

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

GKD

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is GKD. My date of birth is 1951. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in Johnstone and initially I lived in a [REDACTED] along with my father [REDACTED] and mother [REDACTED]. At that time I was the youngest of four with my brothers, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. We did have a sister [REDACTED] but she died before I was born. I do not have many memories of that time as I was too young.
3. When I was about four, perhaps five, we moved to [REDACTED], Paisley. My parents did not want me as they had been hoping for a girl. I was treated much differently from my other siblings including often being told by mother "Why don't you just die". My father was a type 1 diabetic and an alcoholic. He spent most of his time in jail and my mother never worked either.
4. With no money coming into the house there was no money to pay rent. We were evicted from [REDACTED] and moved to other houses including [REDACTED] Institution and then another five different houses. At each of those addresses we were evicted, again for non-payment of rent. This pattern continued until I was about ten years old. Obviously as far as school was concerned I was only there for a short period before I had to move on to the next one. With all the moves there was no prospect of me settling in and taking in any of the lessons.

5. There was some involvement from the Welfare with there being no money and having to be re-housed on a constant basis. Each year we had to be given a grant from them so that we had some clothes to go to school.
6. I can remember when I was about five years old I was playing football and my leg was broken when my brother tackled me. After having been taken to the hospital my leg was put in plaster. I had difficulty in walking and mum had to carry me wherever I needed to go. After two weeks mum cut the plaster off as she was fed up having to carry me. I was never taken to hospital for any follow up.
7. There was another occasion when I was still about eight and I ended up in hospital. My brother persuaded me to put two bare electric wires into a plug in the house. I was blown back from the electric shock. I had to go to hospital and had dressings put on my burns. I was supposed to have the dressings changed the next day but mum refused to help me. She told me that if I wanted them changed I was to walk to the hospital and have them do it. I couldn't get there on my own as it was about four or five miles away. I got no further treatment for the injury.
8. Mum put [REDACTED] and me in a children's home in Largs, I can't remember the name, but we weren't there for long. [REDACTED] was in care at some place in Penicuik. [REDACTED] was not at the house and I don't know where he went. I was about nine then. Not long after we were there [REDACTED] went missing and ended up back in Paisley.
9. One day when I was out of the home I went to the back of a local pub and took some of the beer bottles. I walked round to the front and sold them back to the staff. The money I got I used to get a bus back to Paisley to be with my mum. When I was back she was trying to get us back into the home but they would not allow it.
10. Mum was determined she was going to get us into care and kept us off school. She kept us off until the welfare were again involved. When they came to see her she blamed us and told them it was us who were refusing to go to school.

11. [REDACTED] and I were sent to a Children's Panel where the decision was made that [REDACTED] and I would be sent to be sent to a remand home in Dumbarton. This was to be for a two week assessment and a decision about where we would be sent on a more proper basis. I don't know what the name of the home.

Unknown remand home

12. We arrived at the home in Dumbarton and found it was a huge mansion type building. There were probably between seventy and eighty boys there. I don't remember much about the routine there other than we spent a lot of our day sat in a gym hall. We were also given comics and books to read. I can't remember any of the names of the staff there. There were no issues of abuse to me and I never saw any while I was at that home. After the two week assessment we were back at the panel and told we were being sent to Balrossie School in Kilmacolm.

Balrossie School, Kilmacolm

13. I was ten when I went to Balrossie. I remember there were two social workers that transported us from Dumbarton to Balrossie School. They did not seem to know their way there and kept going down the wrong streets whilst trying to find the home.
14. I thought that we would be going home after a short time or at least be home for Christmas. The average time spent at that school was two years. I would end up staying there until I was fourteen.
15. The staff all lived in separate houses within the grounds of the school. The headmaster and the deputy head shared one of those buildings. There were two rooms in the main building that were used by the odd job men.
16. The school was on two levels. The bedroom numbers two through to eleven were on the upper floor along with showering and toilet facilities. Bedroom number one was on the ground floor. There were two bedrooms which had between eight and ten beds in them and the remaining rooms housed six boys. Also on the ground floor were the

Headmasters room, a toilet, sick bay, staff room, kitchen and dining room. There was a gym, four class rooms, a woodwork room and a sewing room where we would repair any holes in our clothes.

17. There were approximately seventy-two boys in the home and we were all Protestants. They were aged between nine and ten up to fifteen year old. I got on with most of the boys there and can remember [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. There were the odd fall outs but that was just the usual children falling out and then getting on again.

