

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of:

LUK [REDACTED]

Support person present: Yes.

1. My name is LUK [REDACTED]. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1974. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Background

2. I have three daughters and a young son. Their ages are 22, 17, 15 and 5. I work [REDACTED] [REDACTED] as an assistant events organiser. I have done this for four or five years.
3. I went into care in 1987. Before this I stayed with my dad, stepmum and my brother, who was three years older than me. I was thirteen and went to Hyndland Secondary School.
4. My father's name was [REDACTED] he took his own life in 1999. My stepmum is [REDACTED] [REDACTED], my own mother is called [REDACTED]. My brother's name is [REDACTED] and my step sister is [REDACTED].

Life before being put into care


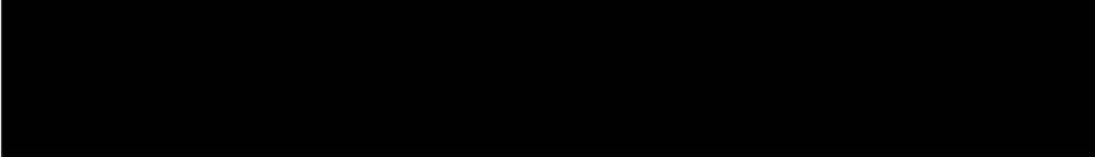
5. My mum and dad were divorced when I was five. My dad was a policeman and we stayed in a police house. My mum moved out. Because he worked shifts I went to stay with my auntie. I'd see my dad but at night time I'd stay with my auntie because of his shift work. My auntie stayed across the road. She was my dad's cousin. I stayed

between houses depending on my dad's shifts. I had my own room in both houses. My brother went to my uncle's as they had a son about the same age.

6. My auntie had three children. I had my own room in her house. It was a five bedroomed house, quite big. She had two girls older than me that stayed in the house. Her son had died in a motor bike crash.
7. I stayed with my auntie from primary one for three years, until I was eight. My dad then took me away. He'd met my stepmum. He had moved into her house in Partick. I'd met her a couple of times but didn't really know who she was. He basically appeared and took me to the house, a new one from a housing association.
8. My stepmum had a daughter called [REDACTED] who was about ten years older than me. My brother [REDACTED] moved in too. We were in there a week then moved around the corner. They bought a house in Thornwood. By that point they were married.
9. I wasn't happy and started running away all the time. My stepmum just kept getting me to clean the house at two in the morning and things like that when my dad was out. She was a marathon runner and she chased me out the house. She was just a pure nightmare.
10. The first children's home I went into was really close to where I stayed. It was called Ailsa Children's Home. Because of things happening in the home I kept running away. My dad was working all the time and my stepmum was a pure bitch. She was a teacher so she was never in either. So I just kept running away constantly.
11. Every time I ran away and came back she would wait until my dad went out and hit me, so I knew what she was going to do when I got back. I ran away with a girl who was in a home and she told me I didn't have to stay at home. She said, "You don't have to put up with that. Tell them what she does to you". I didn't know that I didn't need to live there. So I did, I told the police.

12. My stepmum first hit me when I was about seven. I can't remember her ever being nice. She was quite strict, which I wasn't used to from living with my auntie. I started running away when I was twelve. She was quite short tempered with my brother and me.
13. I ran away because I was obviously unhappy. I went to my real mum and asked if I could live there, but there was no bond. I didn't really know her. I was running away constantly for about over a year. I was usually returned by the police. One time my dad found me. He was a policeman so he knew where to look. He found me in a bin shelter sort of thing. There was no social work involvement then. My dad took me to see a psychologist in Knightswood before I went into care. I must have ran away about 25 times.
14. School was the one thing that was stable at that time. It was always the same, so I didn't have any problems at school.
15. I refused to go home on one occasion. I had been away for a couple of weeks, staying with friends and up closes and things. It was roundabout the Christmas holidays. I told a policewoman I didn't want to go home. I was thirteen.
16. The mum of a girl I knew, called the police and she came with me to the police station. I remember my dad and stepmum were there. I didn't want to go home and told them that my stepmum hit me and how bad things were at home. My dad signed a section fourteen voluntary care order.

