

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

GCS

Support person present: No

1. My name is GCS. I was born as GCS, which was my mum's maiden name. I became GCS when I was four or five years old. My date of birth is 1972. I am 46 years old. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in Dundee. My mum and I lived with my gran and granddad. My Uncle also lived there. We were there until I was about four years old. I had no siblings.
3. My mum was always a drinker. She met my stepdad when I was about four years old. His name was , but he was called " ". I think he was a couple of years older than my mum. I think he must have been about 26 or 27 years old when I was four. We moved out of my gran's house and the three of us lived together. We moved around a few flats in Dundee. We lived on , and . My mum married him and changed my name to GCS.
4. I was five years old when my sister was born. I was about six or seven when was born, and I was eight when was born. They were my stepdad's kids. My mum and stepdad later had two more daughters called and I was thirteen and fifteen when they were born.

5. My mum and stepdad had a really volatile relationship. He used to beat us up. He didn't like us. It was just awful. It would just be days of getting battered by him. I didn't get it as bad as my mum but it was bad enough. He was drunk all the time.
6. My mum would sometimes leave after a fight with my stepdad and she would take me with her. She never took the other kids. We would go to my gran's or my aunty's, but we also stayed with Women's Aid. Whenever we came back, my stepdad would blame me. He physically and sexually abused me. This started when I was four years old, and lasted until I was eleven.
7. I started Saint Peter and Paul Primary School in Dundee. I started running away when I was six years old. I would go to my aunty's house. I once tried to get to Fife, where my stepdad's brother lived. I had gotten a puppy from the scrap merchant and wanted to keep it, but I wasn't allowed. I decided this puppy was going to be my friend so I tried to run away with it. The police caught me on the Tay Road Bridge. They asked me what was wrong and I said I wasn't happy, but didn't tell them why. They took me home. I was about seven years old then.
8. There was a time when I was eight years old, when my stepdad smashed a plate over my head. It burst a blood vessel in my eye and my mum got him charged. The next day, she marched me down to the police station and made me tell the police I was lying. She was a victim of domestic abuse as well.
9. I didn't think anybody would believe me about the abuse. My stepdad used to say that nobody would believe me.
10. My mum got the house signed over into her name eventually. My mum did her best with us in terms of getting us to school and giving us everything we needed. There were a lot of us. My stepdad was still back and forward all the time. I don't think his kids got treated the same way as I did. They were always treated a bit different from me.

11. I was eleven or twelve years old and at St John's High School in Dundee when I first went into care. My mum had been hitting my little sister. She could be quite physical with the younger ones when she was drunk. She would be on the drink for weeks sometimes. I tried to stop my mum hitting [REDACTED] and got into an argument with her. I left to go to my gran's because my mum was going to hit me with a hammer. I was picked up by the police on the way and ended up going into care for a few weeks. I had actually forgotten about this until I recently read a report.
12. I don't remember going to a children's panel. I was taken straight to somewhere on Duncan Place in Dundee. At that time, you could just be taken away. I think I was there for about three weeks. I don't remember much about it. I think it was a mixed place. I just remember that I was fed and the people were really nice there. I don't remember going to a panel after it either.
13. I went back home after Duncan Place. My mum was happy to see me. She wasn't drinking and the house was tidy. My stepdad was away, but he was back and forward all the time to stay over.
14. I don't think I had any social work involvement. There was a lot of police involvement. The police would be back and forth all the time because my stepdad would beat my mum. I remember he left again and my mum said it was for good. He got his own flat but he would come over and stay for a few weeks at a time. He was always back and forward.
15. I started rebelling and bunking off school. I ran away a few times. One time I tried to run away to London with my pal. My mum had heard, and she and my uncle caught me at the bus station. My mum called the social work and told them that I was out of control. That was when I went into care. I was twelve years old at the time.
16. I went to Burnside House Assessment Centre in Dundee. You would only go in there for about three weeks for an assessment. I also went to Florence Booth Children's Home for a few months, but I don't know which one came first.

