

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

GSW

Support person present: None

1. My name is GSW. My date of birth is 1959. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in the Gorbals in Glasgow. My dad was a lorry driver, my mother was a housewife. I have an older sister and three younger sisters born in 1960, born in 1961, and born in 1968. My brother was born in 1963 and died in 2002.
3. My father was an alcoholic and was working away a lot. My mother was a violent alcoholic.
4. I first went to school at Camden Street Primary School. When it shut I moved to Blackfriars Primary School. My family then moved in 1969 from the Gorbals to in Tradeston so I went to Buchan Street Primary School. By the time I went to Buchan Street I was running about thieving and breaking into shops. There were no Children's Panels in those days so I got taken to the Juvenile Court at Ingram Street in Glasgow. My mum got sent a citation for me to go to court and she took me to court. I must have had a lawyer but I don't remember one.
5. I was ten years old when I was sentenced to between one and three years at an Approved School. It was decided that I was to go to Larchgrove. They took me down

to the cells but I was so wee and skinny that the handcuffs just slipped off my wrists. They took me in a van and we went round to the Sheriff Court and picked up three adult prisoners. They got dropped off at Barlinnie Prison and then I went to Larchgrove. I was terrified, I didn't know what was going on.

Larchgrove Children's home, Glasgow [REDACTED] 1970

First day

6. When I walked in the front door of Larchgrove, all you could smell was Brasso brass polish and highly polished floors. The nurse gave me a medical when I arrived. The age group in Larchgrove was from ten to sixteen. I got taken up to a dormitory and was allocated a bed. The other boys told me that I would only be there until a place was allocated to me elsewhere. No-one official told me that.
7. When you walked in the front door, to the right was the Headmaster's office, the nurse's room, and the gymnasium. To the left were dormitories. Upstairs was the dining hall. I think Larchgrove was run by Glasgow City Council but it was [REDACTED] [REDACTED] or a guy called [REDACTED] who [REDACTED] I can't remember the names of any other staff. There were about eighty boys at Larchgrove. There were about twelve dormitories. There were about twelve boys in my dormitory.

Mornings and bedtime

8. We got up at about 7.00 am. We got taken down to the shower room to get a wash. Your clothes were kept in a locker, like a gym locker. They were locked in so you got the key, changed out of your pyjamas into your clothes, put your pyjamas in the locker, and then handed the key back. We had breakfast and then you were working scrubbing and polishing floors with big buffers. The place was spotless, you could see your reflection in the floor. I think they may have got us to do all that cleaning just to give us something to do. After lunch, we had classes until after 4.00 pm, then we had tea and either went to the gym or went back to the dormitory and played draughts and things. We had supper about 9.00 pm and lights out were at 10.00 pm

9. On Saturdays and Sundays we didn't do as much work, we would just give the dormitory a clean. They would use one of the classrooms as a television room and we just sat watching television.

Mealtimes/Food

10. The food was alright at Larchgrove, I didn't pay that much attention to it. There were some instances of boys not liking the food they had been given. Those boys would get dragged away by LTB-LTE, but that never happened to me. The boy who got dragged away would be put in the cell. They had one cell next to the dormitory area. You could see the boy in the cell when you were on your way to the TV room. A boy could be kept in there for two or three days, just for refusing to eat something. I never saw anyone being force-fed.
11. LTB-LTE were probably in their early sixties. One was quite a strong build, the other was thin and wiry. I would say the thin one was probably the younger of the two. I can't remember LTB-LTE names.

Washing/bathing

12. We had a shower every night. There were three showers in the shower room. They would take one dormitory in at a time. The showers were supervised and you were timed for how long you had in the shower. I never got the feeling that the supervision of the showers was inappropriate.

Clothing/uniform

13. We had a uniform of short trousers, a jumper, socks, a shirt, and sand shoes. These clothes were supplied by Larchgrove. My own clothes got taken off me on the first day and I didn't see them again.

School

14. One of the staff taught us, I presume he was qualified to teach. There wasn't a teacher who came in from outside. It was the same member of staff who taught us all the subjects. I didn't feel that I learned anything. It was run of the mill stuff that a five year old could do.

Leisure time

15. You didn't get much in the way of personal possessions. Every dormitory had a draughts board and pieces. Most of the boys spent a lot of time playing Jacks, also known as five stones.