Ailsa Children's Home, 13-15 Turnberry Road, Glasgow

17.  Secondary Institutions - to be published later
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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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26. Secondary Institutions - to be published later



Newfield Assessment Centre, Johnstone

27. I was initially taken to a police station. The social work then took me to Newfield. I went there [REDACTED] 1987. I stayed there for four to five months. When I first got there it was during the night, in the early hours of the morning. They took my clothes and shoes from me and I was given pyjama's and put into a room with only a mattress, so at first I didn't see the accommodation. I wasn't allowed out of my room the first two days I was there. I couldn't even go to the toilet. I used a plastic bag to go to the toilet. I only had that because my stepmum handed magazines in for me.
28. The place was one big building with four units. My unit had a reception area. There were four separate units and a reception area for each.
29. The room I stayed in was off the living room. I think it was meant to be my room, but I think under the circumstances of me going there, and because I used to run away they took my shoes off me, so that I couldn't run away. It was mixed with boys and girls. There were four small units. They were all mixed. The boys shared a dormitory but the girls had their own rooms. There were about nine in my unit. The age group was from about twelve to about sixteen. I was in the same unit throughout my time there.

Routine

Mornings

30. We had to get up about 7.30 to 8.00 for school, which was within the centre. We went for breakfast then went to school, which was terrible. It was in no way adequate. I was quite clever and it was like baby work to me. When I'd been at school I studied chemistry, English, French, biology and modern studies but in the centre they gave you a book and told you to read it. That was it.

Food

31. You had lunch back at the unit and dinner too. The meals were ok but if you ran away you didn't get fed your dinner.

School

32. There were no particular classes. I think there was an English class, a maths class and I think one other class. Everybody in the centre went to school and all ages mixed. I don't know how they worked it out. A school day consisted of sitting there and the teachers trying to control the class. It was very disruptive every day. The education system at Newfield was dire.

Running away

33. Newfield wasn't the type of place that you could come and go as you please. It wasn't locked but they would watch you. They would take you ice skating and swimming and when out I'd take the opportunity to run away. I ran away quite a bit there.
34. When I ran away I went to the train station in Johnstone. I hid in the forest for two or three hours because I knew they'd be looking for me at the train station. Then I got

on a train. I had hid in the toilet on the train from Johnstone. Newfield was about two miles from the train station. I went to my auntie's house.

35. The reason I was running away from the place was because the guy who ran the unit was a bully. His name was [REDACTED] I think his surname was [REDACTED]. There was a hole in the wall in my room where someone had maybe punched it or something and I'd put my toilet bag in that hole. He found it and told everybody in the place that I'd done this. [REDACTED] also called me names in front of other children whilst holding the bag in his hand. He was a disgusting animal.
36. There had been a rammy happening in the unit so there were no staff at the reception and I took my chance and ran. I left about three in the afternoon. I got the train to Glasgow. I changed trains and went to my auntie's in Yoker. I had no shoes on and just my pyjamas on, so I must have looked terrible. She gave me clothes to wear. This was my aunt [REDACTED], who has passed away now.
37. I stayed there the night then they contacted my social worker May Brown but she sent a guy called Mitch. I knew him [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED]. I told him I didn't like it. I told him that I didn't want to go back because I'd have my clothes taken from me and left in my room with my pyjamas on.
38. When I returned I got breakfast, no lunch and water. I was given my dinner in my room. I had no interaction with the other kids there. They let me out after four days. I was watched all the time in case I ran away. They sat right next to me.
39. I ran away from there four or five times. It was at different times. Whenever I saw an opportunity. When I was returned it was the same routine of locking me in my room. It got longer and longer. Five days, then six. I think I was there for a week on one occasion. Everything was taken from the room. There was just a mattress on the floor. There was no TV, no reading material or school work.

40. By this time I went to a panel and I was waiting on a placement. I realised I wouldn't be there too long, so I stopped running away. I'd been to a panel when I first went there, because before this I'd been in care voluntarily. So I went to this other panel and I was told I was going to go to a residential school.

Medical attention

41. I didn't see a doctor, medical staff or psychologist during my time at Newfield. Just before I left Newfield my social worker changed.