Florence Booth Children's Home, Dundee

17. I went into Florence Booth Children's Home in Dundee. It was a Salvation Army place.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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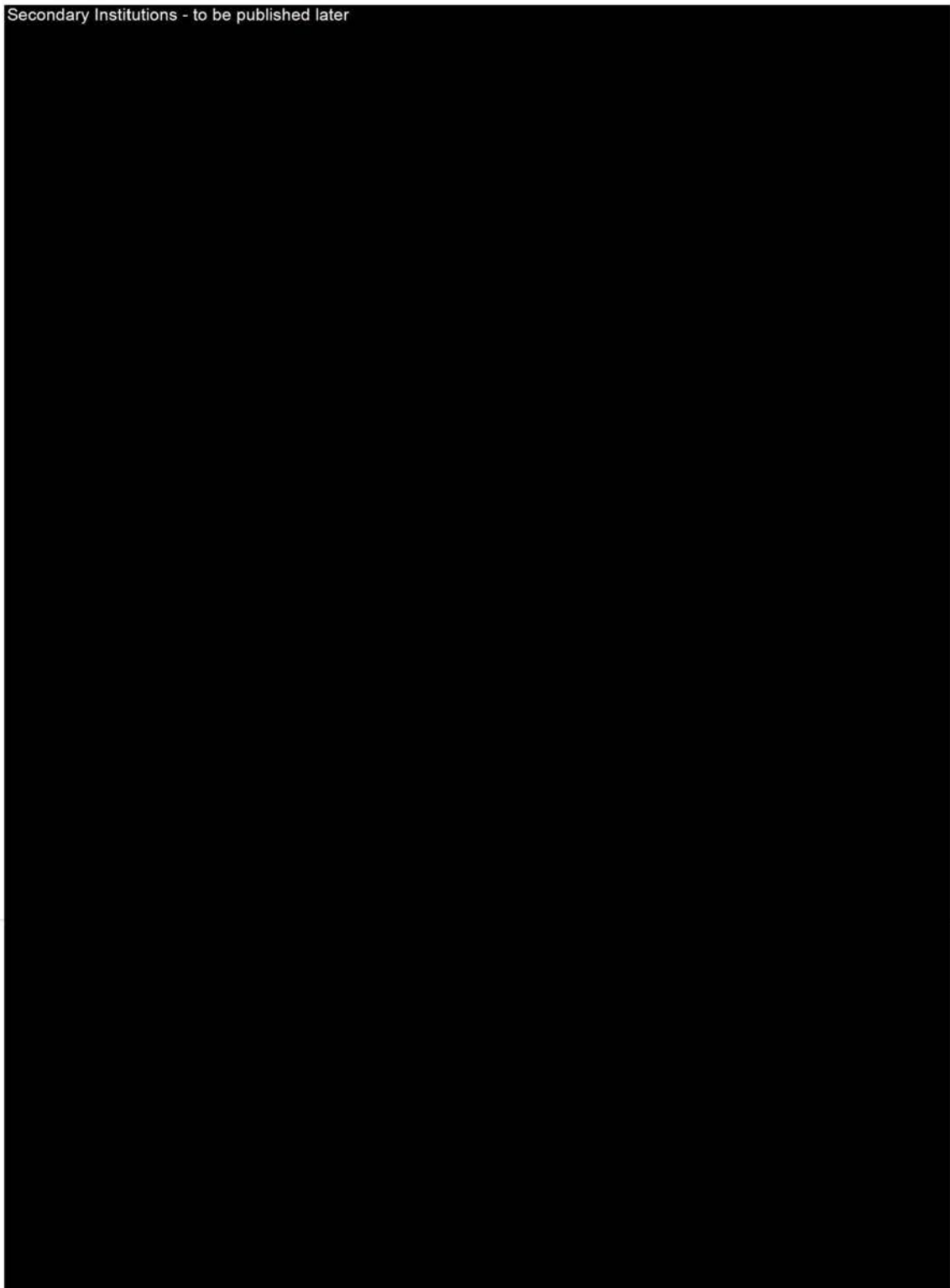
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Secondary Institutions - to be published later



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37. I went to a panel and I was moved to Balnacraig, which was a List D School. I think I was always allowed to have a say in the panels, but I didn't think it would have

mattered what I said. On paper, I was just a wild child. I left Florence Booth after about four months.

Balnacraig List D School, Perth

38. It was a big mansion house. The house was shaped like a horseshoe inside. Just as you walked in the front door, you had the headmaster's office, then the deputy head's room and then the secretaries' room. The dining room was also on the ground floor.
39. In the other part of the house, there was a kitchen, TV room, laundry room, and a room that we called the "reccy room." The reccy room was like a big ballroom with tables, chairs, a piano and games in it.
40. The bedrooms were upstairs and at the front of the house. When you walked up the steps, you got to a landing and then could go up a set of stairs on the right or the left.
41. SGQ [REDACTED] was SNR [REDACTED]. He and his wife stayed in a house [REDACTED]. His wife was our maths teacher. Mr GHG [REDACTED] was SNR [REDACTED].
42. It was a girls' school and there were between 25 to 30 girls in there. I think the youngest girl in there was ten or eleven years old and she had been in for a while. The oldest girls were sixteen years old.
43. Girls were split into groups and every group had a key worker who was in charge of them. There were two male key workers called SHH [REDACTED] and GYX [REDACTED]. The female key workers I remember were Mrs Liddle, Miss GHF [REDACTED] and Kathleen. They key workers took shifts to stay overnight. There was also an odd jobs man called Neil.