Chores

16. You had your job to do, whether it was polishing the floors or whatever, you did that all the time.

Trips/Holidays

17. There were no trips out of Larchgrove. We didn't go to the cinema, or swimming, or anything.

Visits/Inspections

18. I think you were allowed a visit every week. I didn't have visitors very often, I was only in Larchgrove for about six weeks the first time I was there. My mum and dad did come up a couple of times. No social worker came and visited me at Larchgrove. I wasn't aware of any official visitors checking up to see how Larchgrove was run.

Running away

19. I didn't run away that first time I was at Larchgrove but I got taken to Larchgrove when I ran away from other approved schools. Larchgrove was like a prison but when I got

put back in there, I did escape. I was very skinny and some of the windows were broken, there was just a metal frame. I used the handle from the floor buffer to prise open the window and get out.

Bed Wetting

20. I sometimes wet the bed. You would have to take your sheets off the bed and the staff would ridicule you in front of the other boys. The staff would make you do a walk of shame, you would have to carry the sheets from one corridor to another and put them in a pile. The staff would be slagging you off when you did this. They made us do this one at a time, I don't know why.
21. We were allowed out of the dormitories at night to go to the toilet. You would have to call for a member of staff and they would supervise you. You had to press a buzzer that went to the night-watchman's office. If he could be bothered he would come and get you and unlock the toilet door. Sometimes he wouldn't bother responding to the buzzer and boys would end up wetting the bed.

Discipline

22. They used violence as a method of discipline at Larchgrove. It didn't happen to me the first time I was at Larchgrove but I saw other boys being hit. They also had a cell you could be put in. If it was raining, you couldn't go out to the yard to play, so we would be in the gymnasium which was used like a play room. There would be members of staff supervising us. If a boy had been cheeky to a member of staff, I can remember Mr ^{GSX} or ^{LTB-LTE} coming in with a leather tawse. ^{LTB-LTE} were used as the enforcers for Larchgrove. They would lash out at the boy with the tawse, hitting them anywhere. Then they would drag the boy out by the hair. I saw boys getting dragged off to the cell but I don't know what happened to them in the cell. You would see them in the cell when you were walking back to the dormitory. I wasn't dragged off to the cell like that and nobody told me what happened to them in the cell. I never saw anyone getting hit so hard that they would require medical attention. I don't know how the matron would have reacted to a boy having injuries like that.

Abuse at Larchgrove

23. Other than having to do the walk of shame with soiled sheets, there was nothing that happened to me that first time at Larchgrove which I would consider to be abuse.

Leaving Larchgrove

24. There were so many boys coming into Larchgrove that there was overcrowding. They moved six of us down to Cardross remand home. There was no notice given that we were moving, we were just told to get our stuff and get in the minibus. I don't know if our parents were told.

Cardross [REDACTED] 1970

25. Cardross was an old detached mansion. There were only about twelve to fourteen boys at Cardross compared with about eighty at Larchgrove. We were all about ten or eleven years old. We were all just kept in an empty room most of the time. I couldn't tell you the names of any of the staff there because you hardly ever saw them. I didn't know how long I was going to be at Cardross. I thought Cardross was the approved school I was to spend my sentence in, not just another assessment centre.

Routine at Cardross

Mornings and bedtime

26. There was hardly any room to move in the dormitory, there were just beds everywhere. About half of us were in that one dormitory. We got up at about 7.00 am, had a wash, and had breakfast. Then we would go to the classroom if the teacher was coming in. After lunch we just went to the empty room. In the evening after dinner we had a shower and then went to the TV room. At 9.00 pm we went to bed.

Mealtimes/Food

27. The food was okay. We would go to the dining room for our meals. There was a woman with short arms, like she was a Thalidomide sufferer. She did the cooking but I can't remember her name.

Washing/bathing

28. You had a shower in the evening. There were three showers in the shower room. The showers were supervised by staff but there was nothing inappropriate about the supervision.

Clothing/uniform

29. We all had a uniform supplied by Cardross. It was pretty much the same as Larchgrove but a different colour.

School

30. They had a classroom which was like a lean-to greenhouse and it was always freezing, there was no heating in it. They had a teacher who came in from outside but sometimes she wouldn't turn up. If the teacher didn't turn up they would just keep us in an empty room for the day. When we did have classes, it was only for half the day until lunchtime. I didn't feel I learned anything at Cardross.

