

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

KHA

Support person present: No.

1. My name is KHA and my date of birth is 1964. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I am lead to believe that I was born at home, Dalkeith, Midlothian. My father is and my mother is . My mother is one of the most holy women to walk this earth. She has been on pilgrimages, met Mother Teresa and Pope John Paul II. My dad is from Bellshill in Glasgow. He was a poacher and we always had a meal on the table.
3. I have an older brother and an older sister. is the oldest and emigrated to Canada thirty years ago. I miss him. still lives in Dalkeith and looks after my parents. There's about two years between us all.
4. We later moved to , Dalkeith where I grew up. my mother and father were great. I have a vague recollection of being in Nazareth House at a very young age. I just remember being in a cot and a Sister looking down at me. She was like a nun. I now think it was Nazareth House but I don't remember anything else about it. I know my mother suffered from alopecia and I think I must have been so disruptive as a kid. I must have sent my mother off her head.

5. I never stuck in at school. I was rebellious. I could not understand what had happened to me. I knew there was something wrong with me because I was not like other kids. I liked going to the local butchers instead of going to school. I was friendly with the butcher, [REDACTED]. I suffered a head injury at the butcher's. It was an accident and I think that affected my brain. I just went off my head. I am only surmising as something changed in my behaviour. I have had an MRI scan and I know there's nothing wrong with my brain.
6. I attended St David's primary school initially. I remember my first day in shorts and the smell of carbolic soap. It reminded me of the dentist because of the smell. I liked it there. I was happy.
7. I then went to St David's High School and used to run about with guys who were always getting into trouble. We used to jump about the woods. I was never at school. I was then sent to a special school for delinquents in [REDACTED]. There were six of us to a class.
8. I used to fight every day with one of the teachers there, Mr [REDACTED]. I think now that the guy was probably just trying to educate me, but I saw him as the enemy and just went into fight mode. I wasn't interested. He was massive and scared me. I just felt intimidated all the time as he was trying to control me. Where I come from in Dalkeith, if you got a battering your father would say get back out there and fight or I'll leather you. We were brought up the hard way.
9. I was taken out of that school and sent to a children's panel in Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith. My violence meant I could not be in my parent's care anymore. My parents had done their best for me.

Liberton Assessment Centre, Edinburgh

10. I was sent to Liberton Assessment Centre when I was thirteen. I was back and forward from there to panels and I didn't really understand what was going on. They used big fancy words. It meant nothing to me.
11. I remember a Father ^{MTM} and that we would get five cigarettes a day. I think I was unruly as I couldn't understand why I was there. I was put in a seclusion box a couple of times as I was taking tantrums. It was a clear box and looked out onto the yard. I can imagine it was to try and calm me down.
12. I was in a room with a guy called [REDACTED] from Easterhouse. They would take our clothes off at night so we couldn't run away and give us pyjamas. I did get home on weekend leave once when I was there. All I can really remember is the visits from my mum. She would come up with our wee dog Ruby. It was just a strange environment with strange people. Nothing bad happened to me to in there. I can only remember bad things from St Mary's. My mind is full of darkness from there. The bad overshadowed the good. It is a conundrum for me.
13. I remember being taken to a panel from Liberton Assessment Centre after six weeks and I was sent straight from the panel to St Mary's Kenmure, Bishopbriggs, Glasgow. I thought I was going home and I was really upset. I remember seeing my wee mum roaring and greeting her eyes out. That still haunts me. That's when my life changed forever.

St Mary's Kenmure Boy's school, Bishopbriggs

14. St Mary's had a closed block and an open block. I was in the open block. It was like a haunted house. It was a listed building but for years I wanted to blow it up. It's been bulldozed down now and rebuilt. It had a gravel driveway and was like a big massive old Victorian house. There was a wee cottage on the grounds too and wooden huts where we were supposed to be educated.