Visits/Inspections

42. My dad visited me once or twice a week and my granny was over from Australia, so she came quite a lot as well. There was a room downstairs, like a meeting place, that we sat in. They could visit any time during the day. Not at night time.

Abuse at Newfield Assessment Centre

43. HJZ was the guy in charge. There was another member of staff called HPA. HJZ was a horrible human being. He was the team leader of my unit. He was meant to care for children. He was a bully. He would throw you about. When I ran away he would throw me in my room when I came back. He treated me terribly. He called me names all the time. He would ask me who I thought I was, do I not think I should be staying there and it's only going to get worse for me. Anything to scare me.
44. I wasn't given clothes when I first went there. I stayed in my pyjamas and the other kids had clothes on. So they knew I was different. That made things worse. I asked HJZ when I'd get my clothes or when I'd be allowed out of my room and he said I had to earn them.
45. When I ran away, Mitch took me back and they took everything out my room. I wasn't allowed to watch TV or go to school. This remained the same for about four days.

HJZ had found the toilet bag and showed all the kids in front of me and called me disgusting and vile. I was allowed to go to the toilet from then on.

46. There was a girl called [REDACTED] who stayed there, she was about two years older than me and I saw her kissing a member of staff, who I think was HPA. He was night shift. He would maybe be in his thirties.
47. It wasn't just me. There was a kid with special needs that stayed there. He was a couple of years younger than me. His name was [REDACTED] and HJZ called him stupid and "Mongo".
48. This was the worst time of my life. It was horrendous, horrible, because of the way HJZ treated us. Kids were restrained too roughly. It was called a pin down. If kids didn't do what they were told their arms were put up their backs and they were dragged away. I learned to keep my mouth shut when I realised what HJZ would do.

Loaningdale School, Biggar

49. It was recommended that I went to Loaningdale in Biggar because the schooling there was meant to be good. It was because I was quite bright and I'd be able to do my exams there. This was a residential school, or List D school. It was like a big massive house. The school was attached to the house. There were also parts of the school in portacabins behind the house. The dorms were a separate part, a modern part and there was a youth club attached.

Morning routine

50. It was mixed, with boys and girls. The accommodation was nice. You could share a room or have your own. I chose to have my own. I was fourteen and was there for about a year. It was quite a structured routine. You were wakened at 7.30 and you went to a dining room for breakfast. The staff made it but at weekends we helped the girl in the kitchen.

51. The boys stayed at another part of the building. We mixed during the day. We all shared the dining room. Breakfast was at 8.00 and school started at 8.45. There were quite a lot of toilet facilities. There were toilets, there were showers and there was a room with baths and showers. You could have a shower any time you wanted. At Newfield it was restricted and I didn't get washed at all when I was kept in my room.

School

52. At school at Loaningdale if you wanted to learn you could, but they struggled to teach you because it was too rowdy. When I went I was told it was because people were quite bright there and the schooling was good, but there were too many boisterous children, especially boys.
53. At weekends the teachers became the carers. There was woodwork, science, art, English, maths and P.E. You could supposedly do your exams there.
54. It was structured at Loaningdale at first. Some of the staff had their favourites and some people would get away with things that others wouldn't. I can't say I didn't like any of the staff there apart from SNR [REDACTED]. I think his name was Mr LUJ [REDACTED]. The English teacher was really good. Her name was Elizabeth McCulloch. She gave me her own books and extra work to do. She took me down to the library in the town in her own time. We weren't allowed to go ourselves. There was another teacher called Arty, who took art. He encouraged me.
55. Loaningdale was right next to the town but something had happened years before and we weren't allowed into the town ourselves. I think a pupil murdered someone in the town. This was years before I was there. We weren't locked in Loaningdale but if you went down to the town you would be reported to the police for absconding.
56. The teaching staff were really, really good there. They looked after us at weekends. Some of the care staff stayed on the grounds. Mrs McCulloch did that too, she stayed in the grounds with her husband and three children. I think the rest of the staff stayed around Biggar.