First day

44. I was about twelve or thirteen years old when I went in. I remember being shown around the school, meeting the staff and then being shown to my room.
45. I remember getting a bad vibe from SNR [REDACTED], Mr SGQ [REDACTED]. All the kids called him "SGQ [REDACTED]." There was something about him I didn't like. He would have girls sitting on his knee and he would cuddle them. I think I had become aware of things like that because of what my stepdad had done to me.
46. I was split up into a group of about five girls of different ages. All the girls were in groups. Each group had a staff member, called a key worker, who was in charge of that group. Mrs Liddle was in charge of my group.

Routine at Balnacraig

47. There was a set routine at Balnacraig. We had a school day and then had reccy. All the girls and staff would be there. If you were in trouble for something, Mr SGQ [REDACTED] would pull you up in front of everyone at reccy. After reccy, we went to our rooms and got changed out of our uniforms and into normal clothes before tea time. There would be some leisure time and then supper before bed.

Bedtime and mornings

48. Bedrooms were upstairs in the house. We had about three or four girls in each bedroom. They were big bedrooms. We didn't say prayers or anything. There was nothing religious in the school.
49. The staff within Balnacraig home did either day shifts or night shifts. Regular staff would take turns to have a sleepover at nights. There would also be someone who came in from outside and they would stay awake all night, and do a waking shift.

Two women came in to do this, and would take half a week each. They had staff sleeping quarters. We called them the "night sup."

50. You were allowed to go to the toilet if you wanted to at night. The night sup would sit in a room with the door open so she would know if you were up. You could hear floorboards squeaking if someone went to the toilet, but it was ok.
51. There was a room called the "privilege room," which was a cosy bedroom that was only for two people. I was moved into the privilege room in the last six months that I was in there. I was about fifteen years old and had calmed down by then. I was put in there with a younger girl who used to pee the bed. Everyone else laughed at her so she was put into the room with me. She had been peeing the bed, and stuff was going on with her at home. I told the school that things were happening to her at home. I think she hated me for it, but I think it got fixed.
52. When the girl wet the bed, I think the staff made her strip her bed in the morning and put her bedding down for laundry.
53. In the mornings, the staff woke us up. We had to go and get our laundry, which would be on the landing on the stairs. Your clothes would have your name on them. There was an odd job man called Neil who used to creep the girls out. He would stand and watch the girls as we collected our laundry in our pyjamas.
54. We then got dressed into school uniforms, and went downstairs for breakfast in the dining room. It was quite formal. Everybody then met in the reccy room. We all had our own chairs that we had to sit in. After reccy, we went to school. I think the teachers came and took us to our classes.

Food

55. It was a good breakfast. You would get hot porridge or something else. You could choose. The food was good.

56. We would have dinner and our tea in the dining room. We would also get supper, which was normally a tray bake or toast that the cook had made. We were looked after really well in terms of food in there.
57. We could chat during mealtimes. It sometimes felt a bit like St. Trinian's because the girls would get loud and volatile.

School

58. We had a normal school uniform, but not a tie. You got to pick whether it was grey or navy. The staff would take you to pick them.
59. The school was about twenty yards from the main building. Mr Roy was the headmaster of the school. The teachers came in from 9 am to 4 pm for school. They were day staff from outside. We went to school Monday to Friday.
60. The school day was just like a normal school day. We had classes, and then we had a break, and then more classes. We went back to the main building for lunch, then back to school for classes. We finished at 4 pm.
61. We did maths, English, contemporary social studies, and social and vocation studies. Different teachers took different subjects like in a normal high school. Mrs [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED] wife, took maths and art classes. Mr Roy took English and contemporary social studies, which was a mixture of history, geography and modern studies. Mrs McPhail used to take social and vocation studies, which was learning to type.
62. Mrs [REDACTED] opened a school and stopped teaching at Balnacraig after a while. Mrs Williamson became our maths teacher. She was really nice.
63. Mr SGQ [REDACTED] took the physical education class. I think he was an ex-Sergeant Major so he had us running up and down the hill. We would go to a place called The Glebe

School in Scone to use their gym hall for an hour. Afterwards, Mr SGQ would make us run back. It was quite far. It was just tough if you were struggling, basically.

64. I found school work quite easy. I was lucky. We sat exams and they were recognised qualifications. I got standard grades in English, maths, contemporary social studies and Modern Studies. I also got an O' Level in art.

