

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

GDF [REDACTED]

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is GDF [REDACTED]. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1967. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in Glasgow. I lived with my mother, my father and my siblings. My mum's name was [REDACTED] and my dad's name was [REDACTED]. My oldest sister, [REDACTED], is six years older than me, [REDACTED] is three years older than me and my brother [REDACTED] is three and a half years younger than me. My older sisters didn't really bother with me, but I got on really well with my wee brother.
3. Life was horrendous at home. I had a horrible mother. My oldest sister lives in Birmingham. She's disabled now. I went down to Birmingham and brought her up to Glasgow when I moved into my house three years ago. I told her that things were starting to come out and I was remembering things. She started talking about our childhoods. She asked me when I could remember things with my mum. I told her it was probably when my wee brother was born. I was three and a half when he was born. I can remember things vividly after that. She told me that it started long before that. [REDACTED] was seven when I was born. When I was a baby, she caught my mum trying to smother me. My mum didn't want me. [REDACTED] told me that I used to get left outside in the pram in all weathers. My mum was hoping that I'd either die or someone would take me.

4. I liked school because it was an escape. The first school I went to was St. Mary's Primary School for primary one, two and three. We then moved and I went to St. Jude's Primary School, Barlanark for primary four to seven. I don't think many days went by when I didn't get the belt. I was used to it. I went to St. Andrew's Secondary School in Carntyne. The school said I was disruptive because I was always getting the belt. I was just acting out. I got the belt for cheek and talking back. I hated authority. I was going to school to get away from that, so I was cheeky.
5. I was sent to a psychologist in primary four or five, but I never said anything about what was happening. They said I was hyperactive, probably what they call attention deficit hyperactivity disorder nowadays. That's what they said because I never told them anything, not at that age. Not long after I started at secondary school, I started to notice that my normal, what I thought was normal, wasn't normal. I got the belt every single day, as far as I can remember. I started making plans to get away. I remember that somebody in the year before me had disappeared from school for refusing something or other. The person never came back and went into care. To me, at the time, that sounded like a good idea.
6. The belt was nothing to me, but on this particular occasion I refused to take the belt. I was orchestrating getting away from my mother. I was suspended from school. I think it was for two weeks initially, then there was another meeting and I still refused to take the belt. I got suspended again. There were various meetings with the school and my mother, who wasn't too keen on me being in the house. I still refused to take the belt. Eventually, they said that I'd just be expelled. I thought it was all working to plan.
7. I was allocated a social worker because I was refusing the belt. She's the only one whose name I can remember. Her name was Gillian Coates. I was taken to a Children's Panel. I never told them anything either. I sat there and let my mother tell all her lies. She made me out to be a terrible person and unruly and all the rest of it. I just sat there and nodded. I thought it meant that I was going to get out of there. I thought that if I argued the point, I'd just end up being sent home. So I agreed with everything so I could get out of there. The Children's Panel sent me to Robertson, to assess me and see what was to be done.

Roberton Assessment Centre, Roberton Terrace, Glasgow

8. I went into Roberton when I was thirteen. I was there for three or four weeks. Roberton

Secondary Institutions - to be published later



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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Leaving Roberton

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Secondary Institutions - I presume that the staff discovered I wasn't the type of person that I'd been made out to be because they said I could go home before moving on. I still hadn't said anything about my mother. I was back at home for about five weeks.

16.

My social worker told me that she had three places to show me. St. Euphrasia's was the first. I wasn't going to see the other places until a bit later. When I visited St. Euphrasia's, I met ^{SNR}, Sister ^{GWJ}. We were met where we parked at the car park, at the end of a big long drive. one of the residents, showed me all around and made it sound amazing. She sold it to me. I found myself doing that later

on down the line as well. It was just me and [REDACTED]. She showed me the living areas, the upstairs areas and the kid-on school area. I said I wouldn't be going to that school because I'd been told I could go to outside school. She just said, "Oh, alright." She knew that I wasn't going to outside school, but she never said anything.

17. Every single door was locked. I asked what that was about and she told me it was for our safety. It was like watching a television programme about prisons, every single door was locked. Compared to Robertson, it was a much bigger place. The dormitories looked like hospital wards. But [REDACTED] sold it to me. I was asking different things because of what I'd been used to in Robertson. I'd been taken out on trips, shopping and to the pictures. She said that kind of thing happened all the time in St. Euphrasia's. I thought it was going to be the same as Robertson. I had it in my head that I was taking the first place anyway. At the end of the visit, I told the social worker that I didn't need to see the other places.
18. I think I started at St. Euphrasia's about two weeks after my visit. It wasn't long. My social worker came to collect me and took me there.

St. Euphrasia's, Bishopton

19. I was still thirteen when I went to St. Euphrasia's. It was [REDACTED]. There was a big, long driveway leading up to the home. It was long, winding and tree-lined. It looked lovely. It was off a country road. There was a bus stop at the top of the driveway. There was a big long corridor when you went in. There was no reception desk or anything. The nuns stayed on the right-hand side and we stayed on the left-hand side.
20. I know from speaking to other people that it used to be almost all nuns who worked at St. Euphrasia's. When I went to St. Euphrasia's there were only a few nuns working there. They all still stayed there, but they were in a different part of the home from us. Sister ^{GWJ} [REDACTED] was ^{SNR} [REDACTED] and Sister ^{GWK} [REDACTED] was the house nun for my group. I met people who had been at St. Euphrasia's before me and it had been almost all nuns working there. There was one member of staff who stayed overnight. I can't

remember her name, but she stayed in the village. There were two civilian members of staff for our house group and Sister ^{GWK} [REDACTED]. We were the only house group that had a nun. One of the members of staff, Mrs Smith, was nice. She was part-time so we didn't see her a lot. I'll call the other member of staff ^{GWL} [REDACTED] because I don't want to give her full name. One would have the morning shift until we were carted off to the pretend school. I think she then went home, but was there when we got back around 4 o'clock.

