

## **Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

KTV

Support person present: No.

1. My name is KTV. My date of birth is 1972.  
My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### **Qualifications/employment history**

2. I have a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Ulster at Coleraine. After that, I went in to work in various places. I worked in Extern West, which is a Northern Irish probation service for young people and then worked in an NSPCC nursery. I also did a little bit of work for Barnardo's before going to work with a homelessness organisation and then residential services in Northern Ireland, working in children's homes.
3. My understanding is that after the Kincora Boys' Home abuse scandal, people working in children's homes in Northern Ireland had to be largely qualified social workers. Because I wasn't a qualified social worker, I wasn't allowed to have a key child or write reports or do anything that was statutory. I did case notes and managing kids, day to day things. I worked in two separate units. One was for younger children up to the age of about eleven and was called the Cottage. I then worked in Harberton House, which was for older kids, teenagers up to the age of seventeen, eighteen.
4. It was the time of the Northern Irish Troubles so we did a lot of work around conflict resolution and anti-sectarianism. It was quite an intensive period, given the

circumstances, but I absolutely loved it. Because the service had qualified social workers in it, they had therapy rooms and psychologists attached. It was following the Swedish model. It had a throughcare aftercare service, so I had been used to that for many years before moving to Edinburgh. That meant that it was all very planned and stabilised for the children who were going into those units. Children would automatically get driving lessons when they turned seventeen. If they wanted to do horse riding, they could do it. There were lots of meetings with schools. Some of the kids went on to university. There was a lot of investment and a lot of money, but it worked. I was really enthused by that and realised social work was really what I wanted to do.

5. Within Harberton House, I would have had basic child protection, adult protection and mental health training. I also received training in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI), which was about de-escalation. TCI was very rarely used. I think I saw it being used fully once in the five years that I was there. Even the cooks and the cleaners were trained in basic child protection because everyone in that unit saw the same things. Sometimes, the cook knew everything. The kids were all hanging around, cleaning out the bowl when she was cooking buns and licking the spoon. She would pick up on certain bits and pieces and say that so-and-so didn't look right. The thought was that training should be universal so there was a real encouragement to train.
6. I applied for social work and got into Queen's University in Belfast. I did a Diploma and Master's in social work. I completed that and then went back to work in Harberton House. Not long after that, my boyfriend at the time who was a lecturer and was offered a job at the University of Edinburgh. He suggested that I come along.
7. I applied to St. Katharine's after seeing an advert in 'Community Care' magazine. I went across and did an interview in Edinburgh, which was quite extensive. I did not last long at St. Katharine's. I left after less than a year. I then went into a service called Working Together. I was seconded there, which technically I wasn't allowed. However, a senior in St. Katharine's was really supportive and encouraged me to go. Working Together was a brand new service working with kids in transition. The whole point of it was that before kids hit the practice teams and child protection measures, you would

pick them up at pupil support groups (PSGs) in each school. Various local professionals, such as doctors and police officers, would be involved in the PSGs. The idea was that we would get the kids who were maybe on the cusp of going into high school but really struggling, going down a route of crime and other difficulties. We'd pick them up as a service and do transitional group work and one-to-one work with them.

8. After Working Together, I moved onto Panmure House girls' group. Over the years, I did a lot of mental health training and CALM training, all the bits you do as mandatory training as part of your job. I then briefly went to Portsmouth where I worked in child protection teams and was there for a couple of years. I did joint interviews and responded to duty phone calls. I completed initial assessments to decide whether a case needed to reach child protection levels. Through that job, I completed mandatory training much of which was linked to child protection. While there, I also completed a post-qualifying certificate in childcare which focused on domestic abuse. I then started my practice teaching but returned to Edinburgh as the planned move was only short term.
9. When I returned to Edinburgh, I got a job in service development within children's services. We were based initially in Waterloo Place and then moved to Waverley Court. The work involved quality assurance, prepping teams for child protection inspection and reviewing services. A large part of that job involved working very closely with the lead for the child protection committee. We tried to make sure that the service users were heavily involved in the development of services and their voices were heard. Having experienced St. Katharine's, it encouraged me to make sure that service users were involved and had a voice. I was still doing the child protection work, but at a more strategic level.
10. While I was in that job, I did executive management coaching through Strathclyde University. That included pro-social modelling, coaching and motivational interviewing. The aim was that I'd then be a point of contact for various people in the department. It was almost like peer coaching to push forward good practice among the senior management team.

11. From my post in service development, I moved to justice services. I started off as the Sex Offender Liaison Officer for [REDACTED] I was based in [REDACTED], working alongside Police Scotland colleagues. I would chair all the risk management case conferences for sex offenders who were in [REDACTED]. I was also the point of contact for the department in relation to sex offenders information. The work included me sitting on Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). In that job, I completed risk management training and was trained to input onto ViSOR police systems. I also completed MAPPA chairs training.
12. I moved from that role and went into a practice team as a senior social worker. I became a [REDACTED] for the Caledonian Programme, which is the Scottish Government's accredited domestic abuse programme. I am also Adult Protection Level 3 trained, enabling me to chair adult protection case conferences. I am currently a [REDACTED] in West Lothian Council. I have spent almost thirty years working in the field of social work, half in children's services and half in adult justice services.

### **Experiences at St. Katharine's Secure Unit, Balmwell Terrace, Edinburgh**

#### *Recruitment*

13. I applied for the job at St. Katharine's in 1999. I was a qualified social worker at the time and I thought all the staff would be the same. The interview process involved several days of assessment held at the Festival Theatre in Edinburgh. I was really impressed by the process.
14. The assessment involved psychometric testing and group activities, such as case studies, scenarios and workshops. I got a sense that they were testing your ethics, morals, your sense of what the job was, trauma, working with kids, multidisciplinary work and sharing. Frank Phelan was present and coordinating the interviews. I thought that he was [REDACTED] boss and oversaw Howdenhall Assessment Centre, but I was never entirely sure of his role. [REDACTED] was [REDACTED] of St. Katharine's.



During the assessment process, Frank Phelan was sitting in the corner along with someone else, observing and making notes.

15. As part of the process, I visited Howdenhall, which in retrospect I believe was a sister unit to St. Katharine's. At Howdenhall, the kids met me for tea and interviewed me as part of the process. One of the things that struck me was Howdenhall's run down exterior and interior. I was so used to the investment in children's homes in Northern Ireland. Howdenhall was dark and dingy, but the kids were lovely. They quizzed me constantly but made me feel at ease.
16. When I arrived at Howdenhall, I was signed in by Peter McCluskey, who I believe was the senior there. He enquired about my surname and it transpired that he had worked with my mum in social work in Northern Ireland. It also turned out that his partner at the time taught my friends German in their boys' school. It gave me a sense of familiarity, particularly when I had never been to Edinburgh before. Given this and the assessment process, I was excited and couldn't wait to start but I did have some reservations.
17. At the assessment interview, there was a male in the group who said that he worked in Howdenhall and sometimes St. Katharine's. As we discussed scenarios, he told the group that when the kids were feeling really uptight, the staff would sometimes roll them a joint. He also said that he gave out condoms to the children. He said that he was been directed to do so and that the staff were being told that it was "better to be safe than sorry" if they were having sex. I thought that he was joking. I thought that it must be a test because the manager, Frank Phelan, was sitting there but he didn't react.
18. The male also made comments during a social work case study. The case study involved being on an island and you have a raft with x amount of people on it. You have to choose who is going on the raft. They will then drip feed you information, that adds to your decision making in relation to the case study. During the case study, the male who worked at Howdenhall made comments like, "Don't take the disabled person. They're dead weight with their wheelchair. What would they be able to do

anyway?" He'd also say things about women like, "Women only have kids, so what would they bring to society?" I think he worked at Howdenhall and St. Katharine's temporarily and was there to apply for a permanent post.

