

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

MQW

Support person present: No

1. My name is MQW. My date of birth is 1961. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. My mum and dad are and I have three sisters. is four years older than me. is two years older than me. is two years younger than me. I was born and spent the first part of my life in Glasgow. I went to primary school in and then secondary school in .

3. My first recollection from my childhood was living with my dad in

That didn't work out and ended up living with her granny. That left me and my sisters and in a tenement flat with my dad. We were in extreme poverty. My father didn't work and was on benefits. He wasn't good with budgeting. We were constantly in arrears with rent, gas and electricity. Gas and electricity was often cut off. Our furniture was very basic. I slept in the same bed as my sisters and my dad slept on the couch. We weren't the only ones who were poor

I enjoyed my time at primary school and I learned to read and write. This was a good experience for me. By the time I got to ten or eleven I started to get bullied a bit by one girl.

4. I am aware of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (RSPCC) dealing with my family at some point. I was never aware of any social worker coming to the house. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] My father found it difficult to get a job [REDACTED]
5. There was a railway yard opposite our house and the railway police caught me stealing coal a few times. I was stealing it so we could get a bit of heat in the house. I seem to remember going to the children's panel a couple of times and was sent home on a supervision order. The first time I would have been about ten. On the fourth occasion I was in front of the panel for shoplifting a packet of sausages. There were six or seven people on this panel. It was different people most times I appeared, apart from a man who I think must have been the 'Chair'. A woman on the panel, upon reflection, took a dislike to me. This was the first time I had seen her. She lectured my father and told me my behaviour was ungodly. She decided that I was outwith the control of my father and that I was unruly. The outcome was that I was to be put into care.
6. When I realised that I was getting taken away from my father I became upset and started screaming and shouting. My dad was upset and he was crying too. A man who was like a bouncer came and grabbed me. I remember screaming and kicking at him. I was put into a van and driven to Beechwood Assessment Centre. I wasn't given the chance to go home and collect anything. I was eleven.

Beechwood Assessment Centre, Shettleston.

7. My first thoughts were that it was a great big house. It was a detached house in its own grounds. Inside there was a central staircase and to the right was a large dining room. There was a laundry room and then an office. All the bedrooms were upstairs. There was also a loft area.
8. The home was [REDACTED] three women. Mrs [REDACTED] MSK [REDACTED] was [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED] and Mrs [REDACTED] MSL [REDACTED] was [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED]. Elizabeth Jack was possibly a service manager and may have been responsible for a few care homes. She only visited every

now and then. There was a cook and she smoked heavily. She was small, elderly and was a lovely person. There were about ten girls. As far as I know I was supposed to be there for assessment and then they were to decide where I should go. I slept in a dormitory with three other girls but I can't remember their names.

Routine at Beechwood

First day

9. I got taken into the office on that first day. There was an enormous woman who I later found out to be Mrs MSL. After a while she told me to take my clothes off because I had to wear their clothes. I refused. I was told that if I didn't take them off, they would take them off. I went into a cupboard and removed my clothes and they gave me others to put on. I was also given pyjamas and washing stuff like soap and toothpaste.
10. Mrs MSL told me that my knickers were dirty and I should clean myself better. I had nice clean clothes but she told me they were filthy. My dad had taken me to get second hand clothes before I went to the children's panel. I started swearing at her, telling her that I wasn't filthy. We didn't get off on a good footing. No one tried to tell me why I was there or make me welcome in any way. I was then taken to my dormitory. I remember going for an evening meal but I was upset and cried all the time. I told them I just wanted to see my dad.

Mornings and bedtime

11. We were woken up every morning about 7am by a female member of night staff. I can't remember her name but she was old. She was lovely. We then went down for breakfast.

Mealtimes/Food

12. By the time we got down for breakfast the managers were about. There were also a few other trainee staff. I am not sure if they were training to be social workers or nurses. They were more or less directing the children, telling them what to do. All the children ate together in the dining room at the same time.
13. There were no problems with the food at Beechwood. It was nice. I was used to being hungry at home so Beechwood was good because there was food there. I used to wake up at home and I was cold and hungry, but I was never unhappy. I ate the food at Beechwood without any problem until I realised it was laced with medication.

Washing/bathing

14. One time I was in the bath and I was putting my head under the water and counting how long I could hold my head under the water. It was just something I did. Mrs MSK came storming in and dragged me out as she thought I was trying to kill myself.
15. Bath times were only at certain times. We had them once a week. You couldn't just have a bath when you wanted one. I don't remember there being showers there.

Clothing/uniform

16. I am not sure if the clothes I was given was a uniform or not. I can't really remember what we wore.

Leisure time

17. There were books, toys and games in Beechwood. I don't remember ever actually playing with any games or reading anything.

Trips and holidays

18. Some of the other girls in Beechwood had a good time on trips. Sometimes they went out for the day and went to the cinema. I didn't get to go on any of these trips because of my behaviour. I did occasionally get taken swimming.