57. Loaningdale was frustrating because I wanted to learn but there was chaos and rowdiness and a lot of the time you couldn't learn. Mrs McCulloch tried. I had asked to go to main stream school but I wasn't allowed to. I even wrote to the head of the social work department in Strathclyde but it was a straight no. Well, I didn't even get a response. At this time I had a really good social worker called Lawrence. He was good, he tried but his hands were tied.

Birthday

58. I had a birthday while I was there but it wasn't really celebrated. I remember the social work coming to see me.

Clothing

59. From Monday to Friday we had to wear a type of uniform. This was denims, a plain t-shirt and Hi-Tech trainers. At weekends you could wear your own clothes if you had them.

Holidays/Trips

60. We went on outings regularly while in Loaningdale. We went to Hillend ski centre in Edinburgh quite a lot and went mountain biking. I remember we went fishing with the P.E. teacher, I think his name was Dougie. He took us to a fish farm once too. We also went to see his wife play hockey. We also went ice skating in Saltcoats. These outings didn't seem to be funded but came out of the teachers own pockets.
61. The only member of staff that could be a bit heavy handed with the boys was SNR SNR. He was new. When I first went there they didn't have a SNR. He really just shouted at me. When he restrained the boys he was over the top. There was a black boy there called SNR and Mr LUJ called him a "nigger" and bent his hand back until he cried. I never saw the boy again. He went to Kerelaw.

62. I think when SNR [REDACTED] came and they didn't have a lot of money things went downhill. Mr LUJ [REDACTED] didn't know how to communicate with children.

Visits

63. I didn't have much to do with my family during this time but it was more on my part. I didn't want contact with them. Some people went home at weekends. I had never went home when I was at Loaningdale. Later on in my time there Lawrence organised for me to go to a place in West Princes Street, in Charing Cross, Glasgow at weekends. This was a children's unit for girls. I only lasted three weekends there.

Running away

64. I ran away from Loaningdale numerous times. Nothing really happened to me, I didn't get punished. There was no discipline there. There was no consequence for your actions.
65. Loaningdale was a bit more structured at the beginning. As time went on they started taking more pupils. A lot more boys than girls. They used to complain about lack of money and teachers would have to pay for activities out of their own pocket. So there was a lot of boredom. I ran away because other people were doing it, not because I was treated badly. Just for a laugh, out of boredom. We'd run away into the town and wreck the place. It wasn't really running away.
66. There were so many in Loaningdale that the pupils were causing chaos in and around the town. There were riots inside the place every night and the council shut it down quite quick. We all just wrecked the whole place, smashed up beds, smashed up everything. The boys started doing it at night time when the staff were on and everyone joined in. SNR [REDACTED] was called out. He was a bit heavy handed with the boys and that made the situation worse. It had all happened over a couple of months, going down to the town, smashing windows and wrecking the place so it got closed down.

67. About two weeks before it was closed I went to Cardross Assessment Centre. Everyone went to different places. I was the only one that went to Cardross. I was in there twice. The first time I went there was for about six months. I was nearly fifteen when I went there.

Cardross Park Assessment Centre, Kilmahew Estate, Cardross

68. Cardross was good. I had a single room. The building had different units. My unit had a television room in the middle with bedrooms off it and there was a kitchen where you could prepare things and a big kitchen downstairs where you had your dinner. Although the lay out was similar to Newfield, it was nothing like it.
69. There was a high turnover in the place. When it was busy up to sixteen stayed there. When it was quiet there were about twelve. There was a person in charge of the unit and three or four members of staff.
70. The place was just different. The staff interacted with you more. They ate with you and sat and talked to you. It was secondary school age groups. They were totally different. They sat and took time with you and did things with you. One of the staff brought in a big fish tank and we would help him clean it.
71. My social worker came and told me I could call him any time. My key worker at Cardross was good too. His name was ^{GUF} [REDACTED], an Irish guy. My interaction with him was very good. He was really nice.
72. If there was anything wrong with us we went to the doctors in Dumbarton. There was a school in the Centre too. It was basic schooling. School was important to me. I like learning. I liked reading. There was a library there and I could go any time I wanted. We got woodwork and could make what we wanted. There was a guy there, the drama teacher that took us to a studio in Glasgow to learn drama. Anybody could go, you had the choice.