Leisure time

31. There was nothing for us to do during the time we were stuck in the empty room. There wasn't even draughts like we had at Larchgrove. There were no books or toys. Cardross' version of organised sports was to put boxing gloves on two boys and take them out onto the lawn and make them fight each other.

Trips/Holidays

32. There were no trips or holidays at Cardross, nothing like that.

Visits/Inspections

33. My parents didn't visit me at Cardross. There were no social workers who visited and I am not aware of any official inspectors. Nobody spoke to me about the arrangements for me.

Running away

34. I ran away from Cardross. When you came out of the main building in the morning to go to the lean-to greenhouse they used as a classroom, the staff would stand about ten paces apart to form a route for us to walk down to make sure none of us ran away. On the second day I was there, I ran and got over the drystone dyke. Two members of staff chased me. I got caught up on a barbed wire fence and that allowed the staff to catch up with me. They battered me in the field when they caught me and then took me back to Cardross. I'm not aware of any other boys trying to run away when I was there.

Bed Wetting

35. I had problems with bed wetting at Cardross. It was just the same as Larchgrove, the staff would ridicule you when you were carrying away the soiled sheets. There wasn't any other form of abuse associated with bed wetting.

Abuse at Cardross

36. The first day I was at Cardross, at dinner, I was assaulted by a member of staff. You weren't allowed to reach over the table for things at Cardross but I reached over to get a bit of bread and butter. This staff member picked me up and bounced me off the wall. He started slapping me. He rammed me back down in my seat and said, "You

want this, you ask someone to pass you the bread." The wee woman with the short arms was shaking, she got a fright. I can't remember the name of the member of staff who did this. That incident totally changed my life. I was completely anti-authority after that.

37. I tried to run away and after I got caught I was taken up to the SNR office. I can't remember the name of the headmaster. He had a belt in a glass display case and he had a nick name for the belt. I can't remember the nick name he had for the belt but he asked one of the staff to pass him the belt. Then they bent me over, pulled down my trousers, and belted me across the backside. I can't remember how many strokes of the belt I got. I just wanted to get away from the place. After I was belted, they told me to change into my pyjamas and then I was locked in an empty room for two or three days. I was told to stay in the bed. I wasn't allowed to get up, except to go to the toilet.
38. I can't remember seeing the headmaster filling out a punishment book or anything. I didn't see anything like a punishment book or other record at all at Cardross.
39. I got caught fighting with another boy and they put boxing gloves on me. They made me fight another boy who was a bully, not the boy I was originally fighting with. I can't remember the bully's name or what he looked like. It was like he was doing the staff's dirty work for them. The staff always used that boy to box against other boys. I had a bleeding nose when he hit me. The staff just told me to go to the toilet and clean my nose.

Leaving Cardross

40. A member of staff from Balrossie called Archie Leach came up to Cardross and told me I was going to Balrossie. I wasn't given any advanced notice, he just turned up, told me I was going and told me to get in the van.

Balrossie, Kilmalcolm [REDACTED] 1970 to [REDACTED] 1972

41. I went to Balrossie before the Erskine Bridge was built. We went there by the Renfrew ferry. Archie Leach talked to me about Balrossie on the journey there. He told me it was different from Cardross and Larchgrove. He seemed to be aware of what those places were like.

Routine at Balrossie

42. Balrossie was run by the local authority. As well as SNR [REDACTED] GKF [REDACTED] there was SNR [REDACTED] Mr GKS [REDACTED]. There was a Mr GSY [REDACTED] who was a school teacher. Amongst the other staff members there was a Mr GBR [REDACTED] Archie Leach who drove me there, Mr Dowdalls, and Mr GPN [REDACTED]. I can't remember the names of other staff members. It was all boys at Balrossie, from eight to fifteen years of age. There were approximately a hundred boys.

First day

43. My first impression of Balrossie was that there was a sense of freedom. You weren't just stuck in a room, you could walk about the place. They took me in to see SNR [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED] GKF [REDACTED]. He gave me a pep talk and told me to keep my nose clean etc. He told me where the tennis court was and where the football pitch was, he said I could go for a wander. You were given a number at Balrossie, mine was [REDACTED]. That was used to identify your locker, it wasn't used for anything else.
44. Balrossie looks like a castle from a distance but it is a big mansion. The dormitories, staff rooms, and classrooms were all in the main building. The staff had separate houses. There was a wee street with about eight or ten houses.

