

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

HYG

Support person present: No

1. My name is HYG My date of birth is 1961. I am 56 years old. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in Glasgow. I lived in Easterhouse in Glasgow with my parents, brother and three sisters. I was brought up well by my ma and da. I had a happy childhood.
3. I went to primary school and it was alright. I then went to Westwood secondary school. I was fine in first and second year, but then I got into the wrong crowd when I was in third year. I stopped going to school and started shop-lifting. I was just doing stupid, childish things. I was about fourteen years old.
4. I started going to children's panels for not going to school. I was warned a few times to go to school or I'd be put away. I can't remember if anyone asked me anything in the panels. I think in those days, you just sat there. I had a social worker, but I can't remember her name.
5. I remember once going to a children's panel late at night. My ma and da were there. I was told I was being sent to Kerelaw Residential School. I remember my mum crying. I think I was allowed to say goodbye to my mum, and then I was taken straight to Kerelaw from the panel.

Kerelaw Residential School, Glasgow

6. I think a social worker drove me to Kerelaw. I wasn't spoken to about what to expect or what it would be like. I don't remember getting there or the first day. I remember a staff member told a boy from East Kilbride called "██████", to look after me.
7. It was roughly ██████████ in 1975 or 1976 when I went in. I was about fourteen years old. It was a boy's school. Some of the boys in the school were older than me. I remember liking it at first. I got into the football team and used to play in the football pitch behind the building.
8. There were classrooms and a gym hall in the building. There were a few levels of accommodation blocks. I was on the top floor of the accommodation blocks. I was in a dormitory. There were roughly about sixteen boys in my dormitory.
9. At the top of the hill, the first house you came to was the janitor's house. The headmaster's house was also at the top of the hill. This was within the grounds of the school. The gym hall was at the bottom of the hill. There was a wooded area at the back of the school.
10. I can picture the headmaster's face, but I can't remember his name. There was a deputy headmaster. There were other staff members in there who taught us. I don't think any of the other staff members lived in the place. I think they just took turns to do the night shift.
11. There was always less staff at the weekends. It would sometimes be the same staff and sometimes different staff members. I think the staff who were different from the mid-week staff were social workers. I got on quite well with one of them.

Routine at Kerelaw

12. We got up in the morning about 7am or 7.30am, but I am not too sure about the time. Then we went to classes. We got a break for our dinner and then went back to classes.
13. I think you had to wear their clothes in there. I think they gave you a uniform or something. We had a wee wardrobe beside our beds with our clothes all hanging up. I can't remember if we got to wear our own clothes at weekends.
14. We would have our tea after school and then sometimes play football afterwards.
15. There was always a member of staff there during the night. I can't remember if they stayed in the dormitory or just walked through to check on everyone.

School

16. We had classes in the morning and afternoon. We got a break for our dinner. I don't think we had proper teachers. I think it was just staff members who took the classes.
17. I remember doing sums and I was quite good at it, but there were boys in the class who couldn't even count. I found that strange.
18. We went to art class. That is where everything started. The teacher's name was Matthew George. He wasn't just an art teacher. He was also the gym teacher and took sports. He was rough with boys during football, but he was nice in art class. I know he didn't live in the school but I think he did take the night shift sometimes.
19. I think Matthew George was maybe roughly about 28 or 30 years old. He looked old to me at that time. I am 5 foot and nine inches tall now and looking back, he was smaller than what I am now.

20. I was only scared of SNR and Matthew George. The rest of the staff were fine.

Leisure time

21. I was in the football team and enjoyed that. Matthew George picked people for the football team.
22. Matthew George was a bit of a bully. We would play five-a-side football at night time after we had our tea, and he would play with us. He always had to win and he would bang into me and try to trip me up..

Trips and visits

23. Sometimes they took us out in a minibus, but I can't remember where we went.
24. I used to be allowed to get out at weekends sometimes but I had to wait a while.. That was a privilege and you had to earn that. I didn't get home every weekend. I think maybe some people got out one weekend and others got out the next weekend.
25. My dad came to see me once. He was working near Kerelaw at the time.
26. I had a social worker on Westerhouse Road, in Easterhouse. I would go there to see the social worker.