18. I can remember some of the staff at Balrossie being [REDACTED] GKF [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED] GKS [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED], Mr [REDACTED] GSZ [REDACTED], teacher of class A, [REDACTED] GJF [REDACTED] Teacher of class B and PE Teacher, [REDACTED] GSY [REDACTED] teacher of class C, [REDACTED] GKR [REDACTED], teacher of class D, Mr [REDACTED] GKG [REDACTED], night watchman. [REDACTED] GPN [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] HHK [REDACTED] were the two handymen at the school. The woodwork teacher was [REDACTED] KRN [REDACTED]. At the weekend Mr Smith would cover for Mr [REDACTED] GKG [REDACTED] as night watchman. Mr Smith usually worked at another home in the Glasgow area. Miss Cooper was the nurse and she had a room, which she lived in opposite the Headmasters office. Sometimes if needed the Headmasters wife would assist with some of the minor medical needs. [REDACTED] GPN [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] HHK [REDACTED]'s wives were also employed at the school as cleaners.

19. During the holiday periods, when some of the staff would be away, the school employed some students as cover. They were from Glasgow University. They tended not to be bothered with most of the routines and were only there to earn some money.

Routine at Balrossie School, Kilmacolm

First day

20. When we arrived there I saw it was a very large building, like a castle, with turrets. We walked through the gates, up a path to the side of the building. On arrival we were taken to [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED], [REDACTED] GKF [REDACTED], and he gave us a brief introduction as to what was expected of us while we stayed at the school. We were told that we were to

address the staff as "Sir". He also explained that there was a punishment regime in the school, but did not go into detail about it. It was not long before I was introduced to that. We were then introduced to an older boy, I can't remember his name but he was about fourteen and he gave us a tour of the school, pointing out places where we were not allowed to go, the dormitories and where classes were held.

21. We were then taken to the bathroom area where we were told to have a shower. The school then issued us with some clothes.
22. The room I had was shared with another five boys. I had a small locker at the side of my bed. I had no personal possessions and the only thing I may have kept by the bed would be a book from the library. Our clothes were folded each night and placed on the chair. If we did not fold them properly the duty staff, whoever was there that evening, would throw the clothes on the floor and make us fold them again. Similarly in the morning the beds had to be made in a particular manner with envelope corners. If not done properly the sheets were pulled back and we had to do it again.

Mornings and bedtime

23. We were woken about seven thirty by the night watchman. Sometimes he might have one of the day staff with him but not always. It was just a case of him shouting at us to get up out of our beds. On a Sunday we were allowed a long lie until around 8:30 am. We then headed for a shower or just a wash. The staff usually preferred we showered but it was not forced.
24. It was then back to the bedrooms to get dressed, fold our pyjamas and put them under the pillow. Then we would complete any chores we may have been allocated. We were to be down in the dining room for breakfast about 8:30 am.
25. After our breakfast it was into the main hall for assembly. The Headmaster would then read a passage from the bible and we would sing a hymn. He then read out the names of the children who were deemed to have done anything wrong. After that we were in the classroom, until lunchtime and back in the classroom for the afternoon. Tea/supper

was about 4:30 pm and if you were a bed wetter then you were not allowed anything to drink until breakfast the next morning. If you were caught drinking any water then Mr ^{GPN} might give you a slap over the back of the head. Most of the other staff would shout at you for drinking before bed.

26. We would be allowed to play until about 7:30 pm and have a wash and shower about 8:00 pm. Between 8:00 pm and 9:00 pm we were allowed to watch television. About 9:00 pm it was into bed and lights out with no talking allowed.
27. My brother [REDACTED] was in a different room and I am not sure if anything happened to him. [REDACTED] refused to discuss it.

Mealtimes/Food

28. I don't recall there being any issues with the food. If you did not like something being fed to you, you had to eat it, or you went hungry. Sometimes the staff would hover around and be shouting at you to finish the meal. If someone was really bad with a meal and ended up being sick, the staff would realise they were not going to be able to make them eat the meal and allowed that boy to leave the table. It was also never kept for the next meal time and there was no force feeding.
29. I think someone had to say Grace at the each meal. At each table someone would be allocated the role of table monitor who would collect the meals for everyone at their table.
30. On a Saturday there was an unwritten rule at breakfast time. The kids who were going home to visit family would hand over their morning rolls to those who were having to stay behind. On each Saturday we normally had scotch pie, tatties and beans for our main meal. That became my favourite meal.