Mornings and bedtime

45. We got up about 7.00 am. We got washed and dressed and you were allocated chores like cleaning the dormitory. Then we went down for breakfast, then they rang a big

brass hand bell to tell us to go to school. In the evenings the bell would ring about 8.30 pm and we went to the dining hall for some supper, then it was up to the dormitory and into our pyjamas. Lights out was at 10.00 pm.

Mealtimes/Food

46. The food was alright at Balrossie. Everyone got the same, there was no choice. I have no recollection of difficulties if a boy didn't like the food.

Washing/bathing

47. There shower room had two rows of showers, about ten in total. We had a shower every day, after school. The showers were supervised. I didn't realise it at the time, but there were some who seemed to look inappropriately at the boys showering, but I don't recall any inappropriate touching. It would be boys of different ages showering together, from eight to fifteen years of age.

Clothing/uniform

48. As usual the uniform was shorts, sandshoes and a shirt. We also had long trousers and a blazer for church on Sunday. You had a net bag and anything you needed washed went in the bag. That bag had your locker number on it and I think they put the whole bag in the wash so you got your own clothes back.

School

49. The schooling was okay. I got on with the teacher. His name was GSZ. He was quite a hot headed guy. He wasn't slow in firing into the boys in the class if they were messing about. He would use whatever he got his hands on, his favourite was a big bunch of keys. He never hit me, he seemed to take a shine to me. We had classes in the morning. After lunch we would get to play for about half an hour, then back for more classes until about 4.00 pm.

Leisure time

50. After school we could run about the grounds playing football or tennis. It was the same at weekends, we had a lot of time to run about. There was plenty to keep us occupied. They brought other football teams in for us to play and they had a sports day.
51. We got pocket money at Balrossie, we could spend that at the tuck shop to buy sweets. We didn't really have personal possessions. I can't remember books being available but there were comics.

Religious instruction

52. On a Sunday you had no choice, you had to go to church. We got changed into our good flannel trousers and blazers and went to the church in Kilmalcolm village centre. We didn't all go to church at the same time, some boys were on home leave at weekends. The ones that were left would go to church.

Trips/Holidays

53. They took us swimming during the week. There was a certain teacher who could drive the minibus. He would take names of those who wanted to go swimming, although there were only so many who could fit in the minibus. He would take us to Greenock for swimming.
54. They also took us for camping holidays during the summer. Some boys would get home leave in the summer and the ones that were left went camping in Gourrock. They also took us to a cottage up in the hills at Crianlarich.
55. You could get home leave. Home leave was done every two weeks. They operated a points system. If you were doing well in school classes, the teacher would give you points. You could get home leave from Friday to Sunday or from Saturday to Sunday. They would take us in the minibus to Kilmalcolm and you would get the bus to wherever home was. It was the same in reverse. If I was home for the weekend my

parents would drop me off at the bus stop in Glasgow and I would be met by the minibus in Kilmalcolm.

56. Sometimes I didn't get home leave, if I had been misbehaving. My parents did come up to visit me, but only about two or three times. You were allowed to walk around the grounds unsupervised with your visitors. My sisters came to visit me a few times too. There were no social workers or other officials who came to visit me.

Birthdays and Christmas

57. Your birthday was just another day, there was no celebration at all. I was at Balrossie a couple of times at Christmas. You would get a selection box or something.

Healthcare

58. I saw a dentist at Balrossie, he came in a big van. We did get anaesthetic injections. There was no doctor at Balrossie, there were two matrons. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] They would give us treatment for minor injuries. If we needed stiches or if someone had a broken bone, they would go to hospital in Greenock.

Running away

59. I ran away the third day I was at Balrossie, after the incident on the second night where I had forgotten my fire blanket and got assaulted. I couldn't run away that night as the front door was locked, although the dormitory was never locked. I ran the first opportunity I got. I ran right across a field and got back to Glasgow. I stayed with my granny for two weeks. I was running about with my pals thieving. The beat police knew me and knew I was on the run. They took me back to the police station and phoned Balrossie. They came and collected me. They took me back to Balrossie and put me in pyjamas, not clothes. Then you went back through the scenario in the gym being held down and beaten and losing four weeks leave. I ran away on several occasions

and every time I got caught, it was the same punishment. I knew I would get that when I got caught but I still kept running, I just wanted away from the place.