19. Everyone in the group were raising concerns about the comments the male was making. His comments about the condoms instigated a huge debate amongst the group. The male subsequently disappeared from the assessment process. Frank Phelan spoke to the interviewee group afterwards and said that the male wouldn't be coming back. Looking back, it was concerning that he had ever been employed by them. I didn't know what to make of it.
20. At the end of the week, I had my own one-on-one interview with Frank Phelan where he was aware that I was a qualified social worker. On the back of what I had just experienced at the assessment process, I asked him if people were qualified at the units. He said that they were. I told him that I had some concerns about the male in the group who had been saying things. I told him that I had gone for coffee with people after the group session and they had told me that St. Katharine's had been the subject of lots of investigations. He assured me that was in the past and that was why they were doing the assessment centres. He said they were to wheedle out any bad practice. That reassured me again.
21. I went back to Northern Ireland and returned to my job at Harberton House. I got a phone call to say that they were offering me the post at St. Katharine's. I know that my manager told me they gave references.

#### *The institution*

22. I was at St. Katharine's from November 1999 and I wasn't there long. I think I was there for about eight or nine months until the summer of 2000. St. Katharine's was at Balmwell Terrace, just past Howdenhall Police Station and at the back of Captains Road. There was St. Katharine's Secure Unit and Alison Open Unit. There was then another building that was never really used and I'm not sure what it was for. My

understanding of secure accommodation was that it was for children at risk of harm to themselves or others, and was to my understanding supposed to be a short stop-gap.

23. The reasons children were in the unit were varied. There were kids there who had committed serious crimes alongside children who were maybe beyond parental control. The youngest child when I was there was about ten or eleven and the oldest was about seventeen, eighteen if I remember rightly.

*First impressions*

24. My impressions of St. Katharine's started with the interview process. I went on to form more impressions when I arrived. On my first day of work, I was taken into the conference room where I was told to wait. The door was open so I could see right down the corridor. I could see through the glass into the reception and the door with people coming in. Two men seemed to come out of the secure unit, one behind the other. One grabbed the other around the waist and they grappled each other to the ground. They began to punch and grapple each other and they were shouting. What initially seemed quite jokey very quickly turned aggressive. It was my first day. I thought it was a fight.
25. I was used to working in units so I stood up naturally. One thing I had learned about working with children and probably more so when I worked in justice was being very aware of where I sat. It was all about escape routes and very engrained in you as a safety measure. I went to stand up and I could feel my heart. I was wondering what was happening but it wasn't registering because they were grown men. One of the men stood up, walked towards me and said, "Hi, I'm KEI [REDACTED]. I'm senior for the unit." Looking back and based on my memory of how the person looked, I believe that the other male must have been KEH [REDACTED]. I would come to discover that heavy horseplay was indicative and it was daily at St. Katharine's.
26. I was shocked. I began to think about some of the things that had been said at the interview. I persuaded myself that I might not be there for long and it might be a stop-gap in terms of work. I thought that I could find something else.

27. About two weeks into my time at St. Katharine's, I witnessed a member of staff running in the secure unit after a boy of about fourteen called PCX. At the beginning, it appeared jovial. The member of staff went into the office and grabbed a drill that was on the desk. He forcibly put PCX to the ground by grabbing his arms and unbalancing him using his feet to PCX legs. He then straddled him. He put the drill against his head and turned it on until blood trickled down PCX head. PCX began screaming and shouting and the whole tone changed. It turned into a restraint.
28. The culture within the unit became very apparent. The sectarianism started quickly. I was asked "what foot I kicked with", an expression I'd never heard in my life. That comment came from a male member of staff who had been shipped out of Howdenhall. I can't remember his name, but there had been concerns about his practice. He was an older man, short and stocky with dark hair. I was wondering why he had been moved to St. Katharine's if there had been concerns about him. He also accused me of being some sort of spy because I was staying with Peter McClusky at the time. There were lots of racial, Irish jokes. There was lots of misogyny. I was called a "wifey" repeatedly, which again was not a term that I had ever heard. That was just what females in the unit were referred to as being. That culture dehumanises people.
29. That happened within the first couple of weeks. Before I arrived at St. Katharine's, I didn't know that it had already been under investigation. While there, I was told by several staff that investigations had been happening very frequently. Staff had already been leaving and I was told they one person in particular had threatened to go to the newspapers and the police. When I look back, if those investigations had taken place then why were these things still happening? But I can also see why I was met with some suspicion because I came in as a qualified social worker, which wasn't usual in Edinburgh.
30. Very quickly, I was beginning to ask more questions but I was also quite intimidated. I didn't want to push too much. I felt like I was always trying to strike a balance. I couldn't understand why this was going on in the presence of senior staff.

## *Culture*

31. As described, the culture at St. Katharine's could be misogynist, racist and sectarian. It could also lack insight into the needs of children and could be extremely aggressive, although not everyone was like this and there was a set of people who did actively speak out. Some staff had a very protective relationship towards the children. You knew right away who those staff were. We would kind of gather like atoms in a science lab. We kind of merged together. You were also very aware of not being together. We would wait until it was quiet to have a cup of tea together and say, "Oh my God, did you see what I just saw?" You wouldn't do that in front of other people because that would mean you were really targeted.
32. Speaking out was difficult because some of those in senior roles were quite powerful and often dictated what was happening in the unit. For example, LUZ [REDACTED] who was SNR [REDACTED] and KEH [REDACTED] who was one of the seniors. He was particularly aggressive and on one occasion I was physically assaulted by him in the secure unit office, in front of the kids. That was a measure of how extreme the behaviours could become. There were drugs filtering through the unit and on occasion these were found. I was aware of a member of staff who was offered drugs by other members of staff.
33. I can always remember a member of staff saying that it wasn't children's services and that we were run by the SPS (Scottish Prison Service). I'm not aware of staff at St. Katharine's coming from an SPS background, but there were staff who had army experience. There was a kind of toxic masculinity. There were some staff who were constantly involved in restraints. The alarms would go off five, six, seven times a day, often for very little reason. At the time, I felt that certain staff were on a power trip and appeared over-stimulated by getting involved in the restraints. There were occasions when some staff were inappropriate with the girls, such as texting them and being alone with them.
34. There appeared to be a tiered staff system. There were those who tore up complaint forms and intimidated you physically and verbally. An example of the threat was when



LUZ [REDACTED] told me that I'd never work in social work again when I raised concerns. LUZ [REDACTED] appeared to be best friends with KEH [REDACTED] and KZB [REDACTED] and they presented as being extremely powerful. The atmosphere changed when they came into the unit. Other staff often reminded you of how close they were. For example, I was told that KEH [REDACTED] was dating LUZ [REDACTED] sister. I was also told that KEH [REDACTED] was supporting KZB [REDACTED] to do social work and was helping him with his essays. All of this second-hand information reinforced that this was true, that they were a clique and that they would have each other's backs. There were also quiet members of staff who were always involved in restraints and appeared complicit. They didn't seem to openly challenge anything. One of those was later convicted of sexual offences, Kevin Clancy. There were also those like KEI [REDACTED], who was complicit and quiet in a different way, such as helping documents to go missing.

35. There was a group of us who were questioning what was going on. For example, KEO [REDACTED] tore up a Care Inspectorate report in a team meeting because it didn't reflect the concerns that staff had raised with the inspector. He threw it onto the table and said that it wasn't worth the paper it was written on. We did have a couple of seniors who were questioning what was happening and were supportive, like Peter Fleming.
36. These conflicting staff approaches made for a very combustible, constantly chaotic atmosphere. I was trying to keep some stability. I used to do activities with the children, like face painting, pancake-making, movie nights. I was also trying to make sure my case notes and care plans were updated. I tried to make sure that the kids were getting leafletted information. However, on one occasion I can remember putting up a poster about the Human Rights Convention for Children. I found it torn up in big pieces and sat on top of the bin, not hidden. I would often say to the kids that the staff had nothing to hide and that we had to be transparent. I told them that they should come forward if they had a concerns, but often complaint forms would also go missing.



### *Layout and Structure*

37. As you came in through the front door, there was a large reception office to the right. It had a glass frontage. There was a big door right in front of you which led to the secure unit. Along the corridor but opposite the main reception, there was a toilet and a cupboard where you could make a cup of tea. There was also a conference room and a little office where staff could type their reports.
38. When you came into the actual secure unit where the children stayed, there was a square space with several tables where they could eat. The tables weren't bolted down when I first arrived but I think they may have been by the time I left. There were several doors off that main dining space, one that led to the bedrooms, one that led to the living room, one that led to the staff office, which had glass all around it, and one that led to the kitchen. It was small and if there was an incident it could be claustrophobic. The whole secure unit had a courtyard in the centre. There were doors from the bedrooms leading to the courtyard. Children could go out and smoke in the courtyard.