15. Inside it was all old fashioned ceramic tiles, maroon radiators and wooden staircases. You went up the stairs and on the left hand side there was a television room and straight ahead there were the dormitories. Right at the very end was where you got a wash. There were about thirty to forty lads in a house at the one time. We were all put into houses. I was in St Pat's but there was also St Columba's and De La Salle.
16. The ground floor was the dining hall and the gymnasium. The closed block had a big corridor to the gymnasium, so we mixed with the boys from the closed block in there. The kitchen was at the back of the dining hall on the right-hand side when you walked into the building. The head masters office was across from the dining hall and there were various utility cupboards here, there and everywhere. The only staff members names I can remember are my abusers. Brother ^{KHC} Frank ^{MHP} and ^{KHD}.
17. My understanding now is that St Mary's was part of the Catholic church and run by the De La Salle order. They were all monks. Although the staff wore their own casual clothes we did call them Brothers. There was only one woman, ^{KHD} who was the house mistress. I thought her name was ^{KHD}, but the police later told me it was ^{KHD}.

Routine at St Mary's Kenmure

First day

18. I remember on the way there I tried to jump out the car at Harthill services and I was dragged back in. When we got there I was shown around and then I had to stand outside the headmaster's office. It was dinner time and I was taken to a table in the dinner hall. It was the table nearest the door. There were six of us at the table. I was put in front of a guy who had big spectacles. There was a big urn for tea in the middle of the table. The guy with the spectacles asked where I was from and I said Edinburgh. He said 'oh another Ken and Barbie' and I picked up the tea urn and walloped it off his face. I was dragged out by the cook, Frank ^{KHC}. He took me back to the

headmasters office and I never got my dinner. I remember it was macaroni cheese and I was upset about that as it was my favourite.

19. I was taken to my dormitory, which was called St Pat's and got a stern warning. I was shown my bed. All the other guys came up after dinner. There were two Edinburgh guys I knew already, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I made some other friends later called [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. They were Glaswegian. [REDACTED] was off his head. He used to run around barking like a dog. We were all about thirteen, fourteen.

Mornings and bathing

20. You would get up and get a wash and put your clothes on. We would wash at the big 'shanksy' sinks in the bathroom. We ate in the dining room and then all had to line up outside in our houses and we were told what we were doing for the day. Sometimes we would go for a quick roll up before lining up. There were about twenty of us to a roll up.
21. We would have stuff to wash with and you had your own cubicle at your bed to keep your stuff in. It would get nicked though as there were people there less fortunate than others or you would get bullied. I wasn't bullied because I hit that guy with the urn on my first day. People knew I was a bit of a boyo after that.

Mealtimes/Food

22. I remember getting macaroni cheese because that was my favourite. I also remember on a Friday we got fish and chips. I looked forward to that. We got plastic cutlery. I had enough to eat. You had to watch your back a lot so food was the least of your worries.

Clothing/uniform

23. We got to wear our own clothes. I had a bag from the assessment centre. I took it with me every time I went to the panel. My mum would bring me in clothes too.

Leisure time

- 24. At weekends we would go to the gymnasium or they would take us out for the day. They took us rowing on the Clyde once. Those days were few and far between. We could go out and play football too. There was a football pitch on the grounds. I was never sports oriented. My interests were in animals and nature.
- 25. They took us ice skating one time as well to Irvine. I remember putting the ice skates on and I couldn't skate and fell straight on my face on the ice and cracked all my teeth.
- 26. In the evenings we just watched television.

Schooling

- 27. I can't remember any education. It was a school for the worst of the worst. The dregs of the earth. It was horrendous. There were a lot of young alcoholics and housebreakers from Drumchapel. They were just escaping all the time. You could feel the tension from the staff. I felt it the day I arrived. There was no education. The teachers were more interested in doing whatever they wanted and we just had a laugh. The teachers would just read a paper or something.
- 28. You'd go into a class and a fight would break out or folk would be sniffing glue. I never done any of that crap though. They just wanted a carry on. We'd just sit out in the yard and have a smoke. It was people from outside that came in to teach us not the Brothers.

Healthcare

- 29. I did not have any healthcare. There were no facilities for that. The matron was the house mistress and she could give you a plaster but anything more serious you'd get taken to the hospital. I never needed to.

Religious instruction

30. There was no chapel or religion at St Mary's. When you see one hundred and fifty bad boys what priest is going to give them religious lessons? I understand that now.

Chores

31. You had to clean your dormitory and scrub the floors as chores.

Birthdays and Christmas

32. I would have went home for Christmas. I can't remember a Christmas at St Mary's. My mother would come up on my birthday. I remember her giving me a card and writing me a letter about our wee dog, Ruby one time. She would bring me up fruit. When she brought a bag up she was not allowed to hand it to me. It would need to be checked first. Probably for drugs and alcohol. Guys would do anything for a drink in there.