21. There were four house groups. I can only remember the name of three of them, St. Claire, St. Margaret and St. Goretti. We lived in our house groups, but it wasn't a house. There was a big door. You went in and there was a corridor. On the right-hand side there was a kitchen and dining room. Straight ahead was the living room part. It was really old-fashioned. The dormitories were upstairs. There were about fourteen of us in the house group. All the house groups had about the same number of girls in them. The dormitory was split into different sides, although it wasn't that big. Half of us were on one side and half on the other side. You could go between them, but the door was usually locked.
22. There were lots of different buildings, but they were all joined up. The school was within the building. I think the school had a downstairs and an upstairs. It was at the back of the building, nearer the fields. We were surrounded by fields and farm land.

Routine at St. Euphrasia's

Mornings and bedtime

23. The dormitories were freezing cold all year round. They were like old-style hospital wards. We had curtains round our beds. It put me in mind of hospitals. It was plain and cold. There were wee, rickety, metal windows that only opened about an inch. Beside the bed we had a cabinet to keep our things in and a sink. The door would be locked to get out into the main corridor, where the baths and things were. There was a toilet in the dormitory, shared between us all.

24. There was one person on shift overnight. We were locked in, so I don't know where she went during the night. I didn't think about it at the time, but if there had been a fire we'd all have been in trouble. The first time I needed someone during the night, I was told to go back to my bed by the member of staff who worked overnight. She was one of the nice ones, but she said I had to go back to my bed because she was the only person working. Looking back, I can understand it. She might have been afraid to open the door because there were ten or twelve of us who might jump her. The door never got opened, no matter what you said. We'd just be told to go back to our beds and the staff would be in in the morning. After that, I just dealt with any problems myself.
25. The staff member who was in overnight woke us up before the other staff came in at 8 o'clock. That woman stayed in the village, but I can't remember her name. She was alright. She would get us up and tell us to get ready and be down the stairs for 8. There was always somebody on breakfast duty. I was on that quite a lot. If you were on breakfast duty, the member of staff in the corridor would take you downstairs at 7.30 and lock you in. You had to do breakfast for everybody.

Mealtimes / Food

26. Breakfast was always two slices of toast and a boiled egg. It never varied, not even at weekends. On Monday to Thursday, a lady from the village came in and made the dinners. A lot of people went home for the weekend. If you were kept in, you were with a civilian member of staff for the whole weekend and she would do the cooking. We couldn't eat between meals because the food was locked away. We ate when we were told to eat.
27. The food wasn't very nice. It was cheap, nasty, processed stuff. I remember when it was burger day. They weren't very nice but they were edible. You knew you were going to be hungry that night because that was all you got, that one burger on a bun. You were hungry going to bed. I was hungry all the time. The best eating I ever did was when I wasn't there, when I was on the run.

28. I've always been fussy. Food was put down to me time and time again and I was told to eat it. I was told that I was lucky I was being fed. If I didn't eat the lunch, I'd get it again for my dinner, then my breakfast, then my lunch, then my dinner. It would go on for days, until it got to the point where they realised they couldn't force me to eat it because it would make me unwell. The thing that sticks in my mind was gammon steak. I quite like it now but I hated it then. It would be put down to me until it had turned itself into leather could be used as a doorstep.

Washing / bathing

29. The baths were out in the big corridor, in the dormitory area upstairs. I think we all shared the baths. There weren't that many of them. I think there were two lots of bathrooms with two or three baths in each bit. I don't remember there being any showers. I'll never forget the baths because I spent enough time getting put into cold ones.
30. The baths were open so you didn't have any privacy. Separate house groups had baths at separate times. We were never in at the same time as another house group. The baths were deep, old-fashioned things. The staff weren't supervising the whole time. They were away talking, but they'd come in and check. We got clean bath water, but the water was never very warm. It was always lukewarm.

Clothing / uniform

31. All of the house groups wore a colour-coded uniform. St. Claire's was brown, St. Margaret's was blue and I can't remember the fourth. Mine was green, which is probably why I don't like wearing green clothes. We wore a green skirt and a green blouse with Jesus sandals. We washed our clothes in the sink, in the dormitory.

School

32. The only time we mixed with the other house groups was during the day at the "Mickey Mouse" school, apart from leisure time on Monday night. The school was in the

building. I'd just started second year of secondary school when I went to St. Euphrasia's. I wanted to do exams. The teachers at my previous school had told me I would get to do all these exams and that I'd pass them, because I was clever. The schooling reminded me of being in primary school. It was primary two and three level. I was secondary school age, but it was basic primary school stuff.

33. When I went to visit St. Euphrasia's, Sister ^{GWJ} told me that I could go out to school. She had even told me the name of the school. She told me I'd get the bus from outside and the bus stop was right at the gate. She told me the number of the bus and what time it came in the morning and everything. I had no reason to disbelieve that when I got there, I'd be going out for school. It was totally sold to me. I was only in St. Euphrasia's for a day when I was told that I wouldn't be going out for school. I was asking if I'd be starting at school the next week because I'd been told I could go to school in Greenock. I was told that nobody went out for school. I wasn't in there for long when I realised why nobody was getting out to go to school. It was in case anybody told. It didn't take me long to work that out.
34. The nuns didn't teach in the school. It was people who came in. I can only remember two of the teachers, who I liked. One did sewing and hairdressing, but I can't remember her name. She lived in the village. There was another woman who looked ancient to me at the time. She taught art. She also taught me to play the piano. The academic subjects were taught at primary school level.
35. In the summer, we were allowed out on the grounds for games. It was part of school. I remember tennis, although there were no tennis courts. I remember one occasion when I was being my usual obtuse, horrible person. They'd annoyed me for some reason and I was being awkward. I was refusing to play and I was purposefully not helping. We were playing against the other house group and I was not hitting the ball back. That resulted in a beating.
36. We didn't get outside often. Mostly, the games were in the hall. That was where I learned how to play badminton and volleyball. I spent more time outside when I was running away than I ever did officially.