### *Staff structure*

39. LUZ [REDACTED] was SNR [REDACTED], but I was never entirely sure what Frank Phelan's role was. However, when there was a further investigation during my time at the unit and Frank gave a speech to the staff, I assumed that he was slightly superior to LUZ [REDACTED]. I was never quite sure. Frank was involved in a lot of the assessment of me when I was recruited. If he did have a role at St. Katharine's, he appeared to be very hands off.
40. It's difficult to describe LUZ [REDACTED] style. In my opinion, things felt off with his [REDACTED] demeanour and boundaries. For example, he would bring his children into the actual secure unit where there were other children who had committed serious offences. Another example was that a social worker from one of the practice teams told me that LUZ [REDACTED] turned up at a social workers' 5-a-side football game with a kid from the unit, but this is second hand information. He could be intimidating, but quietly so. On occasion, he would try to gaslight me and say that the social work that I had done

in Northern Ireland was not the same as social work in Scotland. There was an underlying tone about "paddies". He appeared to be close to KEH [REDACTED]. It often felt that orders came from LUZ [REDACTED] and were carried out by KEH [REDACTED]. In turn, KEH [REDACTED] then did the same with KZB [REDACTED]. To be clear, the orders that LUZ [REDACTED] gave KEH [REDACTED] were not practice or procedure related. They appeared to be designed to intimidate.

41. [REDACTED] LUZ [REDACTED] there were several seniors, KEH [REDACTED] and KEI [REDACTED] and later on Patrick Walker and Peter Fleming. Patrick and Peter always presented as very supportive to me. There may have been a couple of other seniors, but I can't remember their names. Below the seniors were the residential care officers, which was my role. There may have been approximately twenty of us.
42. We worked via a rota system, rotating between the secure and open units. However, there were some staff who only appeared to work in the secure unit. In the open unit, I think that the ratio of staff to children was less than in the secure unit. In the secure unit, there were maybe three staff on duty at any one time. There was a separate waking night duty system with a staff member who stayed awake and responded if a child's buzzer went off. There was 24 hour staffing.
43. Among the residential care frontline staff, I think that I was the only qualified social worker but I believe that KZB [REDACTED] was training to be a social worker. The only reason I believe that this was the case is because the head teacher in the education department had pointed it out to me. They asked me why I was working there when I was a qualified social worker and were shocked. At this point, I realised that what I'd been told at the assessment centre about people being qualified wasn't actually correct.
44. There were other care workers who started at the same time as me. They were very much of a similar character to me. They were all still there when I left the job. I remained friends with one of them, who told me that she saw a lot more after I left. One of the staff, who I met through the assessment process, went on to work in Howdenhall. She later told me that she left because she found a member of staff passing a joint to a kid and smoking it with them outside the unit. I don't know the

name of the member of staff involved in this, but the person that I knew left that job quickly.

#### *Recruitment of staff*

45. I wasn't involved in the recruitment of staff to St. Katharine's. I'm not aware of any volunteers working there, although there was an Australian member of staff who came on an exchange. She wasn't a volunteer. There might have been agency workers, but I can't remember.

#### *Supervision/appraisal*

46. There was regular supervision to discuss cases and your work practice. We also had team meetings to discuss service development. In 2005 and while working at Waverley Court, I was one of the leads for introducing the new appraisal system. I wasn't aware of it existing before this. We had a handover between shifts. We would discuss any issues of concern or a dynamic within the group.
47. As a social worker, you have statutory supervision and this should be held frequently. As a qualified social worker, there is also informal supervision where there should be an open door policy and you can discuss any concerns on an ad hoc basis. There should be an action and an outcome as a result of concerns that are raised. These are standards within social work that I was used to prior to coming to St. Katharine's. This process was vaguely similar in St. Katharine's, but there did not appear to be a momentum to action concerns.
48. Initially, Robert Henderson oversaw supervision with me. However, I questioned the standard of the supervision that I was receiving. I wanted to be sure that I received supervision from someone capable and who understood safe practice. Supervision notes can be called in evidence, which I was acutely aware of given the things that I was experiencing in St. Katharine's.
49. At one point, Carol Mentiplay took over my supervision. I believe she was a team manager for children with disabilities and may have ran a residential unit for children

with disabilities called Seafield. She visited for supervision only. At the time, candidates who were successful following the assessment process at the Festival Theatre had to complete a six month probationary period. As part of that period, I had to gather evidence of group work, examples and observations to show that I understood the job. In supervision, I began to raise that while completing the portfolio of work I was leaving things out, like the drill incident or a child being bitten on the face or someone having their rib broken. It was becoming a meaningless process. It felt like I was being threatened with not getting a permanent job unless I significantly censored what I was seeing. That then made me question my integrity as a social worker.

50. Carol Mentiplay expressed shock at what I was telling her in supervision. She advised me to keep a separate notebook with dates and times of the incidents I witnessed, but not to put them in my portfolio examples. This notebook was given to the police many years later. I don't remember being formally supervised by anybody else. Given my role at the time, I would not have formally supervised another member of staff.

### *Training*

51. I think there was some basic child protection training and with any job in the council there are mandatory pieces of training that everyone has to do. That was all done in-house, but I did receive Crisis and Aggression Limitation Management (CALM) training. I think it was held at Musselburgh Quay Hotel and it may have lasted a day or two. It was supposed to be about the care and control of children with challenging behaviours.
52. My understanding at the time, based on what I was told, was that the training was developed by someone who used to work in residential services in Edinburgh. I had immediate queries about this given my experiences at St. Katharine's and the comments made by others at the training. The comments being made implied that they didn't understand the system. They were discussing CALM as restraint when it should be an entire process with restraint as a last resort.



53. I can't really remember other forms of training because they were just integral to the job. At the time, you could put yourself forward for specific pieces of training. I seem to remember a departmental newsletter that would have job vacancies, development opportunities and training.

*Policy/strategic planning*

54. I didn't have any responsibility for policy or strategic planning at St. Katharine's.

**Children/routine at St. Katharine's**

55. I remember there being about five or six beds in the secure unit, seven at most. There was a mixture of boys and girls. Most of the children were thirteen, fourteen, fifteen. The youngest we had was probably an eleven year old boy. The secure unit wasn't used in the way that I'd understood a secure unit to be used. The assessment of risk appeared to be misplaced. For example, there was a boy who had committed sexual offences alongside a girl who was beyond parental control and vulnerable to sexual abuse. Without an individualised approach and consideration of all the risks, children were being impacted and traumatised in different ways by each other and by staff.
56. I would have thought that most children who were sent to St. Katharine's came there via decisions made at the Children's Panel. I would have thought that the child's social worker would have been involved in the decision to send a child to a secure unit. It's my understanding that there may also be a meeting held with the secure unit seniors to discuss places and whether there's one available. I would have thought that the final sign off would have to come from the director of social work due to the financial costs.
57. I think that the length of time children were in St. Katharine's for varied. On occasion, some children seemed to languish there with an expectation that they'd move to the adult justice system without any meaningful intervention or work being done with them. I was only there for a number of months so I couldn't say whether children were there for years. Sometimes there could be new faces coming through before they got moved

to something else. St. Katharine's would be in regular communication with other secure units with regards spaces.

58. The number of children in the open unit depended. Sometimes, it could be quite empty in the open unit and other times it was completely full. I think there were about three or four beds there. Some children moved over to the open unit from the secure unit if they were assessed as lower risk. Others might be in the open unit on a parental voluntary basis and for a short period of time. The criteria was quite different. The atmosphere was different to the secure unit.