Birthdays and Christmas

27. I must have been in the school over Christmas. I remember my ma bought me new shoes and clothes for Christmas. I didn't have them for long because a boy who was leaving stole my new clothes the night before he left. I remember raging about that. Somebody from the school took me to Marks and Spencer's in Glasgow to buy new

clothes. I wasn't happy about that because I didn't like the clothes in there but I remember picking something just so I could have something.

Abuse at Kerelaw

28. I remember how it started. Matthew George was being dead nice to me in art class. Looking back now, I can see that it was grooming but I didn't know words like that then. I liked going to art class but I wasn't very good at it.
29. Matthew George had his own art work up in the class, which I thought was weird and scary. They were paintings of scary faces. We did something in class that I think was called silk screen printing or something. We drew a design on a bit of cloth then put candle wax over it. Then you dipped it into the colour you wanted to, and took the candle wax off.
30. Mathew George drew an Egyptian lady's head for me. He did it with blue, yellow and gold paint. He started touching my genitals in the class room during that time. There were other boys in the class at the time. He did it discretely.
31. I won first prize for the Egyptian head. Looking back, he made sure I won first prize. The first time I was kept back in his class was to put a frame on that picture.
32. There was nobody else in the classroom when we were framing my picture. He unzipped his trousers and put my hand on his penis. He forced me to give him oral sex. I was under the table and he was standing up. I honestly didn't know anything about what was happening. It was different in those days. I started to dread going to his class room.
33. The same thing happened again after that. He made me give him oral sex. This happened a further couple of times in the class-room. He would say that he was going to put in a good word to get me out of the school quickly so I could go back home. He made sure that I stayed back after class and at night time.

34. It also happened at five-a-side football. He made me give him oral sex and masturbate him. I don't know how it happened there, but it did.
35. The dormitories were on one or two levels and there was a shower room at the bottom. The same thing happened in the shower room. I was having a shower and it was during the weekend. He must have stayed at the school over the weekend. He started touching me in the shower room.
36. He took me out the school once. I don't know how he managed that but he did. I think we went in the school minibus. He was taking me to see his art work. All I remember about the house was that it was in Ayrshire somewhere, and there were concrete stairs and railings in the house. There were a lot of paintings of faces, which I found quite scary.
37. The same thing happened in his house. He forced me to give him oral sex but it was rougher this time. He was also playing with me. I feel like I must have been enjoying it because I had an erection. I feel like it must have been my fault or something like that. He tried to force me to bugger him. He took me to his house twice and the same thing happened both times.
38. He was a hairy man. I can remember the smell of him. I can't describe it. He was always saying that he would get me out early.
39. The abuse happened right through my time at the school right up until I left. It happened about once a week, but maybe more on some weeks. I remember he would give me threats and warn me not to tell anybody.
40. The first time it happened was when I was kept back to put the frame on that picture. The framed picture was put on the wall in the corridor. I won first prize but I paid a high price for it.

Running away

41. After going home for a visit, you had to be at Waterloo Street at about 4pm on a Sunday to get picked up and brought back to Kerelaw.
42. I remember being with [REDACTED] and another boy on Waterloo Street one time. Matthew George came to pick us up that time. I saw him coming in the van and I decided I wasn't going back so I ran away. I got [REDACTED] to come with me. He didn't know what was going on. Nobody did.
43. We got to Edinburgh and spent the day in Port Seton. I don't know how we even managed to get there. We broke into a wee hut and slept there.
44. We were walking about in Musselburgh at night and the police chased us. I remember jumping into a river to escape the police. I got caught by the police at Musselburgh racing course. We must have been kept in the cells overnight. Nobody asked us why we had run away.
45. A teacher from school came to pick us up from the police station the next day. The teacher took our shoes off us and put them in the boot of the car. We were taken back to school.
46. I got the belt on the hand when I got back. I don't remember how many. I think it was the deputy head who gave me the belt. Then I was kept in the detention cell. It was just a room with a light and mattress in it, and you were locked in there as a punishment. I was kept in overnight. This happened to other people as a punishment as well.
47. Everybody was really surprised that I had run away. I wasn't allowed to go home for four weeks after that as a punishment. Nobody asked me why I had run away.
48. It must have been coming up to Christmas time because [REDACTED] was playing [REDACTED]" in the school pantomime. He didn't get the belt or locked in the detention cell. He

escaped punishment. I got the blame for it and I took the blame. It was my fault anyway.