Bed Wetting

60. Bedwetting was still a problem for me at Balrossie. They gave the night-watchman a list of the boys who were bedwetters. He would come in and wake us up about 1.00 am and tell us to go to the toilet. If you had wet the bed, in the morning, you had to carry your soiled sheets downstairs and get verbal abuse from everyone. There was no physical punishment though.

Discipline at Balrossie

61. You could be punished for running away, for walking on a grass verge, for being out of bounds, and a number of other things. It would either be Mr ^{GKF}, Mr ^{GKS}, or Mr ^{GSY}. You would get belted over the backside for running away. They would pull your pyjamas down. They put a desk in the middle of the gym. All the staff would be standing around like it was an execution. Two members of staff would hold you down and Mr ^{GKF} would belt you. He would give you however many strokes of the belt he felt like, until he decided to stop. I think the most I got was ten. It did leave marks. I saw the marks from being belted on other boys and they saw the marks on me. I can remember the names of some of the boys who were at Balrossie and suffered this kind of discipline such as [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I am not in regular contact with these guys, I just see them about in the city centre from time to time.
62. They had a room they used like cell in Balrossie with a padlocked grill on the outside of the window. I got put in the cell as a punishment. You would be kept there in just your pyjamas. Sometimes they would take you back to the dormitory at night, other times I had to spend the night in the cell. It was their way of keeping an eye on you.

Abuse at Balrossie

63. The first night I was in there, Mr GKF took me to the dormitory I was in. Each dormitory had a captain and he introduced me. He showed me my bed and my locker. He also pointed out a blanket which was a fire blanket in case there was a fire at night. You had to fold up the fire blanket before bed. That first night, I forgot about folding the fire blanket and Mr GKF came in grabbed me by the hair and dragged me into the corridor and started slapping me. He picked me up and threw me back on my bed and then started on the guy who was the captain of the dormitory. I realised that Mr GKF who I thought was a nice guy when I first met him, wasn't a nice guy.
64. My eldest sister has told me that there was an incident at Balrossie where I was locked in a cupboard. I have got no memory of this and I don't know how my sister got to know about it.
65. The sexual abuse started off with GBR He was a member of staff, I don't know what his specific role was. He would have been in his early forties, six foot one or two inches tall. He had grey hair and was from Hamilton. He used to take us swimming. I couldn't swim. He would have the non-swimmers down in the shallow end of the pool and he would hold you. He would be groping you while he was getting you to swim across the pool. You had no choice in the swimming pool, you had to go when he shouted your name.
66. GBR then gave me a job for extra pocket money. The job was to do a stock take of school uniforms and shoes. This was in a turret of Balrossie, one of the features that made it look like a castle. It was well away from everyone. He started getting me to masturbate him in there. That went on for my whole time at Balrossie, from 1970 to 1972.
67. After that, GBR took us camping to Inverkip. He told me to stay with him and help him with the fire. I knew what was coming. He told me to go into a tent with him. He took my shorts off. He put his penis between my legs. He didn't penetrate me but he did ejaculate.

68. All the time I was there, he would abuse me any chance he got. That went on for just under two years. There was no one else who abused me. I am not aware of GBR abusing any other boys but I have no doubt that he did. There were some comments made by other boys about me, calling me "Teacher's pet." and things like that.
69. One time I ran away from Balrossie and I got caught by the police and put in Springburn Police Station, because I was staying with pals in that area. GBR came to get me and I remember we went over the Erskine Bridge to get back to Balrossie, the bridge had just opened. He pulled in to a layby on the way and abused me in his car.
70. On another occasion GBR took me and another boy to his friend's house in Larkhall. It might even have been one of his relatives. It was a man and wife with a couple of kids. Me and the other boy had to sleep on the floor in sleeping bags. GBR abused me there too. I don't know if the other boy woke up or if he was still asleep. I didn't discuss it with the other boy. I can't remember the name of the other boy.
71. GBR also abused me in my dormitory. There were a lot of dormitories, mine was one of the furthest away ones, at the end of the corridor. It was at the weekend and there weren't a lot of us left in the dormitories. I went for a shower and when I came out, he was waiting for me in the dormitory. Balrossie became like Larchgrove and Cardross, I just wanted away from the place.