#### *Mealtimes/food*

59. Mealtimes at the secure unit were important, but the food could be quite poor in terms of balance. It was the usual, chips and haggis and potatoes. I can remember being on a late shift. The kids all went to their beds at a certain time. It was maybe 9:00 pm or 10:00 pm. They were put into their rooms and they were there from then on, unless they buzzed their buzzers. Sometimes they'd buzz and ask for drinks or comics. On this night, they were down in their rooms. I was in the kitchen and I remember saying to someone that there was really good stuff there, like racks of lamb. I remember wondering why the kids weren't getting really lovely meals. The food was made in a big kitchen in the secure unit where it was served immediately. The additional meals were brought across to the open unit in a trolley, which staff collected.
60. Everybody sat in a communal area within the secure unit and ate the food. There was no choice if the children didn't like the meal that was being served. Some staff in the secure unit were precious about the food. For example, they wouldn't give them a biscuit as a little snack or if they were hungry. There were others amongst us who would go out of our way to normalise it. For example, we would bring out some snacks to watch a movie. These children often hadn't experienced parental structure. Part of being a parent is just having jelly and ice cream and watching TV or doing something silly or playing a board game. It's those wee things that build up those memories. Some of us were trying to incorporate that.



61. Sometimes withholding food was used as a punishment. For example, I remember an incident where a girl had thrown a rubber to another child for them to use in the education wing. They were placed into their room for hours. This is one of many examples that I brought up in my supervision with Carol Mentiplay. It seemed like an extreme response and I felt that it was abusive.
62. A while later, I was in the secure unit office with a number of staff. It was all glass. There was a van parked outside along the side of the building. I could see door to back of the van were open. The male cook, who liked to wear a huge chef's hat and whites, was by the van. He appeared to be taking money from the driver and handing over huge pieces of meat in exchange. The claim was later made that he was selling them. There was no element of this service where you could trust that something was above board. Even the cook was selling the kids' food. It was a real feeling that these children were getting a raw deal.

#### *Sleeping Arrangements*

63. In the secure and open units, children had their own individual rooms. In the secure unit, they were locked in at night but they had a buzzer to draw attention to staff. The rooms were really basic in the secure unit. There were no sharp edges and it was almost like nothing in the bedrooms was separate. It was all built into a wall. The bed came out the wall and the sink was moulded in so nothing could be removed or pulled. It was very sterile. There was a window. The staff had control of the lights and blinds and children could be locked in. The rooms were stark. There was also a shower, sink and toilet in the room.
64. The rooms in the open unit were different. They were less sterile. Depending on the young person, some looked quite homely and some looked like they were just passing through.
65. I'm not aware of there being accommodation for staff to live in at St. Katharine's Secure Unit.

### *Leisure time/trips*

66. In the secure unit, there was a tiny little courtyard. Sometimes, children would be in that for leisure time. They could go out there, depending on staff availability and permission. I remember occasions when some of the young people tried to scale the walls from the courtyard, using crates or someone's shoulders to try and get over. I used to think that I didn't blame them. Some of them might have been in there for weeks and weeks without getting out.
67. Leisure time and trips weren't open to all children at all times. It depended on what individual staff deemed as risk or bad behaviour. That could be really fluid. Sometimes those decisions were reasonable, but sometimes it felt subjective depending on the member of staff. Children in the open unit were more likely to get to participate in activities. There would also be planned outings with staff. They would go to shopping centres or M&Ds theme park. We used to go to the beaches at Gullane or Longniddry.

### *Holidays*

68. I have a memory that they were trying to organise a holiday to Blackpool. I think that KZB might have been involved in that. I also have a strong memory that there was a discussion about going abroad as well, but I can't remember if they went. I don't remember being asked to go on trips like that. There seemed to be certain people who were involved, like KZB.

### *Healthcare*

69. The kids would be taken to the doctor if they had any health issues. There was a doctor down the road from St. Katharine's that we tended to use. That was certainly where I took a lot of the kids. It was down from Howdenhall towards Cameron Toll. I think it was on Gilmerton Road.
70. There were occasions when kids sustained injuries and medical attention was not sought. For example, KZB bit a child and there were teeth marks and

blood on the child's face. The child was not given medical treatment. Another child was injured during heavy restraint or what some staff like to call "horseplay". He was complaining about being in pain and could barely walk. He kept complaining about the rib. After several staff, including myself, insisted that medical attention be sought he was eventually taken to hospital. I'm sure it came back that the rib had been fractured.

### *Schooling*

71. There was a small education department in the secure unit. The children went to classes, but attendance could be quite inconsistent. If an incident occurred, the children would be kept in their rooms and wouldn't be able to attend class. The schooling tended to focus on art, maths and English. Some children flourished. It was the first place that they'd actually been able to sit in peace and create something. My memory is that it was one or two big rooms and there was a head teacher.
72. As part of your rota duties, staff would cover the education unit. I don't have a huge memory of covering it very often myself. If you remained within the secure unit, suddenly a kid would be marched back from the school and put into their room quite quickly. It often seemed that it was for something quite minor. On occasion, if something happened within the secure unit that staff had to deal with then children weren't able to be brought down to education.
73. On occasions, I would supervise an individual in a classroom who had started a project and wanted to finish it. This didn't require a teacher to be around. You could be a bit more flexible, but it very much depended on the worker being motivated to do it.
74. There was also a lack of giving homework and giving space to do homework and building on that. It's important but that wasn't done. There weren't really links to schools. In the open unit, sometimes they would get bits and pieces of homework and we'd do it round the table. It was much more open than the secure unit to allow them to do that. There were all these different things that were compounding a child's ability to have a complete and sustainable experience.

### *Visitors*

75. Social workers did visit, but in my memory it was rare. If a social worker asked to speak to a child then you would maybe close the door over and allow them time alone. Social workers would sometimes take children out of the open unit. They were in the open unit for different things and not necessarily a major risk to themselves or others. It was very much on an individual basis.
76. Parents and family members could visit children at St. Katharine's. Just before you went into the secure section, there was a visitor room. In my memory, it didn't happen often. My sense was that children in the secure unit were quite isolated. Mums and dads would pop in and out of the open unit quite regularly. They would leave things in or come in for a cup of tea. It was based on the needs of the child at the time or the parents' presentation. Parents would normally phone in advance.
77. Other than information we held in departmental records about family backgrounds, family visitors weren't specifically vetted. Letters sent into the unit also weren't opened. In later years, in another role within the council, I became aware of a child in St. Katharine's being sent inappropriate letters by an abuser who was in prison at the time. The letters only came to light by accident.

### *Review of care/placement*

78. Children who are looked after and accommodated by the local authority, whether it be on a voluntary supervision order or a full statutory order, have to be reviewed as part of that. You have regular reviews of their care and there would be plans. You would go back to the Children's Panel and assess what was appropriate next. There should be continuous planning. St. Katharine's should never be a long term plan. The plan should always be to look for something in the community, preferably back with a parent or with extended family if they're positive and supportive.
79. The reviews could be held in St. Katharine's, so sometimes they were held in the open unit but I didn't experience many. In between times, you might have individual planning

going on. These would form part of care plans. Not all staff recorded correctly. My experience at St. Katharine's was that some staff turned up to Hearing Panels having not provided a report. The response was that they didn't have time.

80. Following the secure unit, some children moved into the open unit. Some might go to another type of care arrangement with family. Some older children might work with Barnardo's and go to Rock Trust, where they had supported accommodation. On occasion, some young people progressed to custody due to the seriousness of their offence or behaviour. My experience at St. Katharine's was that the above processes could be inconsistent.
81. I'm not entirely sure whether children were given support and help from St. Katharine's after they left. My experience in Northern Ireland was of a throughcare service. This didn't seem to exist, certainly not in full or not explained to me. I wasn't entirely sure how throughcare support worked.

#### *Discipline and Punishment*

82. You would expect staff to respond to behaviours which placed a child or others at risk. The response you would expect would be to talk about an incident with the child. The approach in St. Katharine's was often that children were sent to their rooms.
83. I don't remember there being a specific punishment or discipline book where incidents were recorded. I'm also not aware of a policy about the types of behaviour that would result in a punishment. There was case recording so you might record in case notes within a child's paper file what had occurred and why a decision had been made. Some things were not written down or written in a way that explained why something had happened.
84. In my experience, if a child smashed up their room I understood that they were displaying feelings of anger rooted in trauma. I would talk about what happened before deciding whether they remained in the unit or went on an outing, but there was a counter balance. I would express that it wasn't acceptable and discuss the impact on

others and them. I would encourage them to take the space to calm down, tidy up the room and discuss with them what needed to be replaced. In St. Katharine's, it was straight to, "Go to your room." There wasn't a system wide attempt to explore what had occurred.

