN) came to see me. I was admitted to McKinnon House. Sometimes I still feel like I want to die because I do honestly believe I was born to be abused. If I died now it wouldn't bother me because I think life might be better on the other side. I am on medication now so do feel a bit better.
87. [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED] I don't even have Christmas dinner. I just want it all to go away. I tried this year but I couldn't celebrate. It hurt too much.
88. I have no friends because, it is probably just me, but I don't think anyone likes me. Up until my tablets were changed I stayed in my room because I felt safe. I try and go out the house but sometimes I can't. I can't go on a bus because there was once someone that smelled like somebody in the past. I get paranoid because I think people are staring at me, and I feel they know what happened to me. Even though I am an adult I still feel very vulnerable and worried that someone could take advantage of me. I am now not religious because I have seen every side of religion and they are all the same.

89. I have suffered from depression and I was having nightmares about being sexually assaulted and going through it all again. I had been having nightmares for a long time, just about my whole life. My sleep before I got the tablets was rubbish too. I would usually only sleep for a couple of hours a day. I was almost constantly in my bed in the safety of my own bedroom because I felt safe in there. Before I got the tablets recently I used to think about what happened to me a lot, almost constantly.
90. When I was going through the court process a few years ago with my uncle he committed suicide before his trial. The procurator fiscal told me I should still go for criminal injuries compensation because I would get it. I did and when I got it, it devastated me because it felt like I was getting paid for sex. I have received money on two occasions through criminal injuries compensation. Once was for what my uncle did to me when I was eight years old. The second was for what Matt George did to me at Kerelaw. I gave some of that money away because it felt like dirty money.
91. I have never managed to hold down a job partly because of my mental health and partly because I can't actually get a job because I have had no education. I can read and write now but only because I have self-taught myself. None of the homes helped me get an education apart from Blairvadoch. When I went to Kerelaw I knuckled down there because I knew I would be getting out from there and I wanted to leave with something.
92. I am not a survivor yet, and won't think of myself as one until I feel like I am in a good place. I sometimes still feel like I want to die.

Hopes for the Inquiry

93. Counselling has been good for me but it could be I will need it for the rest of my life. You should be offered counselling for as long as you need it.

94. Everyone wants justice and I do too, but I just want this out of my head. I have wanted to tell my story since I was sixteen years old. This is my opportunity to do it and I want people to listen to me.
95. I think people who get money through criminal injuries compensation should receive counselling when they get the money. I got two lots of money and it devastated me.
96. I was put in a children's home because I was getting beaten up by my dad. There were other children in there because they were criminals. It would have been better for me if I had been put in a home where there were other children who had come from a disrupted family life.
97. I don't think one to one counselling with CPN nurses is any good. It is far better for there to be groups like "Voice Within" where people get to sit and talk about their experiences when they are ready. It is far better to speak to other people who have experienced similar things and know what they are talking about.
98. I am happy to hold on to my records which have had all the names and other things blacked out. I am willing to hand them over to the Inquiry if they are needed.

Other Action

99. Since I have become an adult I have driven back down to where the incident happened with LYW in the tent when I was at Kerelaw. It was in Alston, in Yorkshire and I felt I had to drive back down just to see the place.
100. I have also driven back to Kerelaw as well when I heard it was getting pulled down. I am not sure why but I suppose it was like to visit the scene of the crime. Secondary Institutions
Secondary Institutions - to be published later
101. I have been to the National Confidential Forum years ago but I didn't tell them everything that had gone on because I couldn't at that time.

102. I am in the process of giving a statement to Grant Brown, who is the fitness to practise manager for the Scottish Social Services Council in relation to HSH [REDACTED] HSH [REDACTED] is [REDACTED] I have given an initial statement and am due to give a further statement in the near future.
103. I feel happy that my story is now out there and I feel better now and I would be happy to give evidence at any future Inquiry hearing if I am asked.

Treatment / Support

104. I have been for counselling some of the things have been coming back to me. It is like some of the pieces of a jigsaw are coming together because I have had a chance to speak about everything. I go to a group and other people tell similar stories without going into details about it.
105. I kept asking them at the hospital what was wrong with me and it was only about two years ago I was diagnosed with PTSD. [REDACTED] kept phoning the hospital and told them that I needed help but they just told her that she should phone the police. Since I have been given tablets I have stopped trying to kill myself but sometimes I feel that I don't want to live.
106. I was due to give evidence at the trial of my uncle for abusing me and the week before I was to go to court Dr Ward, who was my community psychiatric doctor, told me that I was finished with them and wasn't to go back. I told them I was giving evidence in the next week for everything my uncle had done to me but she just said I wasn't to come back. That side isn't working and they let me down.
107. At some point the procurator fiscal told me about In Care Survivors Support Service so I have been in touch with them and that was me on the road to recovery. I think I will need counselling the rest of my life.

108. I am now part of a group called "Voice Within" which we set up ourselves. It isn't even a charity. We all just sit down and talk about our experiences and it is a great help. You don't have to talk about it if you don't want to but most people eventually do. We meet every Thursday night and I have been going for about three years. It is brilliant.
109. I have been to see psychologists through the NHS but haven't really found them to be any help. I am still seeing a community psychiatric doctor and I think I have now got the right balance of medication for my depression.

Records

110. I have managed to get my records but it is not clear where I have been. One of the counsellors I had years ago got some of my records. Sandra, my current supporter, got some more. The records are very poor and are quite erratic. They don't show all the homes I was in, and the ones that are there aren't in any sort of order. There is a letter in there from Glasgow District Council offering me money for what happened to me in Kerelaw but there is no apology with it. I just wanted them to apologise.
111. I am happy to waive my anonymity in this process . 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..... 30/4/19