Washing/bathing

31. When we had showers they would be supervised by staff, not in a bad way just to make sure there was no fighting. The temperature of the water for the showers was regulated by knob at the doorway and could be adjusted by the staff. Whichever staff was on duty would help the younger boys to put toothpaste onto their toothbrushes to make sure they brushed them properly. The staff also kept a note of who had been for a shower and this was to ensure they washed enough times during the week. I can remember it was carbolic soap that we were given and the old style Izal toilet paper.

Clothing/uniform

32. When we arrived at Balrossie the only clothes we had were the ones we were wearing. I remember that mum had bought me a new pair of socks as the ones I had previously were full of holes. The staff issued us with clothes, which were same for all of the residents. They were similar to old army clothing, Khaki shorts and tops. This was to be the dress code for the rest of my time there. The shorts were worn until you were aged thirteen and only then were you issued with long trousers. For church on a Sunday we had to wear the school grey trousers and blue jacket.
33. When we lived at Balrossie we were all given a number. I was allocated the number [REDACTED] which was sewn into all my clothing

Leisure time

34. In the school, for leisure time, we did have access to a small library, television, games, table tennis and a snooker table. These activities were usually between six and eight o'clock. There were usually two teachers present on a rota basis, to supervise this and one would be there for the weekend. Depending on what teacher was on duty could affect what television programmes you were allowed. Some allowed more freedom than others.
35. At the side and rear of the building were three playgrounds and a football field where we spend some of our leisure time. We were never allowed to be in the front grounds of the building.

36. Each Sunday, after church, we were allowed to play in the grounds at the back. There was a field at the end of those grounds but we were not allowed in that and told by the staff it was out of bounds. There was an outdoor swimming pool but it too was out of bounds.
37. We did get to go swimming but that was to Port Glasgow swimming pool. There was one week the pool was closed and we were taken to Quarrier's at Bridge of Weir and allowed to use their pool.
38. Each year the school put on a pantomime for staff and parents. I was also a member of the football team and we would play matches against the local Scout group or the Boys' Brigade. I was the captain and goalkeeper. GJF [REDACTED] was a good guy and was the football coach.
39. I was able to show a good standard and allowed to play for the Boys' Brigade team as their goalkeeper. GKS [REDACTED] was the Boys' Brigade leader and his son was one of the officers. They would take me to play the matches and bring me back to the school afterwards. If I did not have enough points to go home I saw the football as a good way to get out of the home for a short while. There was a time when I was on the six points and although not allowed home I was still allowed to play, but on this occasion I had done something wrong and GJF [REDACTED] had given me a point deduction, taking me to seven and not allowed to play. I spoke to him about the punishment and he rescinded the point so I could still play football.
40. When I was at Balrossie I supported St Mirren football club. So long as I had not been allocated too many punishment points I was allowed to use my pocket money allowance and go to watch them on a Saturday.
41. Through my time involved with football I became good enough that as an adult I was able to play for [REDACTED].

Trips and holidays

42. Each summer we did go to a primary school at Bucksburn near Dyce in Aberdeenshire. We would stay there for a two week break. There was one year there was a break out of some illness in Aberdeen and we were not allowed to go there. As an alternative the school arranged for us to go to Stranraer.
43. Once a year we would be taken to the American Navy base and would get to go on board the USS Edison nuclear submarine there. I can remember we were allowed to look through the periscope. The American sailors were good to us and would hand over some of their sweets for us.

School

44. The school lessons at Balrossie were organised in four groups, A, B, C and D. In those groups were children of mixed ages, with about eighteen pupils in each class. It was just general education and each year the lessons were repeated the following year with the same group so you never learned anything new after the first year. I was allocated to class ■.
45. GJF ■ would take us for all the physical education and KRN ■ would take us for woodwork lessons.
46. In the morning prior to going into the relevant classroom you had to line up for parade in the playground. Each class then marched into their classroom. You lined up depending on what house you were in. There were four houses for Balrossie, which were Moray, Forth, Tay and Solway, all estuaries in Scotland. When lining up for parade it was to be in order of smallest to tallest.

Healthcare

47. The only time I was ill was as a result of having run into a wall at the school. I got a cut which got infected. I was kept in isolation at the school and the local doctor from

Kilmacolm came to the school to treat it. Apart from the injuries from the beatings from the staff, which were never treated, I never had any other health issues.