School

19. I never went to school when I was at Beechwood. There was no school inside Beechwood and I didn't go to one outside. All I ever had were art sessions which were nothing special.

Healthcare

20. I refused to eat and sleep when I was at Beechwood and I was sent to Gartloch Psychiatric Hospital. Certain things that happened in there I just can't get out of my head. There were some staff in there who were really horrible. There was another girl in there who was the same age as me. One time we were in a toilet where there were four or five toilets. She showed me her poo and it was jet black. She came out and asked one of the nurses why it was black. The nurse told her that it was because she had done bad things. The girl then told me that she had been admitted to the hospital because her grandfather had raped her. That nurse was awful to her for saying that. I don't think I took any medication when I was in there.
21. When I was in the hospital there was a woman on a trolley and her skin was bright red. I asked the same nurse who had told the girl she had been bad why she was red. She told me that she had been given electric shock treatment. She said that if I wasn't careful I would get it too and I would forget how to be bad.
22. Mrs **MSK** at some point arranged for me to be sent for a brain scan. I remember her telling the social workers and everyone that I was brain damaged. I got the scan and everything was normal. She told me there was nothing wrong with me.

Religious instruction

23. We went to church on Sunday and said our prayers at Beechwood. I was used to going to Sunday school when I was at home. We weren't forced to go to church.

Work

24. We had chores to do. They were set out in a rota. Chores were to clean the bathroom or polish the floors. Sometimes I refused to do my chores and it would end up in a row and I would be put into isolation. I am not sure why I refused. The chores were not big. I think I was just being awkward.

Birthdays and Christmas

25. We had a Christmas dinner on Christmas day. Birthdays were celebrated but I missed out on celebrations because of my behaviour. Other girls who behaved were treated respectfully.

Visits/Inspections/Review of Detention

26. I saw my dad occasionally when I was at Beechwood. Sometimes neighbours visited me too. We would get to sit in the dining room and there was always staff sitting in the dining room with us. Mrs MSK often spoke to my dad in front of me. She told my dad that I was problematic and that the car accident I had when I was younger had caused brain damage. She often referred to an unruly certificate but I don't know if they had something like that then. My dad believed everything she said because she came over as being such a nice person. My sister [REDACTED] came to see me too. I never saw a social worker when I was at Beechwood. I know I had a social worker at some point but never saw them in Beechwood.

Personal possessions

27. I didn't have any personal possessions when I was at Beechwood. No photographs or toys. After meals, the children who didn't smoke, got some sweets. The smokers were given cigarettes. They were allowed four every day. The staff actually told me that I would be better off smoking. Mrs **MSK** wanted me to smoke and she told me it would calm me down and I would feel better. I ended up smoking.

Running away

28. Every opportunity that I could. I ran away. I constantly ran away if I found a window or a door open. I even threw a chair through a window once. Before the isolation room had bars on the window I kicked the window out. Once you were in the back yard it was difficult to get out of there because there was a high wall. I climbed over it a few times but it wasn't easy. I was forever running away but I got caught because I always went back to my dad's. The police brought me back. Some of the other girls ran away from Beechwood too.

Abuse at Beechwood

29. The first day that I arrived at Beechwood I was given medication. On the top shelf in the office were big brown bottles of medicine. Mrs **MSL** told me I had to take it. I told her that I wasn't sick. She told me that I was homesick and every child who was homesick had to take it. I think I believed her and I took it. I was homesick. I was compliant for a while and took it. After a while I realised that this medication had a sedatory effect on me. It was knocking me out. It was later on that I found it was Largactil and Mogadon. Mrs **MSL** and Mrs **MSK** forcibly removed my clothes and gave me the medication. The younger trainees just went along with what they were told. When I was in Beechwood I was controlled, mostly through this medication.

30. They gave me this medication every night around about 5pm. I saw them giving other children it too. I refused to take it. This caused me lots of trouble and there were lots of battles. Mrs MSL and Mrs MSK used to hold me down, pin me to the floor and force it into my mouth. They were also putting it in my drink and in my food. I could taste it and I could sense it. I stopped eating the food when I realised it was in my food. After a while they started giving me the medication after breakfast. I still refused it and they would force me to take it. When I realised it was in my food I went for three days without eating anything at meal times. The woman who did nightshift felt sorry for me and took me downstairs and gave me something to eat. I liked her and could trust her so felt comfortable eating what she made me.
31. I was often put into the isolation room at Beechwood. They took my clothes off me and gave me pyjamas to wear. It was an empty room but at some point they put a tiny straw mattress in it with a plastic cover. Initially it had a solid door but the door was replaced by bars. It was like a prison cell. I was regularly put in there when I kicked off. It might have been because I was swearing, fighting, shouting or refusing medication. It started a few weeks after I had arrived at Beechwood. I saw other girls getting put in there. Mrs MSK and Mrs MSL put me in there.
32. When they were giving me the medication in my food I was getting dopier and dopier. For a while I refused to sleep because I didn't know what was going to happen. I wouldn't go to bed and refused to lie down. I was sort of sleepy but awake. I was having nightmares too. Looking back now I think I was actually having hallucinations possibly as a result of the medication, lack of sleep and my emotional state at that time. I was seeing things and I was screaming and shouting. They put me into a separate room so that I would sleep. They didn't let me out that room through the day. They wouldn't let me out until I had a sleep. It was organised for me to go to a psychiatric hospital.
33. When I got back from the psychiatric hospital nothing changed. They still insisted on giving me the medication. Mrs MSL and Mrs MSK continued being horrible to me. Mrs MSK could be really nice. She spoke gently and was friendly and presented as such a lovely person. It was only when I matured emotionally and developed