85. When a kid moves into a unit, they were often frightened and confused. Rules are discussed but I can't remember a meeting in which kids were sat down and staff went through rules systematically. A common a rule could be, "Don't go into each other's rooms."

86. In relation to staff, there were codes of conduct which were received with your offer of employment. It was called a disciplinary code, which I still have in my possession date stamped 26 August 1996. I understand fully that my job is to protect those kids in my care and to give them the best care available to me, despite the challenges. If you've got a member of staff whose agenda is completely different to mine, they will react and respond. It doesn't matter if you've got a policy and procedure written in stone. They're not going to follow it. Therefore, it is the manager's role to make sure these are adhered to.

#### *Restraint*

87. As an educated observer, I felt that the restraints were overly used and used as punishments because they appeared to be initiated and provoked by staff a lot of the time. Up until that point and in my experience, I had only seen one restraint, which resulted in staff holding a child but the person wasn't prone. He had gone beyond the point of de-escalation and had smashed up a mirror and he had a piece of it in his hand. He was going to hurt himself. The piece of mirror was eventually dropped but he was so heightened that he couldn't calm down and was hyperventilating. Two members of staff sat beside him and held his arms, helping him to breathe and using their free hand to mirror in and out in an attempt to calm him down. He then just sat and cried. That was the only time that I saw any restraint used in Northern Ireland.



88. In Edinburgh, the alarm went off constantly throughout the day. It could be for very random things and often bypassed the levels before using prone restraint. There was no attempt to de-escalate. Some staff were very aggressive. Frequently, the restraints were triggered by conduct or behaviour driven by staff. For example, I remember two members of staff rammed a kid with a table and pinned him against the wall. Understandably, the child reacted and was screaming at them and trying to shove the table and becoming more distressed. As he began to shout, he was grabbed by the staff and restrained.
89. I would equate the behaviours to those dynamics that were sometimes used in domestic abuse. That's how it presented. Staff appeared to pace, looking for an argument. The children were pawns and it could have been any child. It could have been me, it could have been anyone. It was about displaying power.
90. I can't confirm whether all staff at St. Katharine's had been trained in restraint. I attended CALM training, which came with a manual. My understanding was that the training was mandatory. In Northern Ireland, I trained in TCI. It was similar to CALM and should be about de-escalation with prone restraint a last resort. Often, men were involved and women, at least when I was on shift, were issued out of the room. There were occasions when female staff were involved in restraints but it was very rare in my experience.
91. The alarm would go off and you would run in. The child would already be prone so you wouldn't be quite sure what had happened. I can remember one particular restraint with a child, who was my key child, [REDACTED]. She was already on the ground and she was flailing her legs. There were two men on top of her. I can remember being screamed at to get out of a room. She was screaming, "Youse are beasts." Her trousers were coming down. I refused to leave the room and I was told to "fuck off out of the room". [REDACTED] was sobbing and so distressed. She was only about twelve. She was telling them to leave her alone and calling them beasts. She hadn't even done anything to warrant the restraint. I think Kevin Glancy might have been involved in that restraint. I can't remember which other members of staff were involved, but that incident happened in the Alison Unit and they were all men.

92. I'm not sure whether it was a regular occurrence that male members of staff would restrain female residents. After I began to raise concerns about the secure unit, I was pulled to work in the Alison Unit a lot of the time. In my time working there, the only restraint that I remember taking place was that of [REDACTED]. The Alison Unit had a calmer atmosphere. I was forward and back to the secure unit for shifts, but I can't vouch for what was happening to the female residents in there in terms of restraints. Females were subjected to strip searches. I can remember a girl being told to strip in her room for a search. Men were involved in that initially, but I think a female came over eventually after a big row. I can't remember who exactly was involved in that incident. It tended to be the same core of people.
93. I can't remember a child sustaining an injury while they were being restrained. That didn't happen while I was present. I saw very few physical restraints because I was told to leave or I was in Alison Unit. Quite often, things would kick off very quickly. For example, when the child was pushed against the wall by the table, he was grabbed by the arms and shunted out of the room very quickly. You're not following because you have to watch all the other kids. If there are three staff on duty and two of them do that, you're then on your own with five kids. The environment was created where these things were done publicly and privately. Publicly, the alarms are going off, you know a restraint is happening and you can hear the screaming. The situation is that you have no other option but to watch the other kids. You weren't necessarily in the room, but you might see injuries afterwards, such as a carpet burn to the face. Children were often quite distressed after being restrained and they just wanted to be on their own.

*Concerns about the institution*

94. I'm aware that [REDACTED] KZB disappeared with a girl during a shopping trip without explanation and left a female member of staff alone with the rest of the children. He was away for about three hours. I'm not aware of anybody taking children to their home addresses. I'm aware of text messages between children and staff. That also involved [REDACTED] KZB and the same girl. I was told by a social worker in the community that [REDACTED] LUZ took children from the unit to his 5-a-side football, but I wasn't aware of that at the time. There were comments in relation to [REDACTED] LUZ. People would say that he

took kids to his home, but I never saw that and I never witnessed that. These little things were said to me at the time by other staff. I think KEO said that to me a couple of times. He didn't say it as in he had seen it himself, but that he'd heard about it.

95. I had come from Northern Ireland with no experience of Edinburgh so I didn't know how much of it was true. Staff said that there was an inquiry into St. Katharine's before I arrived. I look back now and wonder how true some of the things that had been said were. I'm conscious that people say things and they can grow arms and legs and aren't necessarily true. I was also conscious that there was a growing mound of evidence to suggest that all was not right.
96. KEO used to talk about Cathy Jamieson's 1999 inquiry into abuse at two Edinburgh children's homes. He told me that LUZ was good friends with one of the people convicted of abuse at those children's homes. He said that there used to be contact between them and they would go to each other's houses. KEO would often make throwaway comments like that. It was in the days before the internet being as big so I couldn't go and confirm this, but those comments sat heavily with me.

#### *Reporting of complaints/concerns*

97. There was a complaints process in place. There was a complaint form which had one a self-enclosed envelope and could be sent to Shrubhill, the social work offices just off Leith Walk. They were available in the Alison Unit. I'm not sure where they were kept in the secure unit. A child would have to ask a member of staff if they wanted a complaint form, which creates its own dynamic.
98. A child could complete the form him or herself. It had a freepost address. They could walk to the letterbox with a member of staff or I would put it in the post for them. The complaint could go in the internal mail, but that would mean it would lie around until the mail was collected. The child might be uncomfortable about that because it would be lying in a tray.

99. The kids I interacted with knew about the complaints procedure. I can't speak for other staff so I don't know whether they gave complaint forms to children. I can remember children telling me that they hated a member of staff because they'd restrained them. It was more general comments rather than specific complaints. Even then, they were quite careful about what they said. Children are quite guarded. After everything I saw, not one of those kids came forward to raise a complaint, even if they were badly injured. They'd be screaming and crying, then taken to a private place by a staff member and would return quiet afterwards. I felt that I was constantly advocating on their behalf. I would sometimes find children crying in the unit, on their own. I'd ask them what was wrong, but they wouldn't say anything.
100. The only time I ever gave a child a complaint form was when a boy called KTB sustained an injury to his face. The skin on half of his face was missing and he told me it was as a result of a restraint. It looked to me like a carpet burn. After discussing this with another member of staff, LUZ unexpectedly turned up to Alison Unit. He took KTB into what was the dining/conference room. They both came out. KTB walked past me quietly, with his head down, and went upstairs. LUZ stared at me, tore up the complaint form in front of me, smirked and put it in the bin. When I raised concerns, LUZ said that he would make sure I never worked in social work again.
101. KEH and KZB were often at the centre of incidents where children were injured, but there were other members of staff who were complicit. They would hide files or cover up for them by saying they hadn't seen anything. For example, some of the cover-up could be Kafka-esque. When the incident with the drill happened, someone re-typed a brand new rota and insisted that the people involved hadn't been on shift with me. They suggested that I was lying. There was lots of covering up of things that other people were doing and then gaslighting those who had said something.
102. Several weeks after the drill incident, a member of staff called INA came to Alison Unit out of the blue. I'd never really spoken to him before. He said that he wanted to say sorry. INA said that he'd been in the secure unit and the staff

involved in the drill incident were openly discussing it. They noted that I couldn't take a joke. He told me that he had challenged them because they had said they hadn't been on shift with me. At that point, he realised that the incident had occurred. Around 2017, PCX [REDACTED], the child involved in the drill incident, was interviewed by the police. He told them that what I'd described had happened. He said that he had taken it as a joke, but I queried this with the police because he was only a child when it happened.