Bed Wetting

33. There were constant issues with bed wetting. We were terrified wee laddies. I'm not ashamed to admit I did it. I was feart.
34. You would get dragged up to where the showers were, stinking of urine, stripped and flung in the shower. They would flick you on the legs and buttocks with a wet towel. You got battered. Every night you were told if you needed the toilet, go now before bed and you were warned not to press the buzzer after that. We were terrified and that's why we wet ourselves. They never took us out two at a time, it was always one at a time. You could hear others getting battered, screaming '*I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'll not do it again.*' It was brutal. I screamed myself in terror. I was just a wee laddie.

Visitors

35. My mum would always be the one to come and visit me. I was always so happy to see her. She would get the train from Waverly to Glasgow. The visits were held in the dining hall. She would bring me clothes and did the best that she could in those days. There were specific visiting times like at the assessment centre. All the visits were held at the same time in the dining hall.
36. I would always say I wanted to go home and she would just say I needed to stay a bit longer. I never understood why I was there. That was the chestnut for me. It wasn't because of my mum and dad, they did the best they could.

Review of care / detention

37. To this day no one has explained to me why I was put in care. I never saw one social worker when I was in St Mary's and I never even had an escort when I was sent home on my last day.

Bullying

38. I knew because I had hit that guy with the urn on my first day I was going to get grief. I recognised the Edinburgh boys and they said I was going to be in for a rough time there for doing that. There was going to be reprisals. I found out who the top boy was, [REDACTED] and fought him. The fighting always started when we were locked in our rooms at night. [REDACTED] knocked the hell out of me but he ended up taking me under his wing. He said I had a tough crack on me. They accepted me for that. I also got a pass because my dad was Glaswegian and I had relatives in Glasgow. I was accepted as one of them.

Family contact

39. I got home on leave once and ^{MHP} [REDACTED] took me. He told me if I said anything to my mother and father I would never get home again. I was a mummy's boy, so that

scared me and I kept my mouth shut and endured the abuse. MHP was a big guy with a big black moustache and black hair.

40. I remember just going out with my pals when I was home and them asking me what St Mary's was like. I even remember I wore a tartan jacket with a big furry collar and sleeves.

Sibling Contact

41. I never saw my siblings when I was at St Mary's. Only when I got home on leave.

Discipline

42. If you had to be disciplined you would get no recreation or be locked in your dormitory. You would be flicked with towels by the staff and thrown in your room.

Running away

43. St Mary's was so bad that my wee pal [REDACTED] ran away and [REDACTED]. I don't know if he is alive or dead now. I heard he was in Castairs.
44. I never ran away but I thought about it every day. A lot of boys did though. They would run away and break into houses. One time a guy called [REDACTED] came back with four hundred pounds and he hid it in the kitchen in some pots. Frank [REDACTED] found it and what a doing [REDACTED] got. He probably got the same as me from Frank and I bet they kept his money.

Abuse at St Mary's Kenmure

45. KHD [REDACTED] was the enticer. She used to flash her breasts to the boys and pull up her skirt and show off her suspenders. She was trying to arouse the young guys and they would fall for it. She was vile. It was like bait and she was a tart. She looked like

Mira Hindley. It was at night when we would be going to our beds. She would come into our dorms. She would come into the television room as well and start playing with herself, blatantly. I was so embarrassed but some of the boys loved it. They were a bit older than me. She was just a sicko. A porn queen. Half the staff had probably been around her. She must have been in her early thirties.