Religious instruction

48. At each meal time someone said Grace and at Assembly a prayer was read out and we sang a hymn. Each Sunday we were marched in the house groups to the local church. When we came to a junction we would be lined up, side by side, and crossed the road as one. When we arrived at the church we would have to enter through a different door from the main congregation. We would be sat in the church for whole service but would have to leave by the side door again, before the congregation left the church.

Work

49. Some of the chores we were asked to carry out in the school was to ensure the shoes were polished, sweep and clean the gym hall, setting up the tables for the next meal, cleaning the toilets and shower areas.
50. At one point the school began taking in old electric meters for dismantling. Sometimes there was money in some of the meters. We would be tasked with removing all the copper wire from the meters, which would then be weighed for scrap. The school would get paid for the scrap and we were given an allowance from that money.
51. Any money we had from this or from what we had left of our pocket money was spent at the school tuck shop. The tuck was stored in a cupboard in the kitchen. We were not allowed to go to Kilmacolm to spend the money.

Birthdays and Christmas

52. Some of us were unable to go home during Christmas holidays and we would be looked after at the school with a skeleton staff. We had a lot freedom do what we wanted during that time, maybe playing snooker all day or table tennis. On Christmas

morning we would waken to a comic, some fruit and sweets on our bed, but there was no Christmas meal put on, it was just the normal food.

- 53. Jack Ferguson, who was like a welfare officer, arranged for us to put on a pantomime. When we did this, parents and some locals would come to see it.
- 54. When it came to my birthday I might have received a card from my mum. The staff would give us a comic. During Assembly the Headmaster would announce which boy had a birthday and the rest of the school would sing Happy Birthday. There was no cake or anything like that.

Visits/Inspections

- 55. There were no inspections carried out of Balrossie during my time there. Even if wanted to, I had no opportunity to talk to anyone from any official outside body, to tell someone about the abuse I was receiving.

Family contact

- 56. I did see mum four or five times when she visited me during my time at Balrossie. Her visits depended on bus times. When she visited she just turned up at reception and told staff she was there to see me. When she visited we were not allowed out of the grounds and the visit would be for about an hour. I only saw my dad once during my time in Balrossie.
- 57. Not long after I was in care my mother moved to Bognor Regis. There was one time I was allowed to visit her there. She stayed in a one bedroomed flat.
- 58. When I was about fourteen I was able to go and spend six weeks with my mum at Bognor Regis. It was soon obvious that things with mum had not changed. At one point she wanted me to go to the doctors to tell him I was having trouble sleeping. She wanted the doctor to prescribe sleeping tablets which she would then use herself.

59. When I was staying with mum I could not get on with the locals, mainly due to each other not being able to understand the other because of different dialects.
60. A few weeks into the visit mum turned up at the house having brought home a boyfriend. There was an argument between her and I and she ended up phoning Balrossie demanding I go back there. To start with staff were not wanting to come down and asked for me to be put on a train. I was not happy with this and it changed to the police arriving and I was taken to the local police station. ^{GSY} arrived at the station and took me back to Balrossie. When I was back at Balrossie I was given the belt as they treated me as an absconder.
61. We had to write a letter home every week, usually on a Thursday. We could not write what we may have wanted as it was always checked by a teacher. Sometimes Mr ^{GSZ} would write letters for some of the boys who could not write properly. He would write the letter in pencil and the boys would overwrite it in ink. Mr ^{GSZ} would then rub out the pencil markings.

Running away

62. I never ran away, but that was because I had nowhere to go to. I did see others run away and when they were brought back they were in the Headmasters office and given six of the belt on their backsides. They would have to accept the addition of six points for the week and have six weeks detention.

Discipline

63. For some minor issues you had done wrong, you would find that Mr ^{GPN} might give you a kick up the backside or he would hit you on the ear with his hand.
64. Another method of punishment was a points system used in the school. You started with twelve, as in pennies in a shilling. For each misdemeanour the staff would deduct one point. If they felt like it they may deduct more than one. Each point deducted meant that was the number of pennies deducted from your pocket money. If you lost six points

in a week this led to a loss of privileges, which may involve your weekend leave to visit family being revoked. At one stage during my stay I had lost all privileges for six weeks in a row, which meant no pocket money and not allowed out at weekend. Although I never received it, if someone was particularly good they could be given a plus point from a teacher.