intelligence that I realised that it was sheer manipulation. Mrs MSK used to tell me I had problems and that I was the worst child she had ever come across and there was something wrong with me. Before I was in care, when I was about eight, I was run over by a car. I ended up in hospital with a fractured pelvis and a broken leg. Mrs MSK knew about this accident and she told me that my brain was damaged in this accident. She said this was the reason I was behaving like I was. She said I was backward. She told me this in a nice friendly way and it made me believe that she was telling the truth.

34. All the time I was in Beechwood I felt like I was battling all the time. I just seemed to kick off and be involved in battles all the time. I was kicking doors and throwing things through windows. I just felt constantly angry, from the moment I woke up to the minute I went to bed. Upon reflection I think it stems back to that very first day when I refused to take my clothes off and I swore at them. They obviously thought from that first minute that I was trouble.
35. Either Mrs MSL or Mrs MSK had a niece who was Italian and didn't speak very good English. When she came I was taken into the office and warned not to speak to her. They also said that if I misbehaved I would be removed immediately. Other girls helped this girl and I was jealous that I couldn't get involved. I was treated differently because of my behaviour. My behaviour deteriorated during the period that I was in Beechwood.
36. For some reason I was in there longer than any other girl. I left to go to other places for a while but came back for spells. I know that the staff in there didn't like me. I got on okay with the other girls although there was the occasional fight.

Reporting of abuse at Beechwood

37. When I ran away and the police brought me back to Beechwood. The police never asked me why I was running away.

38. My dad knew why I was running away. He knew I wanted to be at home and didn't want to be at Beechwood. If he knew the police were coming for me he would hide me. We never actually had a conversation about it and I didn't tell him what was going on. My dad was worried that by allowing me to stay there that his other daughters would get taken off him. He didn't want to lose [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] too. I felt like I was a sacrifice so my sisters would get to stay with my dad.

Leaving Beechwood

39. I thought I was in Beechwood for a long time. According to the records which I got from social services it is not clear because I went back to Beechwood at other times. I believe that when I left Beechwood I went back to live with my dad for a short while. I then went to another children's panel and I was sent to Balgay List D School in Dundee. I would have been twelve or thirteen. My dad didn't get any say in the matter. He went along with everything that was happening because he was frightened he would lose his other two daughters. I was sent to Balgay because the panel believed I was a bad person. They were of the opinion I was out of control. I knew that an approved school was for bad children.

Balgay School, Dundee

40. The building was massive, possibly more than five times bigger than Beechwood. There were about eighty or more girls in there. No boys. The girls were split into units, but I can't remember the name of our unit. There were ten to fifteen girls in my unit. Each unit had a dining room. All the girls didn't get together apart from when we went to church. Not all the girls in there were classed as bad. There were two sisters who were in there because their parents had died. All the staff were teachers apart from the cook. One teacher was blind and she was in charge of my unit. I slept in a dormitory along with five other girls. There was a loft at Balgay and I used to sneak up there at night time along with other girls and we used to tell ghost stories.

Routine at Balgay

First day

41. I got driven to Balgay by a social worker and was taken into the building. The headmaster, whose name I can't remember, gave me an introductory talk in his office. I was then taken out of the office by another member of staff.

Mornings and bedtime

42. There was a bell that woke us up in the morning. I don't know what time that was. We then got up washed, dressed and went for breakfast.

Mealtimes/Food

43. The food was alright. It was neither good or bad. I never had any problem eating the food. I never refused any food at Balgay. All the food was brought to our unit and we had it in our dining room.

Washing/bathing

44. I must have washed but I can't remember what the routine was.

Clothing/uniform

45. We had to make our own uniforms at Balgay. It was a long skirt, kind of brown/beige or blue. There was a sewing group so we made our own uniform. When I first went in I was given a dress to put on and my clothes were taken off me. When I had made my uniform I wore that. I got my own clothes back when I left.

Leisure time

46. I don't really remember any leisure time at Balgay. I spent almost all my time in the seclusion room. I didn't really have a normal routine. The other girls may have but I don't know. The other girls, who didn't have problems, might have had activities and a set routine.