Chores

37. After breakfast, we did our chores, which included cleaning the kitchen, the bathroom, the hall and the living room. We had to do that before school, every day. The civilian member of staff on duty or the nun checked whether we'd done our chores. We had to dust, polish and Hoover the living room. In the hall, dining and kitchen area, there was marble-effect flooring that had to be waxed and buffed. It was a punishment to be on that task. We used a big, heavy thing on the end of a pole to wax the floors. It weighed a tonne. You could be there for three weeks in a row, never sleeping, and it was never going to be shiny.

Leisure time

38. On a Monday night, we mixed with the other house groups in the big hall, which was called the recreation hall. It was downstairs, at the back of the building. If you were good, you were allowed to go to that. There were daft games, like wheelbarrows.

Trips / Holidays

39. We never went to the pictures or on any holidays. I'd been promised trips and holidays when I visited St. Euphrasia's, but I only remember leaving the place twice. We went to Cardross for a disco on two occasions. It was a mixed home. It looked like heaven compared to St. Euphrasia's. I've since learned it wasn't, but coming from St. Euphrasia's it looked better than where we were. They had monthly discos at Cardross.

Birthdays and Christmas

40. I went shopping once, not long after I'd gone in. It was leading up to my birthday and they bought me a pair of trainers and a pair of jeans for my birthday. That was the only thing I was ever bought the whole time that I was in there. I was taken out by the civilian member of staff GWL. I didn't get a birthday card. I don't remember anything about being there over Christmas.

Religious instruction

41. We had to go to Mass on a Friday morning. It was on the grounds. We went with all the retired nuns who lived there as well. There were people there who weren't Catholic, but we had no choice whether to go to Mass. I was religious when I had to be but not after I left St. Euphrasia's.

Visits / Inspections

42. I got a couple of visits from my dad and his sister, who I looked on as my mother. They brought my brother once. The visits took place in the dining room in the house group. I don't remember anybody else being there. We sat around the big long table in the dining room. I'd already been in there for months because we weren't allowed visitors for the first six months. We were told that we weren't allowed visitors in order to acclimatise to the place and get used to it. Sister **GWJ** told me that on the day I visited St. Euphrasia's. She said I wasn't allowed visitors because I'd just want to go home with them.
43. I don't remember seeing Gillian Coates again after I told her to get me out of St. Euphrasia's. I had another two social workers after that and I think I saw each of them once. I think they were welfare visits. The last social worker was a man called Terry O'Brien. He was alright. They'd ask how I was doing and I'd say, "Everything's great." I'd learned my lesson after the first time. I was reminded before each social work and family visit, "Just remember what will happen to you if you say anything." Sister **GWK** and **GWL** would say that to me.
44. I didn't go back to the Children's Panel, but there were review meetings, which took place in there. My social worker would be there along with my mother and the staff that worked with me. I'd be called in at the end of it. They would tell me what had been discussed and that I was doing really well, apart from being disruptive. They would ask me what my thoughts were and I would say that I was fine and the place was brilliant. I had been warned beforehand. If there were inspections, they happened without me

knowing about them. If I had been spoken to during inspections, I probably would have been daft enough to say what was really happening.

45. If you behaved yourself during the week, you got home for the weekend. I went home as little as possible. I made sure I was on punishment. I decided that what was happening in St. Euphrasia's was still better than going home.

Healthcare

46. If you were ill, you just had to suffer it. I only made one visit to a hospital. It was because one of my cuts had become infected. I know it was in the West End of Glasgow, so I think it was the Western General Hospital. I got antibiotics. When I was there, they did blood tests. They discovered that I had some allergies. They discovered I was allergic to nuts and cheese. I'd never eaten nuts or cheese before, so I didn't know. That was about the one good thing that came out of my being at St. Euphrasia's.
47. I told the staff at the hospital that [REDACTED]. I just said that I'd felt like doing it. I'm guessing they might have asked me more questions about St. Euphrasia's, but I'd already learned my lesson not to say anything. I started self-harming not long after I went into St. Euphrasia's. I think I'd been there for about three months. The social workers knew that I was self-harming. At social work reviews, the nuns and the civilian staff at St. Euphrasia's told them that I was doing it for attention.

Personal possessions

48. I didn't have much growing up because my mum never got me anything. I had a bible, which had been given to me at St. Euphrasia's. I wasn't allowed any other books because they were sinful. I didn't have anything else to look at or play with. It was a dire, horrible place.

Other house groups

49. Friendships weren't encouraged, especially with girls from other house groups. I think things were different in different houses. I got that impression from talking to other girls during the school day. Unless they were telling lies, they made it sound like their house groups were the way I had been told St. Euphrasia's would be, before I went in. I don't know why our house group was so bad and whether it was because we were the only house that had a nun. Unless they were lying, their house groups seemed to be alright. The civilian staff were allocated to houses.

Bed Wetting

50. I think all the girls wet the bed at some stage, but we slept in it for the rest of the week. We got a cold bath if we made a mess in the bed. We might be beaten as well. Eventually, it got to the point where we didn't say. We knew we'd be sleeping in it for the rest of the week anyway, so at least it avoided the cold bath.