46. KHD [REDACTED] was the only house mistress. She never stayed overnight, but she must have been local as she was always there at bedtime and first thing in the morning. She was everybody's tart. MHP [REDACTED] was my house master, but they all had access to everyone.
47. There was another big guy that looked like meatloaf. He was a big tall guy and would scud me up and down the place. I remember thinking when I got older I was going to get him. We were just wee skinny guys.
48. The night watchman would lock us in our dormitories. If you wanted out for the toilet you had to buzz. The dormitories never had any toilets in them. I remember the first time I buzzed I learnt not to do it again. Guys would pee on a towel and throw it out the window. It was frightening as you knew if you annoyed him with the buzzer you got leathered with a cane.
49. I stole his tobacco tin once and I got leathered for that. It was a joke on me as all the other guys knew and told me to nick his golden virginia baccy tin. I did it and I got electrocuted. He'd wired it up to the table. I was wriggling about the floor screaming in pain and he came through and leathered me. He would shake you and bang you off the television. They were clever dudes as they never bruised you.
50. Frank [REDACTED] sexually abused me in a linen cupboard once. He flicked me with a towel before I got into the linen cupboard. I just remember the light going out and his body on top of me and this horrific pain. He hit my head off a shelf, then I felt a severe pressure going up my backside. I was screaming. It was around tea time the first time it happened. It happened four or five times in total. I got locked in my dormitory after the abuse. He said that's what you get when you are bad. I got hit with a cane too.

51. When I came out the home I suffered from piles and had to get them surgically removed. The doctor asked me if I had been sexually abused when he saw them and I told him I had.
52. I was separated from the other boys and sent to St Columba's house once because I had been [REDACTED]. Frank [REDACTED] took me up there and sexually abused me again. He was the rapist.
53. [REDACTED]. I was the size of a table, I was just a wee guy. [REDACTED]. The lassie told the jury I was the one that hit the guy raping her off with a stick [REDACTED]. I helped the lassie. I heard her screaming and I knew what was happening to me, so I just went into defence mode and helped her. [REDACTED] was found guilty of raping her.
54. When I cracked all my teeth on the ice rink I never saw a dentist. I learnt pretty quickly that if you complain, you got it worse from them. The first time I complained I was sexually abused by Frank [REDACTED].
55. We never saw each other being abused as they always took us individually. But we knew what was being done to each other when they were taking us away. It had already happened to us. We never spoke to each other. It was shameful.
56. I went onto the football pitch one day and found a boy lying dead beside the green houses. His face was blue and he had a glue bag stuck to his face. It was the first time I had ever seen a dead body. I was just told to keep walking by the staff. A lot of boys took their own lives in there. A couple from Drumchapel did.
57. MHP [REDACTED] used to batter me up and down the place and sexually abused me. He abused me at St Columba's House too. He made me touch his private parts. He never penetrated me.
58. Brother KHC [REDACTED] used to whack me with canes and towels all the time. We always got slapped. He got a thrill from hitting young laddies all the time.

Leaving St Mary's Kenmure

59. I left St Mary's when I was fifteen, almost sixteen and went home to live with my parents. I was left to make my own way home the day I left.

Life after being in care

60. I worked with [REDACTED] as a meat porter when I went home. My family then moved from Dalkeith to the borders because my dad got a job as a gamekeeper. He got me a job as an apprentice slaughter man in [REDACTED] through a friend of a friend. The job at the slaughter house in [REDACTED] helped me. I didn't finish the apprenticeship as I had to be there at six in the morning and my wee scooter kept breaking down. It did really help me being in the borders though away from it all.
61. My heart just wasn't settling. I just wanted to be out and about. I became friends with the [REDACTED]'s son, [REDACTED] and he [REDACTED]. Me and my dad found him in [REDACTED]. That was another trauma. I saw him with [REDACTED] when the [REDACTED] asked me and my dad to go up and check on him. I was also friends with his sister, [REDACTED] and she died on a swimming expedition in [REDACTED]. The man of the house Sir [REDACTED] died of alcoholism. They called it the [REDACTED] curse. I remember thinking everyone is dying, I am going to be next.
62. I got another job in the borders with a company called [REDACTED]. It was on the power lines. I was friendly with the gaffer as he would drink in the same pub as my dad. It was good money. I had never seen that much money in my life. I haven't worked since that though. The trauma from St Mary's was still with me and I took another violent episode. I was too much for my family. I have lived a solitude life since. I just like to be on my own.
63. I do still go down to visit the [REDACTED] every year and cut her grass. She is still alive. I clean up the graves of her family members and have a wee cup of tea with her. My dad didn't realise I was doing that until recently.