Trips and holidays

47. I don't remember going out on any trips. All these things might have been in place but I wasn't party to that because my focus was on not being there.

School

48. There was a school but there was no academic education at Balgay. All we were taught was sewing, cleaning, cooking and laundry. There was a blind teacher who did the cleaning with us. She was totally blind. Somehow she knew when we hadn't cleaned down the stairs but I have no idea how she knew. She would feel and she would touch. I think she could smell dirt. She knew when something wasn't right because she used to check. We would have to do all the cleaning of the building.
49. There may have been other educational classes but maybe I don't really know about it because I wasn't involved in the education side of things.

Healthcare

50. I don't remember being given any of the medications at Balgay that I was forced to take at Beechwood. At Balgay I was always alert and aware of what was going on. I don't remember being unwell and needing any medical attention or dental treatment when I was there. I never saw a nurse, doctor or dentist.

Religious instruction

51. On Sunday's we all had to go to the church. The services were really long and boring.

Work

52. We did all our chores during the day during school time. We didn't get any other chores.

Visits

53. I didn't get any visits from my family. I think it must have too far for them to travel. I probably wrote to my dad but I don't really remember. I didn't get visited by any social workers or any other officials like the RSPCC when I was there.

Personal possessions

54. The only personal possessions I had at Balgay were the clothes that I was wearing when I arrived. I didn't get any pocket money.

Running away

55. I ran away from Balgay at every opportunity I could. Things became bad at Balgay but the running away was me wanting to be at home rather than away from there. I just wanted to go home. It was a basic instinct rather than a concentrated thought. I never actually made it back to Glasgow. I wouldn't have known how to get there. I had no sense of direction so I wouldn't have known how to get back but I ran away anyway. I was always brought back by the police. I never settled for a second at Balgay. There was nothing about Balgay that I wanted to stay for. When I was taken back they punished me. I ran away nearly every day.

Discipline

56. Balgay had an isolation room which was called the cooler. Getting put in the 'cooler' was their form of punishment for indiscipline. I don't know if there was another cooler because I was in there all the time so don't know where they would put other girls if they were naughty. I seemed to forever be in the cooler.

Abuse at Balgay

57. There was a very strict regime at Balgay. Every time I ran away they did the same thing to me when I was taken back. They called on Mrs MSM, the cook, to come to SNR office and she would sit on me. She was enormous, maybe eighteen or nineteen stone. I might have been eight stone. They would physically push me to the floor and the cook physically sat on me. I would then get carried by lots of them from there to the cooler. If I had agreed to go to the cooler they wouldn't have had to call on her but I refused to go. I don't think anyone ever told me why I was getting sent to the cooler.
58. I spent most of my time at Balgay in confinement in the cooler. I was put in there usually after I had run away. It was outside the main building and it was like a prison cell. It was like stables. There was a room within a room. I spent most, if not all of my time in the cooler. It had a metal toilet, that was flushed from the outside. There was a mattress and a light which had a thick cover over it. There were brick walls. I was isolated in there. Sometimes I spent several days in a row in there. I remember praying that I would not wake up. I can remember every single brick in that room. In fact I ended up giving every brick a number and then I ended up giving every brick a name. I did this to keep myself sane.
59. I didn't make any friends at Balgay. There was no one in any of my care settings that stood out that I communicated with to the extent of becoming a friend. I didn't even have conversations with many other girls. I think my whole focus was to get out. I didn't settle in at all.

Reporting of abuse at Balgay

60. No one came to talk with me when I was in the cooler. The only time I saw someone was when they brought me food. No one ever tried to make me feel better. I was never asked why I was running away. I don't remember ever being counselled. I remember being told what my problem was but no one ever asked me what my problem was.

Leaving Balgay

61. Balgay obviously decided that they couldn't cope with me anymore and didn't want me around. I wasn't doing what they wanted me to do and they couldn't continue to keep putting me in the cooler because that was just taking up staff time. It wasn't in their routine to keep doing that. I wasn't compliant with whatever programme they wanted me to be on so I was sent back to Beechwood. I didn't even know where I was going until I arrived there.

Beechwood second visit

62. Generally the staff were the same as before. Some of the day staff had changed. I think it was because there was lots of trainees. I thought they must have been young social work, medical or psychologist trainees or something like that. The routine there was just the same as before.
63. In the end I suppose I became resilient to the fact that this was my life. I continued to run away at Beechwood. My whole intention was to get out, runaway and be back home with my dad.
64. They gave me the medication again. I never chose to take it. They somehow managed to get the medication into me and I knew it was happening. I remember not wanting to go to sleep because I was frightened what they might do to me.