Running away

51. I ran away loads. There was hardly a week that went by when I didn't run away. The windows on the ground floor of the house group opened inwards. They only opened a little, but I was quite wee and skinny and I was able to get out. That was how I escaped most of the time. The second time we went to a disco at Cardross, I ran away. Much of the time I ran away with my friend, [REDACTED]. Her house group was better than mine. She did get taken on trips and things like that, but she just liked the buzz of running away.
52. One time, [REDACTED] and I hadn't long been taken back to St. Euphrasia's after running away. They thought that they would humiliate us. We were told that we had to go to school in our pyjamas and Jesus sandals. We had sports in the hall. There were fire escapes in the hall. I looked at it and she looked at it and it was just like a nod. They thought there was no way that we'd run away because we were in our pyjamas, but we did. We burst out that door and went down the back hill, near the fields. Nobody

chased us. I think they thought that we'd sit out for a wee while and then come back in, but we didn't.

53. We went down onto the M8. We were walking along the motorway, heading to Glasgow, thumbing it. A car stopped and it was a female in a two door car. The lady asked us where we were going and we told her we were going to Glasgow. I don't know what we thought we were going to do when we got there, in our pyjamas. We were in the back seat and we couldn't get out. That was when she told us that she was a senior social worker. She said she was taking us to India Street, which was where social work was based. She took us there and we were there for hours and hours. I told her what was going on at St. Euphrasia's as well because she was a senior social worker. However, later on that day we were taken back. I was fourteen.

54. It was nearly always social workers who took us back. I think they were duty social workers. I remember they always came in a black car. If it wasn't them, it was the police. They asked why we were running away, but I only told them one time. Usually when we were taken back to the home, it would be after eight o'clock. The night shift person was there.

55. One of the times I ran away, I ran to Robertson. I found that in my notes. I turned up there with [REDACTED]. I don't remember that. They let us stay overnight and then they took us back in the morning. I think that's why I don't remember it

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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they took me back.

Discipline

56. We'd be made to wax and polish the floors as a punishment. We'd be told it wasn't right and kept there all day. Sometimes, we didn't get sent to school because we had to spend the whole day waxing the floor. That happened to me loads of times. I never learned my lesson from getting the belt at school. I still had lots of back chat. Every time I was brought back after running away, I'd be kept in there for a whole day,

sometimes two, before I was allowed to go back to their hopeless school. I'd be locked in the house group all day, on my own.

57. If I was brought back after running away and it was night time, I'd be put in the cupboard in the house group so as not to disturb everybody. It was a big cupboard with two parts to it. One part was where the staff hung their coats and the other part was where the food was stored. If I was brought back in the middle of the night, that's where I'd be put until the morning. The door was locked and I'd be there till morning, no light, no toilet, no blanket, nothing. It was at most six feet by six and it was pitch black. The light switch was on the outside and it was locked. To this day, I'm still scared of the dark. If I was brought back during the day, I was put in the cold bath and beaten by GWL
58. Another punishment was to turn the other girls against you by telling them that they weren't going to get this or that because of me. The staff let the girls do their work for them. I was never really friendly with anybody in my house group because of that. I wasn't the only one that happened to, but I was the most cheeky. We didn't get very much anyway, but whatever privilege there was would be taken off them and they'd be told it was all my fault. I knew what was going to happen when I went upstairs to the dormitories. The staff knew what was happening because they would say things and you could tell by the atmosphere. Girls would say things like, "You're getting it when we go up the stairs because it's your fault we're not getting the telly for the rest of the week."
59. We were given points for good behaviour. We had to score eighty points to be allowed home for the weekend. You lost every one of your points immediately for running away. Other points would be deducted for backchat or not doing your chores right. The civilian staff member GWL worked three weekends and Mrs Smith did one weekend every month. I was only kept in once when it was Mrs Smith's weekend. It was a good weekend. She took me out in the car and we went out for food. I think I'd ran away so I lost all my points. I didn't want to go home. I wasn't the only one who didn't want to go home. Some people did want to go home and they'd be gutted if they did something stupid and lost their points.

Abuse at St. Euphrasia's

60. There was a lot of bullying at St. Euphrasia's, but they couldn't bully me. [REDACTED] was the staff member called [GWL] favourite when I first went in. She was a bit of a bully, but she got away with everything. I wasn't scared of her. I wasn't scared of anybody. She couldn't bully me, but I couldn't do a lot against a group. [REDACTED] was probably asked by [GWL] to rally the rest of them. I couldn't see Mrs Smith doing that because she was nice.
61. If the girls said I was going to get it in the dormitory, it was one wee person against the rest of them. They would beat me but it didn't bother me. They beat me with their fists and kicked me. I would be standing up until they got me down. I couldn't stand up for long. I would go into the foetal position. I still sleep in that position. I was used to it at home. I used to go into that position because of my mum as well, so it was nothing different for me. They would punch me and pull me hair. The staff would witness the beatings, especially if it happened downstairs in the house group. I don't remember Mrs Smith being there. I really don't think she would have let it happen [GWL] was definitely there and the nuns were there. The nuns seemed to enjoy it. The beatings came to an end when the girls got fed up with it. They were trying to break me, but I wouldn't give them the pleasure.
62. I was always told as a child that I was my own worst enemy and that I should learn when to stop. I was defiant. At that age, I thought they wouldn't break me and I would break them.
63. The nuns weren't that physical at St. Euphrasia's. I might have got a slap from Sister [GWK], but it was more mental abuse with her. She would talk about how horrible a person you were and tell you that you were a sinner. I knew I didn't like mirrors. I've been getting all these flashbacks recently and it came back to me why I don't like mirrors. We were told that we were sinners and that we were ugly. We were told that only nasty, horrible, evil people look in mirrors. Sister [GWK] and Sister [GWJ] both said things like that. I still don't have mirrors in the house. Either the day I arrived or the very next day, Sister [GWK] told me that I was in there because nobody wanted me, I was a horrible person and society didn't want me. She would say that it

was only sinners in St. Euphrasia's, bad people who would spend the rest of their lives alone. She wasn't wrong about that, but that's through choice.