49. I remember going for a walk with one of the weekend staff members who I got on with. I think she was a trainee social worker or something. I hadn't gotten out that weekend because I had run away. I can't remember her name but she was about 20 or 21 years old. I went for a walk with her in the wooded area at the back of the school and I nearly told her what was happening. I wanted to tell somebody. She was the only person I could trust in there at that time but I didn't say anything. I wouldn't have known how to explain it. I was terrified. That was the closest I came to telling anybody.
50. I couldn't tell anybody what was happening. I had been warned not to tell anybody. The one time my dad came to see me was a week after I had ran away. My dad said my mum had been cracking-up because I had run away for two days. He told me the police had been to the house looking for me. I told him I needed to get out of there and asked him to take me home but he didn't. He wasn't there for long.
51. I was seeing a social worker on Westerhouse Road in Easterhouse. This was during the period I was being abused. I am sure it was the social worker who drove me down there. I can't remember any names.
52. We were playing five-a-side football in the gym hall. I wasn't on his team, I remember Matthew George barging right into me and tripping me up. I think he was silently warning me not to tell anybody what was happening.
53. The abuse still happened after I ran away but it didn't happen as much.

Leaving Kerelaw

54. I was in there for roughly about ten months. I know I was in there for a while. I can't remember leaving the place for the final time.

55. I don't remember ever going back to a children's panel after going into Kerelaw.

Reporting of abuse at Kerelaw

56. The police caught me after I ran away from Kerelaw. I had been missing for two days but they didn't ask me why I had run away. I don't remember the staff at Kerelaw asking me why I had ran away either.

57. I was seeing a social worker in Easterhouse during the time of the abuse but I didn't say anything about the abuse.

58. There was nobody in Kerelaw that I could trust. I got on well with a female weekend staff member, but I couldn't tell her either. I wouldn't have known how to. I had also been threatened and warned by Matthew George not to tell anyone.

Life after being in care

59. I don't remember going back to school after leaving Kerelaw. I don't remember what I did after I left. It is blank.

60. My dad tried to get me a job with him. He was a painter. I went to see his boss in [REDACTED] Glasgow. I was fifteen years old and didn't get the job.

61. I remember going to the careers office with a few of my pals. I started my first job as an apprentice plasterer. I must have been sixteen years old. I did it for about three years, but didn't like it. I then started working with my dad. I served my time there for years as a painter. I started self-harming around that time.

62. I was going out with this lassie when I was about eighteen years old. She lived with her sister and the sister's wee boy who I would take to the football. She died in her sleep one night of a brain haemorrhage. That affected me as well.

63. I got married to a lassie called [REDACTED] I was married for 25 years. I always worked and would work away from home. I moved to fire protection and spraying intumescent.
64. I never told my wife what happened to me. I carried on taking overdoses. My marriage broke up and during the divorce, my wife said the reason was my overdoses. The way it was written in the papers made it sound like I was a junkie. We don't talk now because of that. I never took drugs in my life.
65. Everything surfaced again. I chucked my job because of the drinking, overdosing and self-harming. I lost my house because I couldn't pay the mortgage. I didn't care. I was taking overdoses and they were really bad. Most of them were a cry for help but a couple were serious attempts to end my life. I nearly died a few times.
66. After I got divorced, I was sitting having a drink with my sister, [REDACTED] and I told her about the abuse I had suffered. She was the first person I ever told. My older sister [REDACTED] later found out and said that she had always known that something was wrong because of my self-harming.
67. Things just fell apart. I moved in with my ma. I was drinking and taking overdoses. I was also cutting myself. My sister found out because I would be so drunk, that I would leave [REDACTED] lying around.
68. I got a council house on [REDACTED] in Glasgow. I met someone new but it wasn't serious. I was drinking in the house. I fell asleep, drunk, with a cigarette in my hand and set the house on fire. I woke up and jumped out the window. I broke my back in three places. That was about seven years ago.
69. I don't know how long I was in hospital. I checked myself out of hospital and bumped my way down the stairs and into a taxi. I went straight to the pub. I was chaotic. I could hardly walk and was back living with my ma.