73. The routine was quite strict. You had boundaries. You got pocket money and there was a tuck shop. There was a star system and if you got stars taken away from you, you'd lose pocket money. The rules were up on the wall and you had to go by them and when you first went in the staff told you the rules. The rules were fair. If you bullied anyone you had stars taken from you. I responded well to this because you could work and get your stars back. The staff helped you and worked with you to get your stars back.
74. All the staff spoke to you more. They were a team. They worked together. They seemed happy at their work and due to this we were happy too.
75. I ran away from Cardross once. I went home and on the way back I met people from Cardross at the train station and we decided not to go back. One of the boys stole a car and we all got in it. The police caught us and when I went back to Cardross they responded well to me, which changed me. It made me think, "What have I done?". The staff there went the extra mile for you. If you were interested in something they would encourage it.
76. My dad started visiting me again when I was in Cardross.

Kerelaw Secure Unit, Stevenson, Ayrshire

77. I then went to Kerelaw Secure Unit when I was fifteen before going back to Cardross for four or five months. I went to Kerelaw because one time I went on home leave from Cardross but I didn't go home. I met someone I was in Loaningdale with, we had been keeping in touch by letter, and I went down to Dumfries.
78. We just hung about Dumfries. I remember a caravan park. I think we stole drink from a driveway and I hadn't drunk before and a girl started to fight with me. She had a Stanley knife and cut me. She dropped it and I cut her with it. The police came and I got arrested and went to court the next day. I was remanded to Kerelaw for four weeks.

Routine at Kerelaw Secure Unit, Stevenson, Ayrshire

79. Kerelaw was horrible. Everything was locked, like a mini jail. It was mixed with girls and boys. The age groups were from about twelve to seventeen. We were in units. I think they were mixed. I had my own room. Everything was locked. There was a big, high perimeter wall around it. Because I was on remand I wasn't allowed out at all. Some people were there for a prison sentence, some were sent because the panel had made place of safety orders.
80. We would get up about seven o'clock. We had breakfast in the unit. There were about ten of us in the unit and about three staff. There was a school in it. It was basically three different classrooms. People were lying about, refusing to go in and getting dragged away to their rooms. Teachers were swearing at kids. It wasn't a school. I didn't get taught anything. School was from nine until three. You would just sit and watch the teacher and slowly but surely the boys would get taken out the class, physically. There were more boys than girls.
81. I got treated differently to the others because my dad knew members of staff there. My dad came to see me every day I was there, so I didn't get any hassle from members of staff, but others did. One time one of the boys threw his dinner off the table and four members of staff grabbed him and restrained him badly.
82. One of the girls there, [REDACTED] was her name I think, told me to watch out as they come in your room at night. It wasn't until later I thought I should have spoken up. Some of the girls were in for absconding and getting in to prostitution and were vulnerable. Nobody came into my room, I wasn't vulnerable and it helped with my dad coming every day and knowing the staff.
83. It was a regular occurrence for members of staff to encourage bullying in Kerelaw. An example of this was when one boy was watching TV and he said something cheeky to a member of staff. This member of staff told another boy to get him and he just attacked the boy while the member of staff watched. I can't remember the names involved.

Returning to Cardross Park Assessment Centre

84. After four weeks at Kerelaw I went back to court and my sentence was deferred for a year and I returned to Cardross. My keyworker spoke up for me at court too. I went back to Cardross for about four months. By this time I was nearly sixteen.
85. When I returned to Cardross it was the same staff and I was in the same unit. My keyworker ^{GUF} was positive and told me to stop being stupid and that I could do something with my life and get on with it.
86. The incident that got me put in Kerelaw affected me. I couldn't believe I'd done that to another human being. I was so ashamed and thought of the impact it had on the girl. That she'd have to live with that for the rest of her life, but my keyworker helped me and supported me and believed me.
87. When it was your birthday at Cardross they made you a big cake and they got you presents. The staff made it and the kids helped. There was a birthday box in the place and you'd be encouraged to put fifty pence in it for birthdays and it would be spent on whoever's birthday was next. I don't know where they got the money but they bought you presents as well.
88. At Christmas we made decorations and went carol singing at an old folks home. I got about £5 a week pocket money and you were allowed to go to the town and spend it at the shop there.
89. We went on outings all the time. We would go hill climbing, orienteering, duck watching and camping. We went a camping holiday once. On holiday we would go trips all the time. I went home on one occasion when I was on holiday, just for a few days. At weekends you could choose to stay or go home, this was the case on holidays too.
90. Just before I was sixteen and ready to leave I was meant to go to a place called Redheugh's in Beath. My social worker Lawrence arranged for me to have a visit there but I decided I wanted to go home. I realised I didn't want to be like other people and