64. The physical abuse started quite quickly. I hadn't been in there very long, probably for about a week, when **GWL** started to beat me. I was giving back chat and I said the place wasn't what I'd been told it would be and said that I'd be complaining about things. I said I'd be getting out of there **GWL** would always remind me that I was doing it to myself because the reason for the beatings was always back chat or cheek. I knew the consequences, but I still did it. The beatings were nasty with **GWL** but they were never to the face. She was like a big man and she would punch me everywhere, except for the face. I don't know what that was all about because bruises show up in other places. It was all punches, unless she was pulling me by the hair. I had shoulder length hair then. I just got bruises normally, rather than any other injuries.
65. The beatings mostly took place in the house group. There was one time when I must have been really bad **GWL** was called to come up from the village, which is why I think the civilian staff must have gone home during the day. I got dragged by the hair from the school part of the building to the house part of the building. After I came out of St. Euphrasia's, **██████** told me that her mother had been visiting that day. She had seen me getting dragged along the corridor. I don't know why she didn't say something or report it if she saw that happening, but she didn't. When I was taken back to the house group, I got a good beating in the cupboard.
66. The beatings were nearly daily. I was always getting it because I was my own worst enemy. The cupboard was **GWL** favourite place for beatings. They mostly happened in there. You knew that if someone was getting taken in there, it wasn't for anything nice. It was her place. I saw other people being taken into the cupboard. I don't know if she was doing other things to other people because nobody talked about it. You just knew that they were getting a doing. You could hear it. The cupboard was only a few steps away from the living room. You could hear people crying.
67. If we wet the bed, we'd be put in a cold bath and beaten. We soon learned not to tell them. They'd just make us sleep in it anyway. When we had our period, we were

called, "Dirty," by the nuns. We didn't get sanitary towels and we'd be put in a cold bath if we made a mess. They expected us to use our socks as sanitary towels. We washed them ourselves in the sink in the dormitory. The cold bath punishment involved being stripped by **GWL** and held down in a cold bath. I was then scrubbed **GWL** was always on her own when that happened. Sometimes, she would submerge your head in it if she wanted to frighten you.

68. If you went home for the weekend, the staff picked you up in their minibus at Anderston Bus Station. It was pitch black on the country roads and **GWL** would turn the headlights off. She knew the roads because she lived out there, but she was driving a minibus at sixty miles per hour. Things could have popped out at any moment. She thought that was funny because we'd all be screaming. She was twisted.
69. After I reported what was happening to my social worker, Gillian Coates **GWL** beat me. I always knew by **GWL** face when she came storming in. She'd point her finger and say, "You, now. Move." To this day, I hate anybody pointing at me. I never, ever went with **GWL** willingly. She had to drag me into the cupboard. With every hit she would say, "So we do this, do we?", wham, "And we also do that do we?", wham. I knew that she'd been told everything that I said to Gillian Coates because she repeated everything that I had said. She said, "And where did you think it was going to get you? They're just like us, you know. They think the same way as us. You're the dregs of society."
70. The sexual abuse didn't start till later on. **██████████** was **GWL** favourite. When she left, I discovered that she must have been getting sexually abused before me. After **██████████** left, I was the favourite unless I said anything. I would be kept back at the weekend and it would just be me and her. It started when I was fourteen. The sexual abuse happened mostly in the cupboard, but also in other parts of the house. She used to take **██████████** down to her house in the village. She never did that with me, although I knew where her house was. **██** I don't know whether I feel good or bad that I wasn't taken there. Am I not as good as **██████████** because I never got taken there, or the opposite? I don't know what to make of that. It's not that I've repressed it because I think I'd remember it.

71. I'm unable to talk about the sexual abuse. I don't find it easy because of the shame and the fact that it was a female. I've yet to meet anybody else who was sexually abused by a female. It happened all the time until I left. I had been naughty so I wouldn't be sent home at the weekend. I started to follow all the rules and do everything that they wanted so that I would score enough points to be allowed out for the weekend. **GWL** would always find something that stopped me from going home for the weekend. It was always when it was her weekends. You needed eighty points to go home for the weekend. After **██████** left, I always seemed to score 79. I was usually the only one from my house group kept at St. Euphrasia's for the weekend.

Reporting of abuse at St. Euphrasia's

72. Gillian Coates came to do a welfare visit when I'd only been in St. Euphrasia's two or three weeks. I told her that she needed to get me out of there and that I'd made a big mistake. I told her what they were doing. I told her about the beatings, the cold baths and the verbal abuse. She sat there and listened to everything and made her notes. She said she'd get me out of there. As I soon found out, not long after that she left. She told the staff what I'd said. It got a lot worse after that. I didn't tell again, until I told the police.
73. As an adult, I don't believe for one minute that social work didn't know what was going on in there. I wouldn't have been the only person in the whole history of that place who told their social worker what was happening. By the laws of probability, they must have known.
74. One of the times **██████** and I ran away, we were picked up in Glasgow city centre. I hadn't been there that long because I obviously hadn't learned my lesson from telling social work. We were taken to Stewart Street Police Station. I think the police were getting fed up, always having to take us back. They asked us what was going on and why we were always running away. I looked at **██████**. Nothing like that was happening to her, but she told me to tell them. I told them about the beatings, I told them that they withdrew food, I told them that they locked us in six by six cupboards overnight with

no toilet or anything, in the dark. I told the police and the police told the staff what I'd said.