65. I don't remember ever going to any children's panels when I was at Beechwood. I think all decisions that were made were done over the telephone by the decision makers. Neither my dad nor I were ever involved in this process. I believe that if someone had sat down with me and told me that if my behaviour changed, particularly if they had given me a time frame, and that if I stopped running away, then I could go back home, then I would have complied.
66. After Beechwood I went to Langlands Park which was a List D school in Port Glasgow.

Langlands Park

67. In my head I thought that I was only in Langland's Park for a week. My records show that I was there for a couple of months. Langlands Park was a big detached building in the middle of nowhere. It was really isolated at the top of a hill. At the bottom was a giant graveyard. You could cut through the graveyard onto a street which took you into Port Glasgow.
68. At Langlands there was SNR [REDACTED], Mr MSH [REDACTED] was his name I think. He was a horrible, disgusting, really awful person. I cannot remember the names of any other member of staff. Mr MSH [REDACTED] had a labrador dog.
69. From the time I arrived it was mad. I used to run away all the time. The only good thing there was my best friend EQF [REDACTED] was there. We had been friends since I was about five. She lived in the next tenement building up from where I lived. I didn't know she was in there. It was nice to see her.

Routine at Langlands Park

70. I didn't really know much about the routine at Langlands. My focus was on running away and when I was caught I spent most of my time in isolation.

71. There was school in the huts. We got taught English and maths. I don't really think I was interested in learning when I was there.
72. I didn't get any visits at Langlands Park. My friend EQF told me that her family visited her so I think it was because I wasn't there long enough. I think if I had been there the two years that she was then I would have been allowed home at weekends. For me wherever I went it was different because of my behaviour and there was no settling in period. There were no visits, there was no normality. Had I had been there and carried on and did what they wanted me to do, the visits and everything would have come along. I never saw a social worker at Langlands.
73. I still constantly ran away but it was very difficult to get out the building. I had to be a bit smarter about running away at Langlands Park. One day I set the fire alarm off knowing that they would have to evacuate the building. When it happened I ran away and I ran down the hill and through the graveyard.

Abuse at Langlands Park

74. Whenever I ran away Mr MSH would assault me. He assaulted me on numerous occasions. I used to fight back. Looking back now, I think that is what he wanted. He wanted me to fight back so that he got off on that. I was like an animal. He would push me to the ground and hit me. He would punch me and sit on me. His breath was on me. At the time I thought I was being punished but as I got older and understood a bit more and analysed it I realised that it was a sexual act for him, pushing himself against me.
75. On the occasion that I set the fire alarm off and ran away, EQF, another girl in care ran after me. She was calling my name, telling me to come back. She never caught up with me. I got brought back by the police later. When I went in I saw SNR SNR assaulting EQF. EQF was a nice person. She wasn't like me at all. She conformed. He had her on the floor was hitting her and beating her. I am sure that it was because I had run away. He pulled her dangly earrings out. He was beating

her and he was lying on top of her. He had an office and it was in the corridor just outside. I jumped on top of him and was punching and kicking him to get him off her. I managed to push him off and he was a big man. He would spit, he was constantly spitting and the spit would go in your face.

76. It wasn't until I was older that I realised that he was aroused when this was going on and he was pushing himself against us. He obviously had an erection but I didn't know that then. He was horrible to EQF and called her lots of names. She was Asian and he constantly called her a Paki. I did speak to EQF about that recently. I felt guilty because I had thought it was because I had run away that he set upon her. She said that he did it all the time and he always called her a Paki. We didn't know about racism in those days but that is what it was. Every opportunity that he got after that he would try and goad me into fighting back at him.
77. There were other girls there that time he was assaulting EQF. I never saw him assaulting any other girls like that but I heard them talking about it. They all avoided going near him too. Mr MSH never actually sexually assaulted me but he was aroused that day. I didn't realise at the time but when I was older I realised that he was.

Reporting of abuse at Langlands Park

78. When the police took me back to Langlands they never asked anything in those days. I told the police what he was like and what he would do when I got back. It was almost like they were all part of it. They weren't interested because it was a home for bad girls really.

Leaving Langlands

79. I was really difficult with Mr MSH. I would pick up things like chairs and throw them at him. I assaulted him and I just fought back constantly. I told him that I was telling


the police. I think he said to the social worker that he didn't want me anymore and I was taken back to Beechwood.

Beechwood third visit

80. I am not sure how long I was in Beechwood this time, possibly a matter of months. At one point I went to Balnacraig but I was only there overnight. I went to a children's panel at some point and it may have been this time I was at Beechwood. I am not sure why I went back to the children's panel that time. I think it was all just part of the decision making process. I went to the children's panel several times when I was in care.

Aycliffe School, County Durham

81. I have no recollection of leaving Beechwood. Mrs MSL and Mrs MSK must have managed to drug me because all I remember is waking up somewhere else and I was in my nightdress. I was somewhere else and everything was different. The people who were coming in to see me had a different accent. I was later told that I was at Aycliffe in County Durham and it wasn't Scotland. I was told I had been brought in by Mrs MSK and Mrs MSL and I was under the influence of drugs. Staff complained because of the state I was in when I was brought in. Mrs MSK and Mrs MSL apparently took my clothes off me and put me in my nightwear.