end up in jail and other situations. I wanted to live a normal life. It had got worse while I was in care. My key worker arranged for me to go home bit by bit. Lawrence, my social worker, got me a job training in an old folks home.

91. I had never been asked about the allegations I made about my stepmum. When my dad asked me I told him I had made it up because I didn't want to do it to him. I couldn't hurt him like that. I saw in his face how much trouble it had caused in the family.
92. In all my time in care Cardross was a positive experience. It made me more responsible, being treated like a person, like they cared. It made me take responsibility for my actions.

Reporting of abuse

93. I told my social worker May Brown about Newfield. I told her about the pin down but she told me that's what they did if you absconded. But my argument was that when I first went in I hadn't absconded. I hadn't done anything there.
94. I told SNR [REDACTED] that it wasn't very nice what he'd said and done to [REDACTED] the black boy. He told me to mind my own business. I don't think he knew how to deal with children like that. I just thought that these things were what happened in these places.
95. I've told friends and my partner. I haven't discussed it with my kids.

Leaving care

96. I went home two days a week, then three, then four, until I went to stay. I wasn't there for very long because it was weird going back to a family. It didn't feel like home. I think I'd been away too long.
97. I stayed at home for over a year. I did a training course, a caring course. I did my Standard Grades at night school, at Clydebank secondary school. I did English,

history, chemistry, secretarial studies and French. I did Highers too. This was at Anniesland College.

98. After the training course I went back to court and everything had been fine but I was still under supervision. I was working in the passport office in Glasgow at the time. While I was there I went to see the reporter and called a panel myself and had the supervision order removed. It was embarrassing to still be on it, I had a job. I was still living at home.

Life after care

99. I got my own flat while in the passport office. I was there for three years. I then went to college, done my Highers in the first year then my nursing certificate in child care and education, then my HNC in social care.
100. My placement was in the social work department but because of the incident in Dumfries when I was fifteen I was told I couldn't work with children. This was when I was about four months from completing my HNC. I completed the course but not the placement part of it.
101. I felt angry that I couldn't finish the course. I was 22 or 23 and being judged on something I'd done when I was 15. It was something I wanted to do and had been through myself and wanted to make a difference with children in care but I couldn't. I was taken aback by that.
102. I then had kids. I was in a relationship for years. My children are 22, 17, 15 and 5. I am still on good terms with their dad. My relationship with my kids is good. Better than mine was with my parents. I spend time with them and I would never, ever hit them.
103. After Anniesland College I worked in my friends coffee shop for a couple of years and in a pub, things like that.

104. My relationship with my father was never the same. He took his own life. My stepsister said he was never the same after what I'd done. When he passed away I didn't have anything to do with my stepmum and stepsister. It was never a relationship. I had just made up for my dad's sake.
105. I see my brother sometimes. My relationship with him isn't that good just now really. He found my dad and took it quite badly and began drinking a bit.

Impact

106. My time in care has made me quite independent, resourceful. It made me realise at an early age that you can't rely on anybody. The only person you can rely on is yourself.
107. My hopes for the Inquiry are that the bad things that happened to me don't happen to other kids now, so that another child doesn't go through that. There were positives, like Cardross. If it wasn't for there I might have been a lot worse. But why was that so different from the other places? It showed that these places didn't have to be like that. I didn't see one person restrained at Cardross.
108. I have never felt the need to look for support or counselling. I've never had any real hang ups about being in care. I've never let it hold me back.

Records

109. I have never tried to recover my records but I'd quite like to.

Other information

110. 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... LUK

Dated... 21.8.2019