75. Nothing came of it, except that I was informed that the staff knew what I said. That night, I was put straight into the cupboard to save the night staff from having to come out of her bed and take me upstairs. If you were taken back after eight o'clock at night, that's what happened. The next day, I was taken out of the school. The staff informed me that they knew what I had said to the police. I was beaten and told that I should've learned my lesson by now.

Leaving St. Euphrasia's

76. I left St. Euphrasia's when I was fifteen. I believe to this day that my dad never knew anything about what my mum had been doing in the house. My parents were at a review about me, three weeks before I did leave. My dad said he was fed up with the situation and that he wanted me to come home. My mum said she didn't want me back in the house. My dad told her she could leave and that's exactly what happened. I didn't find that out until I was on a rare weekend visit home. I walked in and I just knew something wasn't right. My dad looked tiny. He was sitting, all hunched up. I asked my dad what was happening and he told me that she was gone. It didn't please me. I was so used to St. Euphrasia's at that point. I only had a year to go and I was hardened to it. [REDACTED] and I had made big plans that as soon as we made sixteen, we were off. We were going to go abroad. Right away, I knew those plans were out the window because my mother was away.
77. [REDACTED] did go abroad, but without me. She went to Spain. I felt guilty because my dad was in a state. I couldn't go. I witnessed my father on a daily basis. He loved my mum and it really affected him when she was gone. Me being me, I couldn't leave him because of what he gave up for me. I still call it my curse empathy. My dad was alright. He was very strict, but there was no violence. At the age of eighteen, I still had to be in by ten o'clock. I didn't want to be there, but I was out of St. Euphrasia's, so that was something.

Life after being in care

78. My mum took my wee brother when she left the house. My older sisters had left home and married by the time I left St. Euphrasia's. I didn't go back to school. I was fifteen and there were only five months left of school. I was going to be the dunce because I hadn't had an actual secondary school education since being taken into care, so I refused point blank. Maybe a part of me thought they'd put me away again and then I wouldn't feel guilty about not being at home, but I never got taken into care again.
79. I went to the Douglas Inch Centre which was in the Charing Cross area of Glasgow, at Woodside Terrace. It was a psychology place for children who had been excluded from school and children who had been in care. It was run by a nice man, Doctor **GMX** **GMX**. He went onto be **SNR** at Carstairs. I went there for three days a week until I turned sixteen. Legally, I still had to go somewhere and I was refusing to go to school.
80. I stayed at home with my dad until he died. I was never going to leave him because he was in a state. When I was about eighteen or nineteen, I started to tell him half of what had been going on under his nose. I think I was starting to get resentful at that point. He asked why I had never told him. When my mum went too far, I would threaten to tell my dad what she was doing. From the age of about eight, my mum used to say, "Tell him if you want, but he's not your dad. He just thinks he is. You'll be put out on the street if he finds out that he's not your father. It'll break his heart." He was my father. I was the double of him.
81. My dad passed away when I was twenty. It was just me and him from when I was fifteen until he died. He died of cancer on **GMX** 1988. He was 59. My mum was living in Edinburgh with my brother at the time. She was 47. She came through for the funeral and it was the first time I'd seen her in years. She never sat with us. She sat up at the back. She actually spoke nicely to me. I craved that and I seemed to like that. I went through to visit her a couple of times. My brother was through there and I put up with her.

82. My mum became unwell in November and December of that year. She ended up on oxygen. It was due to smoking and it was called chronic airways disease back then. She was in hospital in Edinburgh and I was still in Glasgow. My brother had turned sixteen at that point and decided he wanted to come back to Glasgow. He came to stay with me. My mother worshipped my brother. He could do no wrong. He didn't go through to the hospital to see her, but I did. My oldest sister lived across the road from her in Edinburgh, but she didn't visit her. I went through to Edinburgh twice a week to see her in that hospital. Nobody else did and nobody else could understand why I was doing it. I didn't even understand why I was doing it until later on I realised that I really just wanted her to say sorry. She died eight months after my dad at the age of 47. I never got my apology.
83. After my father died, I took over the tenancy of the house. I was in a three-bedroomed house in Barlanark. I waited until I was 21 because I'd heard about I would qualify as a mature student at that age. I had no qualifications. I went to college. I studied for a national certificate and then a higher national diploma in accountancy. I passed with distinction without any education. I was a fast learner. I had a bit of a photographic memory in those days. I was three years at college then I went across the road to Caledonian University. I spent two years there, studying accountancy at professional level.
84. After I left university, I worked for eighteen months and discovered very quickly that I hated it. It just wasn't for me, sitting at a desk. I lasted about a year and a half in the job and I left. I had a breakdown. I'd never really grieved for my father dying. I ended up in hospital. I still didn't tell anybody about the abuse I'd experienced as a child. My doctor doesn't even know about any of this. After the breakdown, I was given some help from general mental health services. I only put up with them for a wee while. I withdrew from them after about a year.
85. I didn't get to work for quite a long time. My pal had a pub in London. I went to work there around 2000, 2001. The job came with accommodation. While I was down there, I decided that I wanted to be a prison officer. I applied to join the prison service and I was accepted. I went on a night out in Camden with my friend, to celebrate that I'd

been accepted. I was attacked by a female stranger. It turned out later on that she was schizophrenic. She went for my pal and I stood in the middle. It took seconds and she was off. It was frenzied. I never felt it happening, but I'd been stabbed three times, in the back, the chest and right through my upper arm. I had to have an operation because the nerves in my arm were severed. I was told that I wouldn't be able to use the arm again so I couldn't work. I came back home to Glasgow.