65. Examples of minor indiscretions could be someone being caught talking in bed at night. Another one would be if you were late for parade before class, perhaps for being in the toilet beforehand. All points being deducted for the week were read out at Assembly on a Friday morning. The staff would also have you wear different colour bands, depending on how many points you had been deducted so far that week. Red was the worse and you had lost too many points.
66. The points system was not applied consistently and I feel it was actually random in how it was administered. If one teacher liked you, you may not be given any points. On the other hand if a teacher did not like you instead of being given one point that teacher may allocate two or even three points. It could also depend on what mood the teacher was in.
67. The points could be marked down as disobedient equalled one point, deliberate disobedience equalled two points. The trouble most would have is what the definition of each is. It was left to each teacher, who may interpret it differently. The points allocated were written down in a punishment book.
68. I never followed the rules and was a bit of a show off. Sometimes Mr ^{GPN} would say there is no point in allocating a punishment point to me and would revert to giving me the belt. There were three different belts he could use, dependant on the severity of the misdemeanour. Two belts with different thickness were used for the hand and the last one we called the snake. When he could not be bothered giving me a punishment point he would give me six of the belt on the hands.
69. Mr ^{GPN} was never shy about hitting us boys. Sometimes as he was angry with you he would punch you on the thigh giving you a dead leg. Other times as he passed you

he would slap you on the side of the head. More often than not this was for no reason. There were many occasions when I was slapped by Mr ^{GPN} that this would be seen by some of the other teachers, but they never said or did anything to stop him.

70. Another punishment involved the boiler house, which was coal fired. If any of the boys had been in trouble then as part of their punishment was that they were to use a wheel barrow and move the coal from the bunker to the cellar. It was usually two of the older boys that would be told to do this. They would move the coal after breakfast, about 9:00 am until lunchtime. They were back in the afternoon and repeating this until 4:00 pm. The younger ones were not strong enough to push the full barrow.
71. Once a day someone was allocated to take coal from the bunker to ^{GKS}'s house for his coal fire.

Bed Wetting

72. I did suffer from bed wetting and the night watchman, Mr ^{GKG}, would drag us out of bed two or three times a night to try and stop us wetting the bed. There was no abuse it was just his effort to stop the bed wetting.
73. If someone had tried to hide the fact they had wet the bed and just made it in the normal manner, Mrs ^{SNR} wife, would go round the bedrooms and sniff the beds to check. She would then report the matter to her husband or one of the other staff.

Abuse at Balrossie School, Kilmacolm

74. If Mr ^{GPN} was on duty and you were caught having wet the bed he would make you strip off your night clothes in the bedroom and make you walk through to the showers naked, passed all the other boys. He would be calling you names like being a dirty so and so and a lot worse sometime. After your shower, whilst still undressed, you had to gather the sheets and wash them in one of the large sinks. Again if others were still in the showers it would be done in front of them. You were not allowed to towel yourself

dry until all this had been done. It was then back to your bed area to dry and get dressed. This happened to me on a regular basis and there were probably about another ten maybe twelve boys who also suffered this.

75. Mr ^{GPN} had a room at the end of the building and this was where he would cut some of the boy's hair. Usually when he cut the boys hair there were two or three in the room at the time. When I was about thirteen or fourteen there was a time I was told it was time for me to get my hair cut. When I arrived I saw that I was the only boy there. When I entered the room he locked the door. He had never done that before and I knew there was something wrong. I went to sit on the chair but he wanted me to stand. As he approached me I knew he was going to try and interfere with me. When he came near I started shouting at him and was fighting to keep him off me. He was trying to get me up against the wall in the room. I ran out of the room and to start with did not want to tell anyone, because I was scared and embarrassed. Eventually I did tell some of the boys.
76. There were times when Mr ^{GKF} or Mr ^{GPN} tried to find reasons to search the boys. It happened to me a few times and when they carried out the search their hands always lingered near my groin and on my backside.
77. In 1962/63 we had a really bad winter. ^{HHK} wanted us to shovel the snow from the driveway each day, to allow cars to get to the school building. We were still wearing the khaki shorts. We were frozen as we did this and were crying with the pain from the cold. We would ask to go inside to get warmed up occasionally, but he refused until we had finished it.
78. There was one holiday time when we were supposed to be going to Buxton. I had asked and was authorised to go to Paisley to stay with a friend of my mothers, . She was usually given an allowance of about £1.50 to look after me. Instead of going there, myself, , and all went to Camelon, where stayed. As I had not turned up at 's house her boyfriend phoned the police.