Leisure time

65. After school, we would have reccy then get dressed into normal clothes and have our tea. We would have some leisure time after having our tea.
66. The school would always put stuff on for us in the evening. We were taken out, or we had activities. It could be a run in the bus, swimming or watching a movie. We also had knitting club or crafts. They had a good and varied selection of activities. The staff would take us for activities. On a Tuesday, you could help a staff member at a place called Upper Springland in Perth, where you would chat and play dominoes with a disabled person. I used to see a wee man called [REDACTED] who was really nice.
67. I think we had a choice of which activity to do. You could even watch TV in the TV room if you wanted to. I think you could watch TV whenever you wanted, but you had to watch what everyone wanted to watch. Sometimes there were movies put on.
68. If you were staying over at the weekends, they would take you out for a big run in the mini bus, up hills or to parks. I know a lot of places like the Hermitage and Aberfeldy falls, but that is only because I used to go when I was in Balnacraig. We were very rarely stuck inside.

Holidays

69. I went to a Dutch place once for a week. We also went to Oban and Fort William. It was good to get a holiday. I had only ever been on one holiday to Butlins with my uncle before.

Birthdays and Christmas

70. I don't remember if birthdays were celebrated in there, but I imagine they would have been.
71. Kids normally went home over Christmas and New Year. I stayed in Balnacraig over one Christmas because my mum wasn't speaking to me. I was the only girl who didn't get home that Christmas. It wasn't bad because I had run away from Balnacraig and been sleeping rough for about four months before it.
72. The staff made the most of Christmas. A Christmas tree got put up and Miss GHF took me to her house for Christmas day. The staff got me presents. It was a Christmas day where I didn't have to lie in bed and worry about my mum getting drunk and about getting battered. I was still worried about my brother and sisters.

Visits home and social work

73. We were allowed to go home every second week. If you wanted to go home, you had to stand up in reccy and ask to go home in front of everybody. I think the girls were split into two groups for going home, so one group went one week, and the other group went the next week.
74. We got pocket money. They wouldn't hand you money unless you were going home for the weekend. They would buy your train ticket and take you to the station on a Friday. On the Sunday, you would get picked up from the station by the school bus.
75. I was still going home some weekends. My stepdad was not sexually abusing me, but the emotional abuse was still happening and he would still give me a whack over the head now and then. My mum was still hitting me. I would get dragged out of bed in the middle of the night to go and make eggs .I was still getting battered and getting dragged by the hair.

76. You have to live in that environment to understand it. You don't want to tell social workers because you still want to get home to see your sisters and brother. I wanted to see my mum too, even though she was doing a lot of it. It wasn't like the social workers didn't know about my mum's drinking because they would see her pissed nine times out of ten when they went over to her house. David Innes would tell me about my mum being drunk when he would come to see me in Balnacraig.
77. Me and my sister still had a lot of communication when I was in Balnacraig. We would talk on the phone and I would tell her to make sure the fire was off and other things were done. I was very protective of them.
78. Things were volatile with my mum and stepdad. All of my siblings were taken into care at one point for three weeks for assessment. That was because of her drinking. Two of them had run away when my mum was drinking. They were all returned to her.
79. My youngest sisters [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were born when I was in Balnacraig. I didn't have any kind of regular contact with them so I don't have much of a relationship with them.
80. David Innes visited me about once every fortnight, and he would speak to me alone. I did tell him about my stepdad abusing me once but he didn't do anything about it.

Running away and punishment

81. I was running away a lot. I would sneak into my gran's or sleep on the street. I wanted to be anywhere but at Balnacraig or at my mum's. I was doing this all the time. It was easy to do. The place wasn't locked.
82. There was one time everybody ran away except me. It was quite near our exams and I was keeping my head down. I wanted to go home that weekend.

83. When you ran away, you would be put in what we called "in reccy" or "in craft room" as a punishment. If you were put "in reccy", it meant that you would have a staff member with you from the minute you woke up to bedtime. They would stay with you as you got dressed and went down to breakfast. You would have extra duties doing work in the laundry or washing dishes. We called this "sani squad" as you were doing sanitary work. You would do this before and after school. You'd have to iron all the sheets and table cloths at night if you were in the laundry. I can't remember how long you would do this for.
84. When you were put "in craft room" as a punishment, you would be supervised by a member of staff all day. It was a tiny room at the back of the house. It had tiles all around it and a concrete floor. It was freezing and you would be taken in there in your pyjamas and bare feet as soon as you woke up. The staff member would have a little heater by their feet while you would be sat there freezing all day. It just had a few chairs and tables in it, and you would have to sit and read Shakespeare all day. If you had a decent member of staff, you would maybe get to read a normal book. If anybody came in, you had to stand and face the back of the room. You would have breakfast, dinner and tea in the room. A member of staff had to take you to the toilet.
85. You had to stay in the room from 9 am until late at night, until after all the other girls had gone to bed. That could be as late as 10 pm. You were basically not to have contact with anybody else. You would have to wear the same jammies to bed and wouldn't get any supper. You would get to have a shower every second night during the time you were in craft room.
86. The craft room was the worse punishment you could get and it could last for weeks. I was in there about six or seven times, I think. Once you got out of craft room, you would be put into reccy for a while.
87. When I was about fourteen years old, I told Miss GHF a staff member in the school, about the abuse from my step dad. She was a key worker but also one of the supervisors in the home. I wasn't going home that weekend and everything was just becoming too much for me, so I told her. She said, "shush now."