86. I got my arm working again myself. I wondered what I could do. About a year and a half later, they caught the female who had attacked me. They told me that she was schizophrenic. I wanted to go and work in that field to see if I could better understand people with mental health problems. I worked as a mental health support worker with the Richmond Fellowship. I did that for about thirteen years until I was medically retired in 2013, due to arthritis, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) and what they called depression, because nobody knew what had happened to me.
87. After my breakdown, I managed to put it all away again, in that wee box to the back. I never thought about it again until three years ago.

Impact

88. St. Euphrasia's has had a profound effect on my life. You only have one life and you can't go back. I was a Catholic before I went to St. Euphrasia's. I certainly wasn't when I left. I hate the Catholic Church. A few years ago, I decided I was going to go back and look at St. Euphrasia's. I looked on Google maps and it's gone. It's been levelled. In my mind, I thought that maybe if I went back to see the place it would all stop. My wee niece came up to stay with me when she was thirteen, fourteen. She was wee and skinny. I was looking at her and thinking, "My God, I was that size."
89. I hate getting upset and I very rarely do it in front of anybody. It takes me right back. That's what their end goal always was at St. Euphrasia's, and it was my mother's end goal before I went in. My sisters used to say, "For God's sake, go and just greet because that's all she's wanting." I wouldn't. That's what they wanted to do at St.

Euphrasia's as well. To this day, I still get annoyed with myself if I get upset in front of other people. I've been told that it's not a sign of weakness, but it is for me because the end game in St. Euphrasia's and in the house was to break me. I'm the type of person who cries during adverts about children and animals, but I hate to do it in front of anybody else.

90. My best pal from St. Euphrasia's, [REDACTED], found me on Facebook about three years ago. We're not talking now. When the Inquiry started, I told her that I'd made contact with it. Nobody knew anything about her past and that she'd been in care, including her husband. She stopped talking to me.
91. I have triggers. I was at an advisory group for Future Pathways. One of the girls there pointed right in my face. I told her never to do that again or I'd break her finger. Seeing anybody getting hit triggers me. If I hear, know or see of anybody being abused it angers me.
92. I've been having flashbacks in the last few months. I had trained my mind not to think about it. When the Inquiry started up in 2015, 2016, I wasn't able to put it away again. That's when I contacted Wellbeing Scotland. Now I can't get it to go away. I hope it does after all this. For months, I wouldn't meet anybody from Wellbeing Scotland. It made it too real. I was emailing Sandra Toyer, backwards and forwards. I finally agreed to meet her in person. I finished up with them last June. That really floored me. I nearly ended up in the hospital. Sandra was the first person I had ever spoken to about what had happened. I had seen her every two weeks for two years.
93. Sandra told me about Future Pathways. They'd only been running about six months. I waited for two months and I thought that was terrible and too long and nobody cared. People are waiting eighteen months now. It's too long. Future Pathways referred me to the trauma centre at the Anchor in Glasgow. It was only supposed to be for six months, but they agreed to let it continue because I was giving evidence to the Inquiry. I still get support from Baillieston Community Care, but everything else is ending.

94. I've been having nightmares, especially recently. I'm remembering millions. I don't know why I've remembered it, but last week I remembered that I was up on the roof at St. Euphrasia's. I'm scared of heights, so what made me go up there? I can see it perfectly, like I'm watching a video. It was a sunny day. I can see **GWL** down there with the nuns and a couple of other lassies, saying, "Get fucking down from there, because if I need to come up for you, you'll know all about it." I was feeling afraid when I was up there. I'm scared of heights, but I don't know if that's what has made me scared of heights. I keep dreaming about it and remembering about it when I'm awake. I don't know how I got up there or how I got down. Clearly I did come down, because I'm here. I'm trying hard to think about it before I go to sleep, hoping that I might dream what happened before it and after it. It's bugging me and I'm really trying hard. Tracy at the Anchor Centre said that maybe whatever happened before and after I went up there is so bad, I'm not being allowed to remember. That worries me a bit.
95. I know where my claustrophobia and hatred and fear of locked doors comes from. I don't like the dark to this day. I sleep with the TV, switched to Smooth Radio. It's a purple screen. The sound is switched off, but I get the purple light. I've never, ever stopped being scared of the dark. My mental health has been seriously affected. I never said why. I would go to the doctors and be put on antidepressants, but I never told them what happened. I'm always on edge. I need to be close to a door. I was diagnosed with complex post-traumatic stress disorder at the Anchor Centre last year. It made a lot of sense to me when I read about it. I'm always on edge and I lose the rag quickly. I hate doors being locked. I wish I lived in the days when people didn't have to lock their doors. All the doors in my house are open.
96. My experiences in St. Euphrasia's impacted upon my ability to trust. Trust is so difficult for me. I don't trust anybody. I keep everybody at arm's length. I trust my support worker, Kat, but that's quite recent, in the last two years. I chose to be on my own because I don't trust anybody. I don't like anybody getting close. When I did let anybody close, I always managed to push them away before they pushed me away. I call myself a crackpot. I've got anger issues as well as anxiety. I get really angry. I push people away.

97. The sexual abuse has left me with profound feelings of shame and embarrassment. It has been a big part of my mental health difficulties and is the content of my nightmares and intrusive trauma memories. I can't speak about it in any detail. I am so distressed and avoid the memories if I can, which is why I self-medicated with alcohol for so many years and self-harmed [REDACTED]. What my abuser did haunts me and shames me.
98. I used to think the biggest thing I hated St. Euphrasia's for was my education. That's the second biggest thing because I got that in the end. I did it myself. They robbed me of an education, but I sorted that out by going to college.
99. The biggest regret I have in life is not having children. That came about because my version of normal was what I went through. I went through it in the house with the biggest care-giver in the world, your mother. I came out of that and went into care to be looked after because it was a better place and it was worse in there. To me that was normal, that was what you did with children. It must be normal because it happened everywhere I'd ever stayed. I didn't want to be the one to have to do that to a child. I was too scared, in case I did that, so I never had any. Now that I'm much older, I know I wouldn't have done that. At the time, it was too big a chance to take. What if I did that? I knew how it affected me. I didn't want to put anybody through that. That's the biggest impact and I'll never forgive them for that.