79. The police turned up at [REDACTED]'s house and we were taken back to the police station and put into a cell. GKS [REDACTED] arrived along with his wife, supposed to be to uplift us. When he arrived and was shown to my cell he gave me a kicking. He was punching and kicking me. This was done in front of the police and his wife. None of them intervened.
80. When we were back at the home I was sent to GKS [REDACTED]'s room and I knew I was in bother again. In the office there was a pair of gym shorts he kept there. They were a much thinner material than our Khaki shorts. I was made to change into those shorts and was then held down by Mr GKG [REDACTED]. He held me bent over the table with my head trapped between his legs. GKS [REDACTED] grabbed the thickest of three belts he kept. We called that particular belt the snake as it had to unfolded and snapped into place. I was then given six strokes of the belt over the shorts.
81. The others did not receive any punishment as they were authorised to be in Camelon.
82. It was not the only time I was to receive this punishment. There was a time when [REDACTED] was caught taking some cigarette ends from the staff room. I was sent to GKS [REDACTED]'s office and he told me that [REDACTED] had told them I had coerced him to get the cigarette ends. I did not know anything about it, but that made no difference to GKS [REDACTED]. Once more I was held down by Mr GPN [REDACTED] and given six of the belt over the same shorts, by GKS [REDACTED]. This was the second occasion in four days I was belted. He held me down by pressing his knuckles into my kidneys.
83. Each time I received this punishment with the snake, it was six strokes. My backside was covered each time in purple bruises. I was never given any medication for this, despite the pain it caused. I would have to sleep on my stomach because of the pain. It was not always on my backside, sometimes he may have missed that area and caught me on the lower back. That added to the pain as my trousers would then rub against that area and cause more pain.

84. Some of the other reasons to be given the belt would be if we were caught smoking, having run away and sometimes people may have broken into the canteen for extra food.
85. The only people who were authorised to administer the belting on the backside was Mr ^{GKF} or ^{GKS}.
86. There was one evening we were sitting watching television when Mr ^{GPN} started arguing with me, over something small. He then lashed out and hit me across the face causing my nose to bleed. On top of this he told he was giving me two points as a punishment and then sent me to my bed early.
87. During my time in Balrossie I did suffer from a lisp and had difficulties with the letter "S". ^{GKR}, my teacher, thought it would be funny if he got me to say the date out loud to everyone in the classroom. The problem was the date was 6/6/66. From then on they were calling me ^{GKD}, after the ^{GKD}. When it came to my birthday the boys would sing Happy Birthday but would sing it with a lisp. I could not show how much this was upsetting me in case they did it even more. Inside I was ripped to bits.
88. While I was at Balrossie there was an incident I wanted to tell the Inquiry about relating to one of the boys ^{GKD}. During the summer holiday either 1965 or 1966 some students were providing cover for some staff. One of the students had been talking with ^{GKD} and another boy and gave the boys a cigarette. Later that day one of the staff smelt the cigarettes on them and both were given the belt and six weeks detention.
89. Both boys thought the punishment was unwarranted and absconded from the school. While they were away from the school ^{GKD} had climbed onto a factory roof and fell through it. He died from his injuries.
90. We were all taken into the gym hall and told that ^{GKD} had died. When we were told about this I reported what happened to ^{GKS}. He got hold of the student and in his office, told me to repeat what I had reported. After that meeting I never saw the student again. A few days later ^{GKS} and Mr ^{GKF} took me to their

office. In the office they started shouting and swearing at me, telling me not to say anything about what happened. I was terrified by the manner they were shouting and screaming at me. They were right in my face and I could feel them spitting on my face. They told me that if I was to tell anyone, like the police, I would be in serious trouble.

91. I knew the punishment [REDACTED] received was wrong. Had [REDACTED] not been punished in this manner he would not have absconded and would not have fallen from that roof. There were never any visits from the police regarding [REDACTED]'s death. I never told anyone about this incident, until about three or four weeks ago when I told my son. It has eaten away at me all my life.
92. Although [REDACTED]'s parents may have passed away he may have siblings who would want to know the correct background to his death.

Reporting of abuse at Balrossie School, Kilmacolm

93. As far as the abuse within the school is concerned I never reported any of that as I was always too scared because of any repercussions. With regards to what happened to [REDACTED] I did try to tell staff about that, but they just covered it up and threatened me.