82. Secondary Institutions - to be published later
- 

83. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

84.

85.

86.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

87.

88.

89.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

90.

91.

92.

93.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

94.

95.

96.

97.

98.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

99.

100.

101.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

102.

103.

104.

Leaving

105. I left Aycliffe and went back to what felt like my home, Beechwood. I then went to somewhere called Roberton in the west end of Glasgow. It was in quite a posh area.

Roberton House, Glasgow

106.	Secondary Institutions - to be published later
107.	
108.	
109.	

Life after Robertson

110. When I was at Robertson I was told that if I didn't go and live with my mother I was going to go to Cornton Vale which was like a prison. I didn't have a choice so I went to live with my mum in a flat in Castlemilk. I was still fifteen and I went to school in Castlemilk. I hated it with my mum. She lived with a man who was an alcoholic. She had four other children by this point. I don't think I was there long, I ran away and went home to live with my dad. I think that was the point I suppose that I left the care system.
111. When I was fifteen I got involved with a bad crowd. Some of the Beechwood girls used to go about with some of the boys from Larchgrove. One time I was in a stolen car, and I was later charged with attempted murder and for being in a stolen car. I was released at that time and I went down to England. About a year later I had to come back to Scotland and appear at court again for sentencing. The attempted murder charge was dropped but I was sent to Cornton Vale young offenders institution for three months, although that was reduced to two months.

Cornton Vale Young Offenders Institution

112. At Cornton Vale I was locked up a lot but the prison officers were respectful. There was nothing apart from being locked up that could be considered abuse or bad treatment. There was routine and everything was ok. I was locked up most of the day and couldn't get out because I was under age and couldn't mix with the other prisoners. I was used to being in isolation from the other places I had been.

Life after being in care

113. When I was sixteen I managed to get digs with an old lady who owned a three bedroom detached house in Surrey. I rented a room. I worked in Gatwick airport cleaning the aeroplanes. I worked in a pub before I was eighteen. I was a collector for Littlewoods Pools. I had lots of jobs and I earned enough money to live off. I went to Kingston

Polytechnic for two years to do O' levels. I did English, history, general studies and two other subjects. It was hard work but I passed them.

114. I ended up working in a home for the elderly as a care assistant and did some in-house training. I went to Gilford College of Technology to do a certificate in social care which was paid for by the council in the care home that I was working for. I progressed from there and went to work in an adolescent unit for Surrey County Council. I didn't realise what a mistake that would be because it was just like going back into care. The biggest mistake I ever made. I didn't realise it at the time.
115. I worked there for about a year and a half and then moved to a family centre in Kingston. The idea at that time was rather than bring children into care they brought the whole family in. It was a fantastic idea to prevent children from actually being separated from their parents but that was a load of bullshit. What they actually did was bring the families in and set them up to fail and took the children away anyway. I was completely disillusioned by all of that and decided I didn't want to work in social work.
116. I then trained as a psycho-dynamic counsellor. It was a two year diploma course. I was working at the same time to pay for my training. I worked in the London Lighthouse which was HIV, and Aids and a woman's centre in Kingston. As a counsellor you were made to have your own counselling in order to do this. I gave a whole load of bullshit and lies. I didn't speak about anything to do with me. The stories were made up and I did it to get through the course. I got my diploma in psycho-dynamic counselling and then decided that I wanted to train as a social worker and I was given funding for this. I went into adult social care and decided to stay clear of children and young persons because I knew I would be there for the wrong reason. I had more fire in my belly for children and I had seen injustice so I knew I was more of a liability than a support to young people.
117. I worked in adult social care when the community care act came in and it was divided between purchases and providers. I went over to purchasing in the care management side. I was involved in assessments and told the providers what services were required. I decided that this was not what I went into social work for. I did other jobs in

social care before I moved over to specialise in forensic mental health. I was working with people coming out of long term institutions back in to the community. I did a piece of work with [REDACTED] because the powers that be had decided to close the woman's services. The voluntary organisation that I was working with at that time commissioned to set up services for the women to come in to the community. I did the assessments and risk assessments and helped to establish a house in the middle of West London to bring these women in to the community.

118. I lived in England until August 2017, then came back up to Scotland. I have worked since I went back after my maternity leave. I am still working and work in the contract and commissioning side of adult social care.