Reporting of Abuse

100. Through Sandra Toyer of Wellbeing Scotland, I went to Thompsons Solicitors in order to seek compensation. Wellbeing Scotland ended up talking everyone into it. The solicitor came to my house about a year and a half ago. She was in the house for four hours, maybe five. I told her everything that I could remember then. She sent me through a draft statement and millions was missing. I hate when I think somebody isn't listening. I know I'm irrational about it, but she was in my house for five hours and what was in it was all wrong. The lawyer kept emailing me for months and months, asking me to sign the statement and send it back. I told her it was all wrong and that she'd

missed loads out and got the things she had included wrong. I went to her office a year after she'd been to my house, to do a new statement. That was posted out to me and it was still wrong. She's still hounding me, but I'm not really that interested. She emailed me last week, asking whether I was going to sign it and send it back. It's no further forward. They can't do any more until I sign it.

Records

101. Sandra Toyer from Wellbeing Scotland got my notes for me. She had told me to be aware that they probably wouldn't be able to get my records because there always seemed to be a flood or a fire. I was through in Edinburgh at an event that John Swinney was speaking at. I met Sandra outside St. Andrew's House in Edinburgh. She had a plastic bag and she said it was for me. She told me that I was one of the lucky ones because they'd managed to get my records. She told me not to read them on my own because the language used wasn't very nice. She then gave me them. I was driving back from Edinburgh by myself. She should never have just handed me them and then disappeared.
102. My records weren't even half an inch thick, after everything that had happened to me. I haven't read all my notes. I've only read about two pages of my notes about St. Euphrasia's because it's all lies. It's not about what really happened. It's all about me running away and being petulant and insolent. They said I was a thief. That really got to me because I've never been a thief. Apparently, I was robbing in the village. That never happened. I destroyed my house the night I got my records because of the lies. I never, ever looked at them again for about eight or nine months. I read the notes about Roberton Secondary Institutions - to be published I also read my school reports from before I went into care. They were mostly negative. They concentrated on my behaviour, but my intelligence was mentioned on the odd occasion. I've not read them all.
103. When I skimmed through my notes, it said that my behaviour at St. Euphrasia's was so bad, they were considering expelling me and sending me somewhere else. I wish I'd known about that. I would have said, "Send me then, because anywhere has got to

be better than here.” According to their records, it was a voluntary placement and they were getting fed up with me and were going to discharge me. That’s not true. It certainly wasn’t voluntary. They were going to send me somewhere in the Borders. I can’t remember the name of it, but I looked it up. It’s shut now. It sounds like it was worse than where I was, but apparently they were going to send me there until I said I’d toe the line and be good. That never happened. If they’d told me that, I would have said, “Right, I’ll go and get my jacket.” I would have loved to have left there and gone somewhere else. Having researched the place in the notes, I don’t think I’d have liked it much either but at the time I would’ve thought anywhere would be better than St. Euphrasia’s. The notes make out that they were angels and they were fantastic. I was a horrible person who was always causing trouble and they were going to throw me out.

Lessons to be Learned

104. I think there should be cameras everywhere. I don’t believe abuse has ended. I think it still happens. Recently, I watched *Panorama* on TV recently about a care home for vulnerable adults with learning disabilities. It reminded me so much of St. Euphrasia’s, the way they taunted them. The undercover report wasn’t showing everything that was going on, but the bits that they did show made me realise it’s still going on. My friend phoned me up and asked what I had made of it. She said it reminded her of being in care. I said it reminded me of being in care too. In this day and age, you can’t move without a camera spotting you. Why do they not have them in these places, where there are vulnerable people? It’ll never end until they do. People need to be watched and accountable all of the time.
105. It’s no good getting a protection of vulnerable groups check every three years. You could go out and do something the day after getting a clean one. You’re still working with those people for three years. You might have been convicted of a sexual offence. Your employer wouldn’t know because they only send you to be checked every three years. I think it should be every six months.

106. It's gone from one extreme to the other, from not believing children to a child saying one thing and being removed from the house. They need to do something because it's gone too far. They'll remove the child for the slightest thing and then investigate it. That didn't happen back then. When I was about eight or nine, before I went into care, I'd had a horrendous beating off my mother, worse than usual. A five minute walk from the house was a wee portacabin. It was a police station, which was only there during the day. I went in and told them what my mother had just done to me. They dragged me back to the house and told my mother what I had been saying. Children need to be believed.

Hopes for the Inquiry

107. I want recognition for what happened. When John Swinney apologised, I went through to the Scottish Parliament. At the end of the day, it wasn't the Scottish Government that did it. We didn't even have a Scottish Government back then, but they're having to pay the price now. I think it's the Catholic Church that needs to apologise. I hate them.
108. I know the Catholic Church weren't the only organisation, but they were the organisation responsible for my care. They need to be outed and shamed and made to pay. The Government and tax payers shouldn't be made to pay. It should be the institutions that did it. They should be paying and they should be on their knees, apologising for what they did. We survivors spent our childhood being used as a punching bag and a sex toy. I heard a saying in the last year, that child abuse casts a shadow that lasts a lifetime. It's true. People have been affected for the rest of their lives. It didn't end, coming out of there. They need to pay for that.

109. 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.

GDF

Signed

Dated.....12th September 2019.....