Leaving Balrossie School, Kilmacolm

94. When it came to [REDACTED] reaching fifteen years of age he left Balrossie. He went to live and work on a farm in Kilmacolm. He was treated the same as me throughout our time at Balrossie, but as I have said we never discussed it.
95. Prior to leaving Balrossie I was aware of Quarrier's Village and when I was fourteen I had asked the staff if there was any way I could be sent there. This request was refused and ^{GKS} [REDACTED] told me I was to be held there until they decided I was allowed to leave. I had no incentive to make any improvements as there was no possibility of getting out. I decided I was just going to do what I liked. ^{GKS} [REDACTED]

would still ask me to call him "Sir". I just replied "and when did you get knighted". Needless to say I got points for that.

96. When it came to my time to leave, at fifteen, I was sitting in GKR's class. GKG shouted in me to come out. He took me to the school office and told me that I was being let out. He told me they had got me a job.
97. I did not leave that night as I still played football for the local Boys' Brigade team. I had to stay the Friday night so I would be able to play for them on the Saturday morning.
98. The job was at carpet factory. I also left the home and went to stay with mums friend. Jack Ferguson had negotiated with that I would give her fifty shillings from my wages for rent. As soon as I moved in she changed that and took my whole wage packet. She then returned ten shillings to me, which was to cover my bus fares and any food I might need at work.
99. When I worked at the carpet factory my jeans were being worn out from the carpet backing. I had to mend them by using black tape to wrap around the legs. I asked her for money to get new jeans but she wanted me to ask Balrossie to give me a new pair. I tried telling her she was getting my wages and she should give me new clothes. She said she had her own children to look after. I was with her from late until about that year.
100. My brothers were working on the shows (funfair) and they told me that what she was doing was wrong. I decided that this was not for me and made my way to Bognor. When I arrived in Bognor I went to my mum's door but she did not want me there. She phoned the police and I had to leave. I had nowhere else to go to and returned to Paisley.
101. I ended up walking the streets and was picked up by the police. It was arranged that I would go back to Balrossie. Jack Ferguson came to pick me up. I stayed for a couple of months but nothing happened while I was there on this occasion. At the end of my time they gave me the train fare to go through to Edinburgh, but no other money. I was

walking the streets and even tried to see if the police at the station in the High Street could give me any money.

Life after being in care

102. I managed to get some casual work and slept in the Greyfriars Hotel, which was for the homeless at that time. When I stayed there I got some work at the cement works at Dunbar. They used Greyfriars and another homeless shelter at 75 Grassmarket to provide the casual labour. The night watchman at Greyfriars, I can't remember his name, knew my dad and for a while he took me under his wing. He helped stop some of the older Irish labourers and the older down and outs picking on me.
103. I managed to get a job with the shows when they were based at the Waverley Market. They were based there for the winter season. The vans and lorries they travelled the country in were parked down by Portobello. I left Greyfriars and each night had to walk to Portobello to get somewhere to sleep in one of the lorries. About April time when the season finished I decided to stay and travelled the country with them. Wherever we stopped there was always someone in the local area who would help put us up. It was not until I was about nineteen or twenty that I got my own place.
104. I met a girl, [REDACTED], and she fell pregnant. At that time I had a job working as a coalman. My son [REDACTED] was born and a couple of years later we had my daughter [REDACTED]. My father in law was always insisting my son go to his house after school. When I came home from work I was asking where he was. When I got told what was happening I told my wife to get home to our house. My father in law never accepted me and would tell [REDACTED] that I was not worth anything. That relationship did not work out. As soon as I was divorced my wife changed their names to her maiden name. I have no contact with [REDACTED], who now lives in Australia and I have no contact with [REDACTED].
105. On my birthday in 1976 I met my son [REDACTED]'s mum, [REDACTED], who was a teacher. [REDACTED] was born in 1980. We moved to Stranraer but we were never accepted there and always treated as outsiders. At that time I was working on the roads laying tarmac.