88. I saved money and ran away. I think my gran might have given me money. I ran away to London with my friend [REDACTED]. I think she also put money towards my ticket. One of the girls I had gone to Florence Booth with had given me her mum's address in London. I was planning on going there. As soon as we got there, the mum's boyfriend phoned the police. [REDACTED] had to make her own way home because she was older than me. I was put into a house in Islington and met social workers there.
89. The social workers booked a train for me to return home. I was allowed to do what I wanted during the day, so I would always come back later than I was supposed to because I knew I would miss the train home. I did this for about three days because I didn't want to go back.
90. On one of the days when I was out in Islington, I was raped and badly beaten by three men. They were strangers and they took me in a car. After it happened, I managed to get myself out of the car and ran to a nearby police station. My clothes were taken and I had tests done. I stayed at the home in Islington for another few days. The police took me around to see if I recognised any of them, but I didn't.
91. That happened to me on the Thursday and I was flown back on the Sunday. I remember it was Sunday because girls were coming back to Balnacraig after their weekend home. My mum came to the airport with my social worker, David Innes. I think she just cried, but didn't speak to me about it.
92. I was taken back to Balnacraig. None of the staff spoke to me about what happened. They must have known. I had been badly beaten and you could see it. I told the girl I shared a room with, but that was it. Nobody else knew and nobody else spoke to me about it.
93. David Innes came to speak to me the day after I returned, on the Monday. He wanted to talk about my stepdad. I can't remember if the police in London told him about it, or if I had told him the day before, but that was when he found out. I remember talking to David about it on that Monday and telling him all about the

sexual abuse. David said he was going to have to speak to my mum about it, which I said was fine.

94. David Innes came back to tell me what happened a few days later. He told me that my mum didn't believe it and didn't want to have anything to do with me. She had said that I was jealous of my stepdad. Nothing was done about my stepdad and David didn't mention it again.
95. The police from London came to see me in Balnacraig with photographs to see if I could pick out the men who had attacked me, but I couldn't.

Abuse at Balnacraig

96. The staff at Balnacraig knew what had happened to me when I came back from London.
 97. I refused to go to the doctors when I came back. I had already been checked in London. I was only a kid and that had happened to me. My mum didn't want to talk to me, and my step dad had been abusing me for years. I just felt so alone like I had nobody. I felt like I had already been through all that and I didn't want to go through it again.
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98. About three weeks after coming back from London, Mr SGQ told me to stand up in reccy. He said, "GCS get on your fucking pins. You're going to the doctor. I'm not having you spreading VD or AIDS around my school." I sat back down embarrassed.
 99. He said that in front of everyone and he had no right to do it. Only the staff had known about what had happened to me in London. Mr SGQ hadn't mentioned that I had been raped. Some of the girls called me a slut and other names because of what he said in reccy.

100. That was how Mr SGQ [REDACTED] the school. He controlled people with humiliation. You don't say things like that about people in front of everyone. It was humiliation. He pulled other people up and humiliated them too.
101. I was made to go to the doctor a few days after that and take the tests. No staff member or girl spoke to me about it. The staff must have known what had happened. I wasn't offered any support, but in fairness I did keep running away.
102. I ran away again after that and was away for a long time. I think I managed to stay away from August until [REDACTED]. I got a Quinsy throat half way through that period, which developed because I used to get bad tonsillitis and then got glandular fever. I think I was caught and put into Burnside Assessment Centre to be assessed.
103. Burnside sent me to hospital for my throat. I was there for a week and my granddad came to see me every day, but nobody else did. Then I went back to Burnside Assessment Centre. I ran away from there because I knew there was going to be a panel and they wanted to send me back to Balnacraig.
104. I was away for about four months. I slept in cars. My little sister, [REDACTED], would bring me tea and toast when she could. My gran would give me money and I would stay with her now and again. I would be here, there and everywhere. I slept in sheds and gardens. The police were looking for me. I would see them outside my gran's but I would use the back door.
105. I was eventually caught and taken back to Balnacraig on [REDACTED] 1986. I stayed in Balnacraig over Christmas and New Year that year because my mum still wasn't talking to me. I was the only child there that year. I didn't mind because I had been sleeping rough for four months.
106. I never felt safe with Mr SGQ [REDACTED]. It was like home from home. He was very regimental. He wouldn't tell you off in private; he would do it in front of everyone. There was something about him that creeped me out badly. He had his favourites who took him his breakfast in his office, and he would sit them on his knee. He never

asked me to do that. He was sleazy. He made me feel uncomfortable. I don't just find any person creepy, but he creeped me out. I used to take Mr GHG his breakfast and he didn't do anything like that.