70. I ended up in rehabilitation in Stobhill Hospital for about five weeks. I was sectioned after falling and banging me head while I was drunk. I got a psychiatric counsellor through the hospital. Two guys just appeared and they were helping me through my drug and alcohol problems. I stopped drinking when I was in there.
71. I carried on going to hospital every day for a few weeks after I got out. They'd send me a taxi because I could hardly walk.
72. I went back to being chaotic after that. I got into a place called 'Link Up' on Commerce Street, Glasgow, about four years ago. It was a residential place for homeless people. I was basically homeless because nobody wanted me at that time. I was in there for over a year. Ian Traynor and Sonia were my case workers in there.
73. I was going to a place called 'Milestone' at Bridgeton Cross every day. It's a rehabilitation place, and you go through a course for a year. I had a wee lassie called Maggie, who was the case worker assigned to me at 'Milestone'. I was still in a lot of pain for my back and had been on heavy medication, including morphine, for my back. I didn't drink for a year. I started to get my life sorted.
74. Everything was going fine. I went upstairs to my room in 'Link Up' one night. There was a TV up there. I was watching the news and I just caught the end of it. I heard something about Matthew George getting the jail. I just lost it. I was totally shocked. I couldn't believe it had happened to other people. You always think it is just happening to you. I hadn't heard his name for all those years and that was the first time I heard it. This was four years ago.
75. I had a lot of trust in Ian Traynor in 'Link Up'. I called him up. I told him about the abuse. Ian convinced me to get counselling.
76. I started counselling in 'Milestone'. It was a young lassie who came to see me. She was about 21 years old. I couldn't tell her half the things that were going on. She was a young lassie so how was I supposed to tell her. I had about six sessions and then they stopped it.

77. I got help to get a house in Pollockshields. My sister lived about two minutes away. I was still off the drink. Everything has been fine since then. I've met a nice woman and got engaged last year. I told her about my abuse about eight weeks ago.
78. My sister knows about my abuse. My ma is alive but I wouldn't want her to know what happened to me. My dad is dead.

Reporting to the Police

79. Turns out Matthew George had gotten ten years jail time for abusing boys. Ian was telling me that I needed to get it dealt with. He persuaded me to report my abuse to the police.
80. Two CID officers came to see me and took a statement from me. Ayrshire police went out to see Matthew George and charged him. The police said he just replied, "no comment" to everything.
81. A couple of months later, I got a letter from the Procurator Fiscal saying that they weren't going to take it further. I wasn't happy about that. They didn't give me a reason. The police were surprised.

Impact

82. The abuse in Kerelaw completely changed me. I didn't realise it at the time but I realise it now. I became scared and reserved. It has impacted my whole life.
83. I started to drink when I was sixteen or seventeen years old. The drinking would lead to self-harming. I would cut myself [REDACTED]. It felt good. I have had to go to Accident and Emergency for the cuts.

84. I would have flashbacks of the abuse in Kerelaw. I would blame myself for it. I would think that I must have enjoyed myself because I had an erection when it happened. I started overdosing on [REDACTED] I could get a hold off.
85. I had a good marriage, but I was taking overdoses all through the 25 years I was married. I was also drinking. I cut myself a couple of times too. I got divorced and my wife said it was because of the overdosing.
86. I have always had flashbacks. I have flashbacks of the abuse but I always see the painting of the Egyptian head. I see it framed on the wall.
87. I have been homeless and been in rehabilitation for drinking and overdosing. My life has been hard, when I think about it.

Records

88. I have never gotten my records from my time in Kerelaw. I didn't know that you could do that.

Other information

89. I think things are different now. Ever since the Jimmy Saville thing came out, I think it changed everything. Maybe it would help if kids have a designated person that they could speak to. In my day, there was nobody you could speak to.
90. People working with children need to be able to pick up on warning signs.
91. There is 'Childline' available now for kids to speak to someone anonymously. There is no 'Adultline' to speak to someone. I called Samaritans a few times but I didn't find it helpful.

92. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed. ^{HYG} 

Dated... 11 / 10 / 2017