106. My brother [REDACTED] came to my door out of the blue saying he was working as a window cleaner. In December 1979 [REDACTED] asked me to go into business with him as a window cleaner.
107. [REDACTED] and I later broke up and in 2002 I went back to Stranraer. In 2004 I left Stranraer and returned to England and have lived in my bungalow ever since.
108. Over the years I got on okay with my brother [REDACTED] but any relationships with my other two brothers deteriorated. [REDACTED] would only get in touch if he needed money to get out of Barlinnie. [REDACTED] ended up moving to Perth. He was disabled after being involved in an accident with a [REDACTED]. In 1988 [REDACTED] died when he was at [REDACTED]'s house and [REDACTED] died in in 2004 at Perth Royal Infirmary. Both of their deaths, like my dad in 1968 and mum in 1974 were due to alcohol issues. I have no contact with [REDACTED] at this time and don't know what he is doing.
109. Throughout my life I never received any love and affection, either from my mother or father. I have always made sure my son [REDACTED] knows how much he is loved. He also knows that if he has something to say, I am always available to listen.
110. In July 1998 I went back to Balrossie to see what it was like. I was aware that [REDACTED] GJF [REDACTED] stayed nearby. I tried to make contact with him, to thank him but he was out that day playing golf.

Impact

111. I still feel institutionalised to this day. If I was to be put in an old people's home I would not feel out of place. That is one way how those five years have affected me. Balrossie was run under absolute fear for all who stayed there.
112. I have no time for people in authority. I still cannot speak to or look a police officer in the eye.

113. Since my time at Balrossie I was made to feel I don't belong anywhere. There were times when my son [REDACTED] would ask where home is and I would say to him I don't have a home. There was never any encouragement from the staff at Balrossie and GKS [REDACTED] would often say to me that the only thing I would do later in life was spend most of it in Prison.
114. I don't have any real friends, other than a lady who used to be my neighbour. We keep in touch, but other than her I don't have anyone. I do have acquaintances, but not friends. The only family I have is [REDACTED] and his family.
115. I have suffered from flashbacks and most of them are me being ridiculed by the staff. The punishments I learned to live with but the ridicule was the worst thing.
116. It was not until I was working that I felt I had some meaning to my life. Even when I was a goalkeeper I felt different as I had to wear a different top from the rest of the team. They were in blue, while I wore yellow.
117. I have never had a proper secondary education. I still have difficulty with spelling, which does have an effect on my life. Sometimes I have had to get in touch with [REDACTED] just to help with spell something. He helps me with all the main correspondence I receive.

Reporting of Abuse

118. I have never reported any of the abuse to the police or any other agency. The first body of people I have told is the Inquiry. Even my son [REDACTED] did not know all the details.

Records

119. I am trying to get hold of my records and Sandra Toyer from Well Being Scotland is helping me.

Lessons to be learned

120. In my opinion the staff at Balrossie were judge, jury and executioner. They had so much power as to who you could go home to visit, how much treats you could have and punish you in big ways for small things. I find it hard to understand how some of the staff could treat us so bad but at the end of the day they would go back to their own family and treat them differently.

Other information

121. I was on [REDACTED] some time ago and saw there was an item put up by a former pupil [REDACTED]. He was writing things about some of the teachers at Balrossie. One of the things he alleged was that GJF [REDACTED] had kids visit him in his room under the pretext of polishing his shoes. [REDACTED] was suggesting that GJF [REDACTED] was abusing the children. He also made allegations about other teachers, not named, being involved in sexually abusing boys at the school. I have no specifics, just those rumours.
122. I know some former residents have gone to the police. They have been told that all the staff are believed to have died. I saw from the boy on [REDACTED] that he put up the current phone number and address of GJF [REDACTED]. So he must still be alive and the police have not been entirely truthful.
123. I saw an article in Sky News about the investigations being carried out by the Inquiry. I came forward as I wanted the truth about what happened to [REDACTED] to be told. It was not for any financial reasons, only to see justice for [REDACTED].
124. I would like the Inquiry to cause investigations to be made into the death of [REDACTED] and give the family the truth about the circumstances around him being out, when he died.
125. I would like to have the staff at Balrossie provide an apology for all the things they did to us as kids. I know that is unlikely as they will have more than likely passed away.

126. Through the Inquiry I was put in touch with Future Pathways and they are helping me with some counselling. They have put me in touch with a psychologist and I have been speaking with her for two or three months. It has been a great help to me, to be able to speak to her, and get things out in the open. We don't just talk about my time I care but about many other subjects.
127. I have received a payment from the Scottish Government for my time in care and the abuse that I suffered. Part of the agreement that came with the money was that I had to use the money right away. I bought a car, which I rarely use. [REDACTED] has probably driven it more than me.
128. 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.....GKD.....

Dated.....17 October 2021.....