107. Mr SGQ picked who he would hit based on who he thought wouldn't hit him back. A few times, he took girls out of the craft room and across into the TV room. He would beat them up in there. You would hear him throwing them about. There was an old gym horse in the room. Girls would come back with a fat lip. They would also tell us that he'd beaten them up. This happened quite regularly. He was definitely beating those girls up. Nobody else would be in the room apart from him and the girl being beaten.
108. I heard him hit girls a few time in the TV room. He never hit me. I always thought that if he hit me, I would hit him back. I think that's why he never hit me. He picked his victims, and they were the quiet ones.
109. He beat a girl called up because she wrecked her room and barricaded herself in. I think she had had enough of the place. I was sent in to get her out but she wouldn't come out. I liked and she told me not to leave her because Mr SGQ would beat her up. I came out and Mr SGQ managed to get in the room.
110. Mr SGQ shouted and I vaguely remember people storming the room to get her out, but I don't remember if it was police or staff. When came out, she was bashed up and there was blood. In my opinion it was Mr SGQ who had done it to her. She was sent to Glasgow and she didn't come back. She was about a year older than me and was fourteen or fifteen when this happened.
111. I felt uncomfortable in Balnacraig. I should have felt safe but I didn't. I didn't like it. Some of the staff were really nice but everybody was under Mr SGQ. None of the staff ever questioned his actions.

Family contact

112. My mum had stopped talking to me after the London incident because of what I had said about my stepdad. It took her a year to get over it. I had run away for four months during that period. Eventually my visits home started up again. This time I was to go home every four weeks instead of every two weeks. I would go to Florence Booth for the weekends in between.
113. My stepdad would still be there when I went home. The staff told me to tell them if he was there, but I wouldn't have done, because then they would have stopped me going home. I wanted to see my mum and sisters and brother.
114. I got home for Christmas that year. It was my last Christmas at Balnacraig and I was fifteen years old. My mum and stepdad went out and came back drunk. They got into a fight about the money in the meter running out. They had a big argument. I said to him about what he had done to me, and he grabbed me by the throat. I had finger marks around my neck. My mum went to hit him with a hammer and there was blood over the door.
115. The next morning, my mum was worried that he would be lying at the bottom of the stairs, dead. He had gone but he came back the following day and my mum called the police. I told the police that he had strangled me. My mum made the police come back and made me tell the police that I had made it up and he hadn't strangled me.

Leaving Balnacraig

116. I was entitled to leave when I turned sixteen [REDACTED], but they made me stay until I went to a panel, which wasn't until [REDACTED].
117. I had gotten a place in College because I got the grades I needed in my standard grades. I was going to move in with a member of staff called [REDACTED] who ran a bed

and breakfast with her husband. She was a key worker in Balnacraig, but not my key worker.

118. At my panel, it was agreed that the plans were made. I would leave Balnacraig, start college and move in with [REDACTED]. I had said that I wanted that and I would still be supported at [REDACTED]'s.

Reporting of abuse at Balnacraig

119. When I was about fourteen years old, I told Miss GHF [REDACTED] a key worker and supervisor at Balnacraig about the abuse from my stepdad. She said, "shush now." Nothing more was ever said or done about it.
120. I told my social worker, David Innes, about my stepdad abusing me when I was fourteen years old. He said he was going to have to speak to my mum about it, which I said was fine. He came back a few days later and said that my mum didn't believe me and wanted nothing to do with me. Nothing was done about it.
121. David Innes went on to be the head of the social work department in Dundee.

Life after being in care

122. I stayed at [REDACTED]'s bed and breakfast. College started in August, and I left after three weeks. It was too much like school. I got a live in job in a hotel in Dunkeld, so I moved out of [REDACTED]'s.
123. I lasted two or three months at the hotel. We were all just having too many parties with the waiters and chambermaids. Me and my pals had a food fight with cereal, milk and butter one night in the canteen. We were drunk and chasing each other with fire extinguishers and pillow cases. We were just being idiots so we got sacked.