Reporting of abuse Balrossie

72. Although there were some other members of staff I could talk to, I never told them about the abuse. I didn't tell my mum and dad, I didn't tell anyone. I have spoken to people in the past about the violence in care, but I have never spoken about the sexual abuse before now.

Leaving Balrossie

73. Towards the end of my time at Balrossie I ran away again. Mr **GKF** said he didn't want me back. The police picked me up and took me to Larchgrove. I had expected they would take me to Balrossie but when they took me to Larchgrove, I knew I wouldn't be going back to Balrossie.
74. I was back in Larchgrove for about eight weeks **1972** **1973**. It was still the same routine as before. The only thing that happened at Larchgrove that time was that there was a teacher who used to talk dirty to us. I can't remember his name, he was about five feet ten inches, ruddy complexion, and about sixty years old. He would ask us if we had any sisters and what they did with their boyfriends. There was nothing physical that he did. I also noticed that there was a lot more violence from **LTB-LTE** and Mr **GSX** at that time. That might have been because I was in the older kids section that time. There was another guy called **GTB** that used to like slapping people about. After about eight weeks, they found me a place in another Approved school, Thornly Park.

Thornly Park, Glasgow **1972** to **1974**

75. I didn't get any notice that I was being moved to Thornly Park, they just came in and told me to get in the van. **Thornly Park** was **GNG**. He was in his late thirties, he was about five foot nine inches. He had sandy coloured hair. He was a violent alcoholic. **I can't remember the names of any of the other staff.**

Routine at Thornly Park

76. There was nothing in particular I remember about the routine at Thornly Park that sticks out in my mind. Compared to Larchgrove and Balrossie it was alright apart from the violence and strange behaviour of **GNG**.

Abuse at Thornly Park

77. At weekends there would be a lot of boys on home leave and they didn't want those of us who were left to be scattered in all the dormitories so they put us into one dormitory at the weekend, the one nearest to [GNG]. [GNG] would come out of his house at 2.00 am on a Saturday morning and put all the lights on. He would be drunk and would attack people. He would claim there was a lot of noise and commotion but it was all in his head. He was a Jekyll and Hyde character.
78. Thornly Park had a small Victorian swimming pool. Sometimes when [GNG] came in drunk in the middle of the night, he would come in happy. He would get us to go for a swim in the pool. [GNG] would sit in the gym in his housecoat with his carry-out watching us. Then he would fall asleep in a drunken stupor. When he woke up, he wouldn't remember anything about letting us go for a swim.
79. One time, there were about seven or eight of us left in the dormitory at the weekend. A couple of the boys went down and broke-in to the kitchen area. They came back up with cakes and stuff. They started flinging food about the dormitory. The night-watchman, he was another alcoholic, came in and put the lights on. The place was covered in food. He phoned [GNG] who came in and had a look then just put the lights off. He must have phoned the staff to make sure they were in early because at 6.00 am the staff woke us up and took us down in our pyjamas to a playground which was called The Courtyard. [GNG] drove his car into this playground and put his car up on the jack. They lined us up into two lines of about ten boys. [GNG] went up to the first boy and asked him who broke into the kitchen. He said he didn't know and [GNG] battered him and then came over to me, I was the smallest boy there. I had long hair at the time and [GNG] grabbed me by the hair and dragged me over to his car. I thought he was going to put my head under the car where the jack was. I was aware that [GNG] staff looked concerned about what he was doing and were trying to get him to calm down. I managed to get out his grip and ran away but just before I did, [GNG] was screaming and ran after me but I got away and ran over the fields beyond the boundary of Thornly Park. He gave up chasing me and shouted,

"Keep on running, you'll not be coming back to this school." I kept running until I got to Paisley.

Reporting of abuse at Thornly Park

80. After GNG [REDACTED] tried to put my head under his car, I didn't tell the police when they caught me. I told my family but nobody in authority.

Leaving Thornly Park

81. When the police caught me after running away from Thornliepark, they took me to Larchgrove again. I think I was there for two or three months. It was still the same routine as before.
82. There was a guy I saw who was more like a probation officer than a social worker, I can't remember his name. With me running away from all these schools he said that he thought I was going to have to go into a closed block as none of the Approved schools were willing to take me. He then said he had found one Approved school, St Mary's Kenmure, which would take me and he asked how I felt about going into a Roman Catholic school. I said yes, it didn't bother me that it was a Catholic school.