103. Supervision was used to report concerns about ill-treatment or abuse of children by staff. There were also processes for grievances at work, fair treatment at work and codes of conduct. All of those policies and processes were in place. They've never changed. They existed everywhere that I've ever worked, in Scotland, Northern Ireland and England. Fair treatment covers abuses of power, gross misconduct, physical abuse and a wide range of issues. It's not exhaustive.
104. My understanding of the process is that if I'd seen something, I would go direct to my line manager. She would then have had a discussion with her senior manager about any investigation. The department has policies that if there was a lack of fair treatment for raising something, I could go down a fair treatment route and raise a grievance towards the department. The department also has clear disciplinary proceedings. My understanding is that if something criminal has happened, the police should be called. There is a clear lineage in terms of what was supposed to happen as a process, but my experience was that these processes weren't always followed.

*Trusted adult/confidante*

105. There were children's rights officers who children could speak to if they had concerns. One was Linda McCracken and I think there was somebody else at the time. Linda would come round the unit, but she was representing all the children's homes in Edinburgh so she was spread thin. The children could contact her and speak to her. I don't know whether children did raise concerns with Linda. She was a little bit at arm's length. She would come in and introduce herself. She would maybe turn up for the odd tea visit and maybe sit down with the kids when we were having tea. In my experience, it was quite rare. That's no criticism of her because she could only do so



much, but I never felt like I really got to know her. I can't remember seeing any kids use that as a system for raising concerns.

106. Every child also should have had a keyworker. All the care staff could be keyworkers. It depended on the number of kids to staff ratio. Sometimes, you might have a secondary keyworker working alongside you. I wouldn't be in every day so I might work alongside another member of staff. If that member of staff was off then I'd be there and vice versa. The children should always have someone around to follow things up for them.
107. It's really hard to explain, but the children almost gravitated towards people they felt safe with. They enjoyed the time that they spent with them, but they didn't necessarily tell you if they had a concern. It's not that they had nothing to say or didn't want to say it, it was the way that the whole culture was being played out. Everybody was walking on eggshells as to who they spoke to and what they said.
108. There was one incident when a child told me he had complained to his social worker and his keyworker in St. Katharine's about his respite foster placement. He said that the foster carer was being abusive to him and that he wasn't getting enough food. I went back to the keyworker and told them that the child had raised this with me, but I don't remember anything being actioned. I can't remember who the worker was, but I think it was one of the male staff. Sometimes staff did not record or pass on information because that generated work.

### **Child protection arrangements**

109. When it came to trips out of St. Katharine's, there wasn't necessarily a policy per se in terms of "this is what you do when you take a kid out". There would have been health and safety checks. For example, you couldn't take kids swimming in a river because of insurance. You had to make sure they had their medicines with them, that you had a contact, that the vehicle you were taken had been checked and was all up to speed, that you told people where you were going and what time you were coming back. There were those kind of systems in terms of lone working and safe practice.



110. You would never take a child to your home address. You could have good working relationships with children and children could look to you almost as a parental figure if you'd worked with them for a period of time, but that would be crossing a massive boundary. I don't know whether it was written down in any policy, but there were standards of practice, even in those days. You'd have your fair treatment at work and your grievance process, which laid out bullying, boundaries, conduct and everything else. I would struggle to understand how someone could justify, in terms of professional conduct, taking a child to their home. While it might not explicitly say that you shouldn't take a child home, we have a code of conduct. How would you explain bringing a child from a unit to your house? Everybody would have known that. You do not encroach boundaries. It's standard. You just wouldn't do it.
111. All staff members had access to the secure unit. We all had keys with a fob and anybody could come in and out. However, if I was on shift in the Alison unit, I'd be on shift with those kids at that unit. I couldn't just wander off. I might say to a colleague that I was going to the secure unit, but only in terms of accessing the main office. I might have gone there to get some paper for the printer, for example. There would then have been no need for me to enter the actual secure unit and I wouldn't have thought to do so. The only time that I might have been in and out was if I changed shift or an alarm went off.
112. The council's disciplinary code was available to all residential care staff and issued to them when they accepted a position of employment. The code I have was dated 26 August 1996. It clearly outlines behaviours which are unacceptable while employed as a council member of staff. It was explicit. In my experience, there was a lack of understanding of trauma and complex trauma, of the impact of moving a child into care. There was a power imbalance and staff did not follow the behaviours expected of them, as laid out in the disciplinary code. There were statements said to me by staff like, "We're the Scottish Prison Service, we can do what we like. We don't follow children's services rules." According to LUZ [REDACTED] and Frank Phelan, physical abuse was "horseplay" and "boys will be boys". I would be accused of not understanding that boys needed to express themselves. Both of them made comments like that to me separately.

113. There would have been child protection arrangements in place to reduce the likelihood of abuse or ill-treatment of children. We have very strict systems in place in terms of child protection investigations. After a child goes into care, there are regular reviews and access to Children's Rights Officers.

**"Abuse"**

114. There is a definition of abuse in terms of children's legislation. For example, the categories children get registered under. Registration is reviewed regularly and, if no improvement, moved to statutory proceedings. For example, abuse can be defined as emotional, psychological, failure to thrive, neglect, sexual, physical. We've already defined what abuse category the child is at risk of in order to take action and put them into St. Katharine's.
115. All members of staff would have known the categories and definitions because they were writing reports for hearings. They had key kids, they were going to Children's Panels and LAAC (Looked After and Accommodated Child) reviews. Copies of the legislation and child protection arrangements would have been kept in the offices at St. Katharine's. All these procedures detailed what you did and when. There were also separate policies and procedures in terms of what you had to do in line with your specific job. In a children's unit, because it was 24 hours a day, there would be policies around medication for children and absconsions. Our policies and procedures were in folders in both the secure unit and the Alison Unit.
116. Even though residential care officers weren't necessarily qualified social workers, they would know very clearly all the set deadlines and timescales. It was part of the job. If someone in the unit had said to me they didn't know anything about abuse, I would have said, "Why are you in that job because that's your job and that job is clearly defined."

## External monitoring

117. The Care Inspectorate carried out a routine inspection towards the end of my time at St. Katharine's, but I can't be specific about the timings. The best 'china' would be displayed for the inspectors coming in and children would immediately say that they didn't usually get fed like that, pointing out the differences.
118. The inspector came into Alison Unit and the secure unit. I can't remember whether the inspection was announced or unannounced. I don't think unannounced inspections really happen in Scotland, which was another big difference from Northern Ireland where a lot of unannounced inspections are carried out. I don't know whether the inspector spoke to all of the staff, but I am aware that some of the staff told the inspector about their concerns, which I also did. I can't remember whether he spoke to the kids. I think most of the kids in the Alison Unit were out at school when he was there.
119. I can remember a couple of us in the kitchen, building each other up and discussing whether we should tell the inspector full details. I can remember skirting around the issue, telling him that some staff could be very heavy-handed with the kids and that there should be more use of de-escalation techniques. I said that people might need better training. I was telling him a lot of things without telling him that there were broken bones. I can remember telling him about injuries but I wasn't going into specifics. Overall, there was a lot of tension in the unit at that time. LUZ [REDACTED] was threatening that I wasn't going to work in social work again so I was being very careful about what I said around people, especially the inspector.
120. At the time, I was told that the inspector had worked in the social work department at Edinburgh Council and knew everybody. I think he might have been called Duncan, but I'm not sure. He was short with dark hair. We were all very clear that practice wasn't great, however nothing was mentioned in his report. As far as I'm aware, he didn't raise any of the concerns brought forward by staff. I would have seen the inspection report at the time, but I can't remember it. I can remember KEO [REDACTED] tore up the report at a staff meeting and said it wasn't worth the paper it was written on. It was quite dramatic, but he had a point. He was absolutely furious.