Impact

119. At primary school one of my biggest achievements was being the head of my class in maths, although referred to as Arithmetic in my primary school. I had a natural aptitude for maths and proud of getting gold stars and recognition for my good maths work at school. Whilst in Balgay cooler, I spent hours and days meticulously counting, adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing the bricks and even all the cracks in the brick work within that cell. This was my way of breaking the boredom and maintaining my sanity. This could well have been a sign that I was losing my sanity. As a consequence I am now unable to do any maths work without panicking to the extent that I will not apply for any post that has or potentially has an aptitude test. I do have tasks within my professional roles which involves maths including budget management but I find ways around coping and managing this. I can easily become highly anxious and have panic attacks. I avoid anything to do with maths.
120. The fear and panic in this area for me can be quite extreme. Even simple day to day tasks such as paying bills can throw me into a panic. This is very important for me to highlight because of the impact on my day to day life and the great loss of what was once pleasure and a natural skill for me. My partner had to help my daughter when she needed assistance with her homework.

121. When I was sixteen and left Scotland, I was an angry person. My fantasy was that I was going to meet Mr MSH and Secondary Institutions - and kill them. I wanted to get rid of them out of my system. If either of them are alive today there is part of me that would take pleasure out of them trying to justify their behaviours, I would like to see them look at me in the eye because there was no reason or justification for it. They were not threatened.
122. When I was able, years later, to have my own place and a telephone, EQF called me and I would avoid her calls. For years and years I hid the burden of the guilt that the beating EQF had received at Langlands Park had been because of me. I know now that it wasn't. I can still smell that man to this day. I can't remember the smell of my partner who died earlier this year yet I can still smell Mr MSH.
123. The time that I was involved in the stolen car showed up on my disclosure record for years. There was also theft of sweets and theft of coal, all of them showed up in the police checks. For a number of years it didn't show up and then started to show up again for some reason. I was mortified every time I went for a job interview. I had this pre-programmed story in my head and I told them that I was brought up in the care system. I wrote asking for the convictions to be taken off my record. By the time I came back up to Scotland they had been removed.
124. I am now very aware, no matter where I go in my life, that I always have to find where the nearest exit is. I always feel constantly on guard and I can't shake it. I am always alert anywhere I go, although shops are the worst. I have always had problems trusting anybody, not just men. It took a long time to trust my partner and I am not too sure whether I ever got to the point that I totally trusted him. We had been together 26 years and I know that when I woke up in the mornings with him, I had the same sense of despondency. I knew that was to do with how I was and how I feel but it would gradually go away during the day.
125. It still happens but it happens more strongly since died and this is probably me grieving. I think I carry a huge amount of guilt as a survivor. Guilt about how my dad was treated. My family were completely affected by it. I believe if I had not been taken

into care I wouldn't have left Scotland. I don't know what would have happened to my life but I think that I was smart enough to know that I would have done something with my life. I would have tried to get an education in Scotland.

126. My sisters wouldn't have been affected by me being taken away. They were frightened of being taken into care and they lived with that for the period I was in care. My dad was affected, he was distressed and upset and I think I was blamed for that by two of my sisters. We lost any kind of closeness we should have had as a family. I have got three sisters with whom I communicate with but there is nothing, there is no familiness about our contact. I know that me being taken in to care impacted upon that. For my father, his children became his whole life and for me to be dragged away in front of him it was distressing. That was at a time when men didn't cry and that would have impacted on him crying in front of me. That guilt has lived with me. Before going into care I would wake up cold and hungry but not miserable or unhappy and no stress. Now I don't know what it is like to wake up without stress. I know I should go for some kind of appropriate counselling but I don't trust counsellors.
127. My education has had a big impact on my life and I feel so angry about it. From the time I went into care I was told that there was something wrong with me, that I wasn't intelligent. At meetings the terminology used was that I was educationally subnormal. Mrs MSL and Mrs MSK in particular gave me the impression that I needed to be in a special school and I was backward. ESN which stands for educationally sub normal was written on my reports. My IQ was very low so I have hang ups about that. When I came out my primary school I was able to read and write. By the time I went down south to England when I was fifteen I couldn't tell the time. I could read and write but my spelling was ridiculous and I struggled. My behaviour and the separation impacted on my life. I think I would have done okay at school and I am sure I would have gone on to further education. The schools were not brilliant in the east end of Glasgow but the lack of education hugely hindered me. I have been left with no confidence.
128. I did go on to get a post-graduate qualification. I am still in the process of doing an MA but it has taken so many years. I have now got to the point of diploma level, moving

on to the masters level. I just can't seem to do things that other people do and I think that the lack of education during that period, eleven to sixteen was quite a crucial learning period that I missed out on.

129. I had real problems sustaining pregnancies. I genuinely believed that it was a combination of Secondary Institutions - to be published later and the medication I was forced to take. I don't know whether it is true or not but it is what I believed. I believed that in my head and particularly Secondary Institutions - to be published later Secondary Institutions - to be published later Secondary and that the medication hadn't helped.