St Mary's, Bishopbriggs [REDACTED] 1973 [REDACTED] 1974 to [REDACTED] 1974

83. I was about fourteen or fifteen by the time I went to St Mary's, Bishopbriggs. The probation guy took me there.

Routine at St Mary's, Bishopbriggs

First day

84. When the car drew up to the front of the building, SNR [REDACTED] LNI [REDACTED] came out. He was a nice big guy. He said, "Don't try and run away or you'll end up like him." and pointed to a statue of Jesus on the cross. He was laughing when he said it. He said that I didn't have to go to Chapel. St Mary's was alright, apart from the incident that resulted in me leaving.

Healthcare

85. I had been seeing a psychiatrist since 1971 in Balrossie and he continued seeing me until 1974, at St Mary's. His name was Mr HYF [REDACTED]. I saw him approximately every two months. When he came up to see me he wouldn't get two words out of me, I couldn't bring myself to talk to him. I just classed him as being the same as all the other figures in authority. He would just sit in silence with me for a while and then leave.

Religious instruction

86. I was the only Protestant in St Mary's. LNI [REDACTED] had said I didn't need to go to Chapel. I would just wander about the school which he didn't want. After about eight months he got me a job in the cookhouse on Sundays so they knew where I was. He was trying to do me a favour but there was a problem with Bill Franks who was the cook.

Abuse at St Mary's

87. When I had to go to work in the cookhouse on Sunday instead of going to Chapel, I worked with Bill Franks. He was a wee Italian looking guy, about five feet four inches tall. He would have been in his thirties. He would masturbate when he was standing in the pantry. He tried to encourage me to come over to him, he was gesturing with his head. It was only me and him in the kitchen and I just left and never went back to

Approved Schools. I had been at St Mary's for about eight months when that incident happened.

Reporting of abuse at St Mary's

88. I didn't report the incident with Bill Franks, I just walked out. I had had enough.

Leaving St Mary's

89. I walked out of St Mary's on the Sunday when the incident with Bill Franks took place. Everyone else was at Chapel so there was no-one to stop me. I got on a bus and never went back.
90. The police did track me down at my granny's in Glasgow but by that time I was almost sixteen. Approved schools weren't interested in you after you were sixteen. There was no further action taken. I didn't go back to school, I just went and signed-on the dole when I was sixteen years old.

Life after being in care

91. I started drinking after I left care. I suffered from depression. I have been in and out of jail for a lot of my life. A lot of it has been to do with alcohol. I was with a lassie and had three children to her, but then she had enough of me. My next partner was the same, we had a couple of kids but then she had had enough of me. I married a third partner but that ended just the same so I just stay on my own now. I work as a window cleaner.

Impact

92. Even though the abuse I suffered happened years ago I still think about it all the time. In all the care facilities I was in, the staff would batter the boys like they were hitting a grown man. I saw staff, like LNI hitting other boys, even though he was alright with me. I have a great love of music and I am good at remembering when particular songs came out, but when I hear songs from my childhood I associate them with the care facility I was in at the time and the memories of violence and abuse keep coming back.
93. For years I suffered from depression and depression is not a condition that runs in my family. I would drink because of the depression. Working as a window cleaner means cash payments and I would just drink the money every night.
94. My parents were both alcoholics, they separated around 1972. My mother was a violent alcoholic whereas my father was a working alcoholic. I went to stay with my father when I came out of care. My sisters stayed with my dad too. My parents are both dead now, they died due to their drinking but I still have a relationship with my sisters.
95. I had virtually no education during my time in care. At St Mary's you either worked in the morning or you worked in the afternoon. You went to school for the other half of the day. That meant, at best, I was getting half the education that I would have done if I had been at home going to school. I basically had no education from the end of Primary school. I had no qualifications when I left St Mary's.

Reporting of Abuse

96. As stated, I have told my family and others about the physical violence that I experienced in care, but I have never previously spoken about the sexual abuse.

Records

97. I have never tried to get my records of my time in care. I wouldn't mind getting hold of what they have about me. I understand that Future Pathways may be able to help me with that.

Lessons to be learned

98. What happened to me would never happen in this day and age. At least society has learned something.

Hopes for the Inquiry

99. I hope the Inquiry will help make it safer for children in care. I wouldn't want to see it going back to the way it was in my day. It seemed like the staff could get away with murder back then.

Other information

100. 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.

GSW

Signed.....

Dated..... 6/3/20