124. One of the chambermaids was going out with a chef in the hotel so we stayed in his room for a couple of weeks. The manager found out, and we were escorted out by the police.
125. The police took me to the police station in Perth. I must have flagged up because I was in care. My school teacher from Balnacraig, Miss McPhail, came to see me. I don't know if I had asked the police to call her, because she was nice. She asked me to go back to [REDACTED]'s but I didn't want to. She gave me money to go home to my mum's house in Dundee. I stayed between my mum's and my gran's house for a few months, and then got my own flat in Dundee.
126. I got a job as an au pair in London and moved there. I did that job from when I was seventeen until about twenty years old. I also worked in finance and worked in the pub or video shop at night. I liked having money and having nice things because I never had them when I was younger.
127. I got into a relationship and got pregnant when I was nineteen. Just before I was due to have the baby, I found out my boyfriend had been having an affair with the bar maid in our local pub. I had my son, [REDACTED], and then I moved back to Dundee without his dad.
128. I stayed with my mum for about a month. My stepdad was still there and I kept the peace for my mum's sake. He would come back and forth to my mum's house every few weeks. I then got my own flat after about a month. My granny died a year later.
129. My brother had been taken into care and the social work were thinking of putting him with his dad. I got a letter through the door asking me about my stepdad. I broke down and told my new partner. He convinced me to tell the truth so I saw Mr Currie, [REDACTED] social worker, and told him about the sexual abuse from my stepdad. I was 21 years old at the time.
130. I told my mum that I had spoken to [REDACTED] social worker and what I had said. [REDACTED] was living with his dad at the time. I said to my mum that we could ask my stepdad

about the abuse together if she didn't believe me. Me and my mum went to his house and confronted him. He spat in my mum's face. My mum knew what her husband was like and she said that she knew from his reaction that I was telling the truth about the abuse. I also told the police when I was 21 years old.

131. [REDACTED] ended up in foster care. He smashed his dad's house in when he found out what he had done to me. [REDACTED] had to be taken away by the police.
132. My mum hit the drink again. I plodded on in Dundee. I had three jobs doing telesales, working in a shop and cleaning in the mornings. I wasn't skilled or nothing, but I bought my own flat. I wanted [REDACTED] to have food on the table and better things than I had, especially because I had left his dad. You only get what you work for.
133. My mum never got with my stepdad again, but she would still go on about how she loved her husband when she was drunk. My granddad got dementia and my mum took him in. She was still drinking every day and had [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] who were not being looked after. I took [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to live with me but I couldn't cope with having three jobs, [REDACTED] and them.
134. I had a friend who lived in Morecambe so I moved there with [REDACTED]. I came back to Dundee after three months when my Granddad died. I stayed in Dundee after that because I didn't want to leave my mum. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had been taken into care by then.
135. I just got on with my life. I worked and went to university, and got a business degree. I moved down to London again so [REDACTED] could have a relationship with his dad. I had a job and my own flat. [REDACTED] dad wasn't great so I moved back to Dundee.
136. I never really got involved with anybody for ages after having [REDACTED] because I didn't want anybody involved with my son. I met someone when [REDACTED] was ten years old. I got married and moved to Bathgate. I had another son and a daughter.

137. I still spoke to my mum although my husband never understood why because she was always putting me down. My mum got cancer when I was in my thirties. I took her to her chemotherapy one day. She told me that my decisions as a youngster had effected my younger siblings and that's why they were in care. I was having a tough time because I had split up from my husband and my oldest son was off the rails, so when she said that to me, I decided it was enough.
138. I stopped talking to my mum. She died three years later. I met her once before she died but that was for my own sake. I suffered years of mental torture from her. That break from her helped me to start healing myself. She has been dead for five years now.
139. My kids are now 25, twelve and nearly eleven years old. I look after my younger two children and my grandson. I had to become a kinship carer to look after him and so had to get a report done.

Reporting to Police

140. I told the police about my stepdad's sexual abuse when I was 21 years old. I went to a place called Seymour Lodge on Perth Road in Dundee. It was a place for rape victims and children. My mum was supposed to make a statement too but she turned up drunk twice and wouldn't do it. Nothing happened with the police. He wasn't questioned because it wasn't corroborated.
141. When I was in my mid-twenties, I took my pal to Seymour Lodge, because she had concerns about her daughter. The police there asked how I knew about the place and I told them I had been there before to report my stepdad. He said the law had changed regarding corroboration so he took my statement.
142. My stepdad was then pulled in and questioned. Nothing happened because he didn't admit it and there was still no corroboration, but it means they now have his name on file if anything else about him comes up.

143. The police man said he had no doubt, from his experience, that my step dad had done it. All he had said when the police interviewed him was, "where was her mum?" The policeman told me about criminal injuries compensation. I made a claim and the officer also gave evidence. I was awarded money and got two good holidays out of it.