130. Every day something happens that reminds me about my time in care. There is not a day goes by that I don't think about it. It is not in great detail and sometimes it could be a smell, a certain noise, a building or seeing a similar looking person that brings the thoughts back. I cannot bear big buildings. I hate walking into them, yet most of my work is in buildings like that. I have to live with that. I don't sit and cry over it but I live with this impact. I am under a huge amount of stress. I want to run, that is all I want to do. That is what the care system has made me want to do, run away. It is not that I don't want to face these issues, I just want to run away. That feeling is there, constantly.

131. The way I am has affected my daughter. I realise that along the way I have implanted my fears to her. It wasn't until [REDACTED] had gone that I realised that she is very risk aware and she shouldn't be and that is me that has done that. It is not such a bad thing but mine is over the top and I think some of that was planted some on her.

Treatment / support

132. When I was at Beechwood and refused to sleep and was hallucinating, Mrs MSK organised for me to go to and I was admitted to the psychiatric ward within Gartloch psychiatric hospital. I was twelve. I am not sure how long I was in there but my records

indicate I was in there for a week. My time there was horrendous. I think I did get a sleep but didn't feel any better when I left.

133. I have seen a counsellor but that has been since the death of my partner and was in relation to me grieving. My counsellor tried to touch on my issue of always needing to find an exit. She said I had something like combat stress which kind of fits in a way because I am always alert.
134. I have not received any treatment or therapy of my own in relation to my time in care. I avoided it like the plague and even didn't really comply when I was supposed to get counselling when I was doing my training to be a counsellor. I avoided that. I was aware that I probably needed counselling but there was nothing in me that wanted to go down that road. I am the same now. I don't want to go down the route of counselling, I am not ready really. This is the first time that I have sat down and told my story.

Reporting of Abuse

135. Years ago I met with Fred Edwards who was a director of social services for Glasgow. I must have been in my twenties. From that meeting I actually met with Elizabeth Jack again and she was quite high up at this time in social work. I think she was some kind of senior manager in Strathclyde. I spoke to them about all of this so along the way I attempted to tell my story.
136. In 2001 I made a complaint in writing to Glasgow City council. At that time the director of social services was Ronnie O'Connor. I lodged a complaint about everything that happened in Langlands Park, Balgay, Aycliffe and Beechwood. I spent two or three years communicating with them. In November 2002 Alison Burnside, the child protection officer allocated to my case, wrote and told me they were going to involve the police to investigate the abuse because my allegations were so serious. I wrote back but told them I didn't feel comfortable with this taking place in my own home as I did not want that to come into my world in Surrey. I was not comfortable with the possibility of information being shared with local agencies. I live and work within the

local community and I wished to maintain my privacy. I said I would welcome the police getting involved but nothing ever happened. They never did anything about it. This all started in 2001 and by the time it got to 2003, when it was still in negotiation, I fell pregnant and after that I just focused on being a mum. I still have all this correspondence.

137. I didn't contact the police myself because I was living in Surrey at the time. I didn't want anything of my childhood to be brought into that world. Scottish social services had suggested that the police see me down in Surrey and I think that they were using that as a way of preventing me from following up my complaint. At one point they told me they would have to contact my local social services and I said there is no way I wanted them to do that. My life is down here. I wanted to keep the two worlds separate. I offered to go up to Scotland. I think they realised that was stressing me out and I didn't want to do that so they kind of used that as a form of trying to get me not to take it any further.

Records

138. I tried to get my records in 2001 from Glasgow city council but they said that the care homes in Glasgow didn't have any records as they had been destroyed. I had to battle with them and eventually they gave me some records. I was told they had approached Aycliffe for my notes. Aycliffe stated that they didn't have any. Langlands Park, which is apparently run by the Church of Scotland, didn't keep records either. I didn't trust Glasgow social services. When I pushed and pushed, eventually they came up with some of my records. I believe that more of my records will be held somewhere. I stopped pursuing things in 2003 because I fell pregnant and had a different focus. I feel that what they gave me in my records is hand-picked and very selective.

139. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

140.

141. According to my records it would appear that applications were made to continue my time in care. Neither myself or my dad ever seemed to have a part or say in this part of the process. This was all decided without our knowledge.

Lessons to be Learned

142. Even in the 1970s people were trained. They were aware and they knew the difference between right and wrong and what poor practice was. They knew what abuse was. There was no excuse for Secondary Institutions - to be published later Mr MSH's behaviour, or for Miss MSM sitting on me. There was no excuse for the regimes or the processes or the policies. No level of ignorance would make that excusable. The people that did these things knew that they were doing wrong, and not in line with good practice.
143. There was all sorts of training and knowledge on child care. People like Dr Hoghugh, when he was in charge at Aycliffe made their fortune out of that. There was not a lack of training or knowledge. and at that point actually knowledge was being developed around good practice and good child care. I don't know if there is any more learning to come out of this process.

Hopes for the Inquiry

144. My main hope for the Inquiry is that people who have done these things will be held accountable. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. They have no guilt because they thought that it was okay to do what they did.

Other information

145. 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..... [REDACTED]

Dated..... 21.2.2019.....