64. I got involved with a woman who was raped by an Asian man and she committed suicide. After that I became involved with a movement and got some tattoos. That is why I cannot go and see my brother in Canada. His wife is Canadian Indian. He is so proud and I am so ashamed. He could never see these tattoos. I want to get them removed. We were so close as well. We used to be called the stylist. We would always wear the same smart clothes by accident. Wherever he went, I went. I don't think I will see him again now. It's sad.
65. I still speak with my sister because she looks after our parents. She has her own problems as she has Crohn's disease. We never really had a relationship growing up but we are closer now.
66. I also had some small sentences in prison for some stupid things.
67. I have two beautiful daughters, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and two grandkids, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I still have contact with them all.

Impact

68. My abusers at St Mary's have given me a death sentence because of their sick enjoyment of hurting young boys. Maybe I did have behavioural problems but I didn't deserve that. I was just a number to them. My prison number is [REDACTED]. I will never forget that.
69. My abusers have stolen my dignity and taken away all of my trust in people. Psychologically it has ruined me, but they will never take away my pride. I know now that not all people are bad, but it's still taken away all of my trust in people.
70. I just try to block it all out. I still suffer from nightmares and cold sweats. As you get older though you get a bit wiser. At least I think I am wiser now.

71. I have attempted suicide many times in my life. I just didn't want to be alive. I could not talk to guys about this type of thing. That is a real trauma for me. It has taken its toll on me. Even now. I still feel threatened and freeze up if a guy tries to cuddle me, like you would at New Year or something.
72. The abuse has also affected my relationships. Me and [REDACTED], my daughter's mother, were not made for each other. We did have two beautiful kids, but we became venomous and bitter and split up. I then got involved with a notorious family because I was handy with my fists. [REDACTED] then fed the bairns head with a load of rubbish.
73. There was a [REDACTED] in the paper that killed his neighbour and ended up in Carstairs. My picture was mistakenly put in the paper when referring to him. The bairns were terrified of me because of that. That affected their head. [REDACTED] even believed it. I had to get my lawyer to write to the paper. I didn't see the bairns from the age of five, six years old.
74. They eventually got back in touch when they were sixteen and just chapped on my door one day. I said who are you and when they told me I collapsed on the floor. Now we get on like a house on fire because they know the truth. I have never deprived another human being of oxygen in my life. That really hurt me what the papers said about me and affected my relationship with my bairns. I find it difficult to talk about.
75. We were at St Mary's to get educated and taught. Not to be abused and treated as sex toys. I couldn't understand it as a kid, so I could never explain it to my parents. My dad would have went off his nut. My mother was a strict Catholic so she would never have believed it. She was religion orientated.
76. The only person I can talk to now is my friend [REDACTED]. He was the most [REDACTED] in Scotland. We are making a [REDACTED] and it will [REDACTED]. That's going to open up a few eyes and you'll see what really happened. We are trying to get access to St Joseph's school in Tranent to do [REDACTED]. We just want to help people and show there's light at the end of the tunnel.

77. I still suffer from paranoia and I am on diazepam and mirtazapine. The way I look at it though is that I am one of the survivors. There are others that haven't made it and I will fight for them who have not lived to tell their story.

Treatment/support

78. I have a clinical psychiatric nurse but what can you do for someone like me? I have opened up to friends about what happened to me. I just wish I could put this nightmare in a bag and throw it away.

Reporting of Abuse

79. I did report the abuse at St Mary's to the police, as an adult when I stayed in Stenhouse. Someone came to take my statement and I was treated with respect. Years later I was doing community service at the time and officers came to speak with me again. They said they were investigating historical child abuse. They also said that my statement had stayed exactly the same. It had not changed one bit. They told me my abusers were all dead apart from KHD .

Records and compensation claim

80. The lawyers have my records and I have an ongoing compensation claim at the moment.
81. I cannot answer the phone to the lawyers if they call me from a private number. I just can't do it. It is this trust thing again. I just think have you got something to hide? What are you hiding from me by calling on a withheld number?

Lessons to be Learned

82. The people that are in these jobs need to be properly vetted. There should be more steps to get the job. These people that looked after us were not qualified.
83. Children need to be encouraged to stick in at school and not skip school and be a bad boy. Everyone just turned a blind eye back then. They didn't put us on the right track.
84. There were failures in the whole system. They failed the children of Scotland. Everyone did. They are all guilty of crimes against humanity.

Other information

85. 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.....
KHA
Dated..... 12/5/2020