## **Record-keeping**

121. We prepared reports for LAAC reviews and Children's Hearings. We kept case records for each child. There were also significant occurrences forms, but I don't think they were always necessarily filled in at St. Katharine's. It was like a pink form and in my experience similar forms are used all over the UK. If there was a significant occurrence, like injuries, then you would fill them in. All significant injuries and issues that occurred at St. Katharine's should have been written down on those forms. Those forms should have been flagged to the director or those in management in order that they got a clear picture of what was happening.
122. I filled the forms on a number of occasions but there were also occasions when they were torn up, but I don't know by who. The pink forms would go into a tray that would go through the main office in the reception. There was a bit of a process after you had filled in the form, but I can't remember what that process was.
123. I tried to put the bite mark incident and the drill incident on a pink slip. They kept being torn up. I can't remember if I finally got to submit them. When that happened, I would bring the torn forms to supervision and tell Carol Mentiplay or whoever was supervising me at the time. In my previous experience, significant occurrence forms could also be used for positive achievements by a child.

## **Allegations of Abuse**

### *Incident involving a drill*

124. At the time I was raising concerns, I was told to make notes by an outreach manager Carol Mentiplay. I had a little blue book, which I subsequently gave to the police in approximately 2017 or 2018. Before handing the book to the police I read it. I had not realised that one of the incidents I witnessed happened within two weeks of me being there. I was shocked that it had happened so early on. Two weeks in, I was working in the secure unit when one of the kids, PCX [REDACTED], began running round the living

room, screaming. He was excitable and a staff member was running after him. PCX  
PCX was about fourteen at the time.

125. The door of the office was open. The member of staff went into the office and grabbed a drill that was on the table. He forcibly put PCX to the ground and straddled him. He put the drill against his head and turned it on until blood trickled down his head. PCX began screaming and shouting and the whole tone changed. It turned into a restraint.
126. I can't remember the member of staff's name. I couldn't remember it when I gave a statement to the police. It would be easy to find out which staff member it was because we were all working there in 11 November 1999. I can see the member of staff's face, I just can't remember his name. He was probably in his thirties, forties. He was big built, stocky and had dark hair. There was another member of staff present who I think was called Angela.

*Kevin Glancy*

127. Kevin Glancy was always front and centre of restraints. At the time, I felt that some staff were getting a power arousal by being involved in the restraints. I later found out that Kevin was arrested for sexual offences around 2008 or 2009. I don't think he was qualified when I knew him but he must have gone on to do his social work training because he was working as a social worker in Victoria Street when he was arrested. He was convicted of being in possession of indecent images, mainly of boys.
128. At the time of his conviction, I was working as a Sexual Offences Liaison Officer and I was asked to chair his risk management case conference. I excused myself because of my previous professional knowledge of him at St. Katharine's. My understanding is that the images he was found in possession of involved the restraint of boys and boys being bound. It was a lightbulb moment for me, given he was involved in so many restraints at St. Katharine's. It did not go unnoticed that his frequent involvement in restraints and the nature of the images were similar. Children would shout, "Beast," or, "Get off me," but there were often several men present. It was difficult to know



whether this was directed towards Kevin Glancy. He was very quiet and I always found him very amenable. Compared to KZB and KEH for example, who were very aggressive, Kevin seemed quite pleasant I was therefore surprised by his conviction.

KZB

129. One member of staff, KZB went missing with an older girl. I remember a member of staff who was involved in an exchange from Australia. The Australian member of staff came out of the car one day when I was in the Alison unit and was angry. I can't remember her name, but she had long blonde curly hair. I asked if she was okay. She said that KZB had left her with all the kids and had gone missing with a girl in a shopping centre for several hours without explanation.
130. I can't remember the name of the female child involved, but she would have been about fourteen or fifteen. The Australian worker went on to say it was completely out of bounds and that KZB had also been repeatedly texting the girl. She thought that it was outrageous. One or two staff were texting children and were very inappropriate with girls. I can't remember who the other member of staff involved was. It is my understanding that KZB was later arrested in a significant cocaine bust. It was a several years after I left St. Katharine's and I am unclear if he was still working there.
131. KZB behaviour within St. Katharine's was often erratic. On one occasion, he straddled a child and he bit him on the face. It was during what he would call "horseplay". He was holding the child down by the wrists, leant down and bit him. He seemed to be so high and aroused. The bite broke the boy's skin in his lower cheek area. I can't remember the name of the child.

*Physical and sexual abuse of* KTB

132. I came into Alison Unit one day to start my shift. A child had the skin missing from half his face. His name was KTB The entire side of his face was bloodied and

it looked like a significant carpet burn. I gasped in shock. I didn't see him sustain the injury, but I saw him immediately after he had been restrained.

133. KTB was shaken and teary. Nobody had given him medical treatment. He was clearly struggling to keep it together. I told him that it was not acceptable and it was not how restraints worked. I asked him if he'd spoken to his keyworker and he said that he didn't know what to do. I told him that I'd log all of it and speak to staff. I told him that there were complaint forms readily available if he'd like to make a complaint. I told him I'd make sure that it was escalated up immediately, but not through LUZ. I planned to go to someone who I thought might listen a bit better.
134. KTB completed the complaint form. It wasn't much later, maybe a matter of hours or a day, that LUZ bursting through the front of the Alison Unit. I was taken aback to see him coming in. There was a big dining room by the office. He pulled KTB in there. They were in there for ages and I wondered what was going on. LUZ came out and he had his hand on the shoulder of the boy. He was kind of just guiding him. KTB had his head down and walked as if he was going upstairs to his room. LUZ had the complaint form and he just looked at me. He ripped it up and put it in the bin whilst smiling at me.
135. When I was later working in another team in Edinburgh, a team manager came to me to say that they had been doing parenting work with KTB and asked for some department information. The manager stated that, during the parenting work, KTB disclosed that he had been sexually abused in St. Katharine's. His disclosure happened at a time when the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry phone number was everywhere. It was very much publicised. Clients were disclosing physical and sexual abuse, some of whom you had worked with for years but hadn't said anything before. It wasn't a surprise that KTB had disclosed abuse. Looking back at my interactions with him, he seemed quite withdrawn.
136. I witnessed another incident with KTB. I had a suspicion that something was wrong. I don't know that I suspected sexual abuse but I knew that there was something. I had found him with drugs when he was very young. It was cannabis and joints and they



were sitting on the windowsill in the main bathroom of Alison Unit. Looking back and given [KZB] involvement in drugs, I wondered where [KTB] had got the drugs from.

137. On another occasion, I came into Alison Unit and he was sitting at the top of the stairs. He had his arms over his knees and his head down. He appeared small. I asked him what was wrong. I told him that he could tell me anything. He just wouldn't speak to me. I told him that if there was something wrong, I would take it forward and stand by him. I said that I could speak to the Children's Rights Officer. In hindsight, given what the team manager later said about [KTB]'s disclosures, I wondered if he was being sexually abused at that time. It was sometimes difficult to speak to a child alone because it was common for staff to appear from nowhere and interrupt the conversation. There was often no reason for the staff member to be there or be involved in the conversation. You would note that they had seen you speaking with the child and it resulted in the child clamming up.