Impact

144. It is embarrassing talking about your abuse to people. You could have all the therapy in the world but it will stay with you until the day you die. You could be the happiest person in the world, but it would still be there in the back of your mind. It will still affect you.
145. I don't understand why things weren't picked up on when I was younger. I was very vulnerable and running away all the time. Why wasn't it picked up on? When I did say something about my abuse, why did Miss GHF not do something? Why did my social worker take my mum's word over mine?
146. If Miss GHF had acted when I told her about my stepdad, I might have got help at the time. I may not have run away to London and wouldn't have got raped. It all has a knock on effect.
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147. I was not given any help or support after I was raped and beaten in London. Nobody spoke to me about it. Instead I was humiliated. Someone with my background should have got help in Balnacraig, but instead I was humiliated. I have carried that feeling of shame with me throughout life. If I had been treated differently, I may not have carried these feelings into my adult life.
148. I think Balnacraig affected me the most. You think you are going to a safe place but you're not. Yes, you are well fed and clothed, but the fear never goes away, especially with Mr SGQ I do not think he should have been in charge of a girls' school.

149. I have always been unsettled and never able to stay in one place. I got on with my life. I worked and went to university but I am still unsettled. It is only recently that I have been able to stay somewhere for a while.
150. I can appear to be normal but things still affect me. It is hard. Certain smells and things still affect me like pickled onion Monster Munch, Kit-Kats and fifty pence pieces. My stepdad used to give me these after abusing me. This is not an impact of Balnacraig, but I still think if it had been dealt with when I was younger or a teenager, then I might not be so unsettled as an adult.
151. I never had a relationship for a long time because I didn't want anybody involved with my son. What had happened to me had made me so aware that I didn't want anyone around my son. I don't trust anyone. It took my husband a long time to win my trust.
152. I can be overprotective with my kids. I wrap them in cotton wool. I am always on alert. I think you need to be aware as an adult, but maybe not as much as I am.
153. I don't feel that I have much of a relationship with my youngest sisters, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. They were born when I was in care and we didn't have any regular contact.
154. I don't have a proper relationship with my siblings. I think the way they look at it is that I left them with a drunken mum. I have always had that thrown at me. I think it would have been different if I had regular contact with them when I was in care.
155. I sometimes get on with my siblings and sometimes I don't. There is always this thing about their dad hanging over us. I couldn't have a drink with them now or there would be an argument. Nobody is ever speaking to everyone at the same time. People are always falling out.
156. I used to have that one drink too many and flip out at people but I can now have a few drinks and stop. I have been better since I don't have the emotional abuse from my mum.

157. I never felt I was good enough to get married or have children. I have always had that negativity about myself. I think that is all to do with my upbringing and the humiliation from Mr SGQ. I still feel like I am not good enough sometimes. I want to disappear and not have people look at me.
158. I can be up and down. I have bad dreams. I take panic attacks and don't want to go out. That hasn't happened for a while now. I have had depression on and off. I have been diagnosed and given medication, but I go nutty on it and I don't want to be reliant on medication so I always come off it.
159. I have had counselling on and off but not properly. I have never stuck at anything.
160. The majority of the people I was in care with are dead from substance abuse, or are serious addicts now. I can't think of one person that has had a natural death.

Records

161. I had to have a kinship report done when my grandson came to stay with me. This covered stuff about my life in care. I have never got my records from Balnacraig or social work.
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162. I think it will be in my records that I told David Innes about the abuse from my stepdad. He worked in the social work department and was quite high up, but I think he is now retired.

Final thoughts

163. Balnacraig wasn't run by a local authority, but by a board of governors. It was run by an external body. Authorities need to monitor these places to see if certain practises are still taking place. I don't think people these days would get away with things that

happened in Balnacraig, but you might find other things that are going on. I still hear of things going on in Balnacraig about how kids are treated.

164. My mum took me to the police twice to take back complaints about my stepdad. The social work put me back to my mum after I had run away when she tried to attack me with a hammer. I was clearly vulnerable and running away all the time. Social work should look at the bigger picture. They should look at the behaviour patterns of kids and consider why they are behaving a certain way. Then they need to interfere when things like this happen and give kids more support.
 165. I should have got help when I told David Innes, my social worker, or when I told Miss GHF that I had been abused by my stepdad, and also when I had been raped. If I had, my issues would not have carried it into my adult life. Children need to get the help and support they need while they are still children. That might stop them carrying it into adult life.
 166. The majority of people I was in care with are dead of substance abuse or are serious addicts. It needs to be looked at and figure out why this is the case.
 167. I hope my experiences might back up someone else's experiences, especially with Mr SGQ.
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168. 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.

GCS

Dated.....

6/6/18