*Possible sexual abuse in secure unit*

138. There was a girl who was in St. Katharine's because of very vulnerable behaviour. I can't remember her name. I just remember that she had dark hair. She came to me one day and told me that she'd missed her contraceptive pill. She said that she thought she needed to see her doctor because she didn't take her pill. I seem to remember that she had to take the pill to regulate her periods. I said to her that it wasn't a major issue missing it for a day because she was in a secure unit. She then told me that she had had sex with another resident and implied to me that it hadn't been consensual. She told me that residents and a couple of staff had been having a cigarette in the courtyard in the centre of the unit. They had left the courtyard door open so she could get to her room and get access to her loo. She told me that someone followed her to her room and they had sex in there. It was a boy in the unit.
139. As I was writing up the incident, a member of staff stormed into the secure office. I remember someone trying to take the case notes off me. I think it was this incident that led to Peter Fleming calling me in and asking me what I thought of the practice at

St. Katharine's. I told him that I didn't think it was great. He said that I was being polite. He told me that the notes I had written had gone missing and someone had tried to amend them, as they were later found on the photocopier. I believe someone had also tried to fax them to KEH Peter was incensed.

*Physical and emotional abuse by staff*

140. I witnessed physical and emotional abuse at St. Katharine's. I also witnessed excessive and inappropriate use of restraint. Children were hit and injured and it was always done in a "jokey" way, but it was often out of the blue and out of context. They would have bruises and bite marks. A child could be walking down a corridor and someone punches them and says, "I'm only joking." However, it didn't feel like a joke because often a staff member would verbalise that they were unhappy about something a child had done before they hit out at them. Not all the kids seemed to be targeted. They seemed to go for the most vulnerable children.
141. I can recall a girl being struck with a ladle by a member of staff in Alison Unit. I think her name was [REDACTED] but I can't be sure. She had a really bad sniffing aerosol addiction, which was commonly described as "buzzing". A member of staff called KEM [REDACTED] usually worked in the secure unit, but he had walked over to help out in the open unit. He used to call [REDACTED] ' [REDACTED] ' from the movie [REDACTED] to her face. On one occasion, we had just finished dinner. As we stood up to clear the plates, I heard a bang through the hollow of [REDACTED] back. KEM [REDACTED] hit [REDACTED] full force, right in the back with a metal ladle as he walked past her. It was totally out of the blue. [REDACTED] grabbed her back and burst into tears. She asked KEM [REDACTED] what he was doing and he laughed and said he had only been joking. That was the common theme.
142. I can remember a boy fractured his rib. I think it was during "horseplay" by staff, one of whom had slammed and jumped on him out of the blue. A lot of the injuries that I saw came from so-called horseplay, such as the drill, bite mark and the rib. On these occasions, the child was straddled and pinned down.

143. There was lots of verbal abuse and lots of gaslighting. Certain staff would deny saying things. It was shifting sands so the children never knew where they stood. There was also a power play when it came to meal and education times. If you're in a secure unit or Alison Unit, everything hangs on dinner time, lunch time and rec. It's similar for prisoners I've worked with in justice. Those things become really important because you don't have much else around you and it builds structure. If you pull a kid when the dinner's just about to be put on the table because you suddenly want to talk to them, having sat there for two hours and not said anything, or you pull them during these important times to tell them that they can't go to the pool because you've decided to call a meeting, that is psychological abuse. For that child, those are the only things that they have as a focus in that unit. Is it somebody who's not able to manage their time properly or is it a culture where these are other tactics? It didn't go unnoticed that they'd had all day to do something and were pulling children out just as they sat down for their food.
144. I think that some of the physical abuse was pretty evident and likely to come to light around the time it was happening because you could see it. However, children could be physically abused and it wouldn't leave any marks. I used to always think that if staff were doing these things in front of me then what the hell were they doing in private? If staff were that disinhibited in front of people then what would they do if they had nobody around them to monitor them? I had no doubt that there were other things going on that I wasn't aware of.
145. When you meet people over the years who have worked there, they often ask how you survived. It has a reputation amongst Edinburgh City Council staff. You cannot begin to unpick how dystopian and Kafka-esque it was at every level.

#### **Reporting of abuse/investigations into abuse**

146. When I arrived from Northern Ireland, I didn't realise that there were other members of staff at St. Katharine's who had already gone to the director with concerns. I had previous knowledge of Edinburgh. It's my understanding that staff from St. Katharine's



had already been to Christina Burnett, Lesley McEwen and Duncan McAulay. LUZ was [REDACTED] and I think that Frank Phelan was over him. I was never quite sure. I believe that Christina Burnett was the head of the practice teams and residential units. Above her, there would have been Duncan McAulay, the assistant director, and Lesley McEwen, the director.

147. When I went for interview, I was made aware that there had been concerns about Howdenhall. Frank Phelan told me at my interview that they'd had issues before, but this was part of their new process and they were going to try and make things better. When I arrived, I didn't realise that the issues at St. Katharine's had been very recent. I would usually learn about the concerns from other staff at the time. When I later worked in other departments I met people who had worked there who had also expressed concerns.
148. The very first person I told about an incident I experienced at St. Katharine's was Peter McCluskey. I lived with him when I first moved to Edinburgh. I told him about the incident with the drill and PCX [REDACTED]. I told him that I didn't know anybody and I didn't know what to do. He told me to go back and speak to my senior. I can't remember whether I spoke to Robert Henderson or KEI [REDACTED], but I did raise it with a senior.
149. Immediately, through my supervision with Carol Mentiplay, I started to express concerns about St. Katharine's. Carol carried out my professional supervision because I was a qualified social worker. She was a team leader from the Children with Disabilities Team. She was very supportive. She was shocked by what she heard and asked me to put it in writing. I also spoke to Patrick Walker. I flagged my concerns to Peter Fleming and LUZ [REDACTED]. I spoke about over-restraint and the horseplay. Frank Phelan, LUZ [REDACTED] and KEH [REDACTED] tried to say that I just didn't understand horseplay, that boys will be boys and that boys need horseplay. I knew that it wasn't horseplay and that it was abuse of children and abuse of power.
150. I was over in the secure unit one day. I think it was just before LUZ [REDACTED] left. I was standing in the office. The kids were all there. The door of the secure office was open. The partition wall from the office into the living area was all glass. KEH [REDACTED] came

running in and grabbed me by the shoulder. He pushed me against the glass. All the kids and other staff could see what was happening. He went right into my face and said that he had heard that I had a problem with the restraints. He asked me what I would do if a kid came at me. I expressed concerns that what I had said had been taken out of supervision and given to him. The children looked stunned. There were other staff present.

151. It felt like things were coming to a head around the time KZB bit a child in the face. Staff were openly now discussing the behaviours. There was so much going on and it was just so unsettled. I spoke directly to Duncan McAulay and Lesley McEwen about my concerns at the social work offices in Shrubhill. Duncan McAulay told me that they needed people like me to stand up. He said that he wasn't there all the time so he couldn't see what was going on. He said that they'd had incidents before.
152. At that meeting, Duncan McAulay told me that there was an assistant manager post coming up and suggested that I apply. I did apply, but then I pulled out of the interview for that post because I had significant concerns about the culture and practice. On reflection, I didn't think that I could change it. HR's Elaine Wishart came to St. Katharine's to challenge me about why I wasn't going for the job. It felt aggressive and strangely accusatory. At the time, given her reaction, I suspected there was a nefarious reason for them wanting me in that post. Perhaps so they could later blame me in any future investigation for not managing poor practice at St. Katharine's.
153. My concerns were raised in various formats over the years. Initially, I had a blue notebook that I wrote everything down in. The police took that from me when I met with them in or around 2017. But it was difficult to put full detail the book. I couldn't do my day job and deal with everything that was there and then also keep an eye on the staff. I kept a log for her and it was also going into my supervision notes. As it was getting worse, I was also asked to put my concerns into writing. I can't remember who asked me to do that. I think it might have been Carol or Peter Fleming rather than anybody higher up. I can't be specific. In and around 2017, the police told me that they found my original statement. Apparently it was on file.

154. As a result of the concerns raised by myself and other staff at St. Katharine's, the director delegated Christina Burnette to carry out an investigation. That resulted in my meeting with Duncan McAulay. Staff were interviewed to seek their experiences. I don't know whether they spoke to the children. We were asked about things like restraints and assaults. Some of the interviews with staff seemed very brief, but I do know that other staff raised concerns similar to mine. It went on for a period of weeks.
155. While the investigation was ongoing, I was standing outside Alison Unit with some other members of staff. Christina Burnett and someone else, I can't recall who, arrived in their cars. As they did so, LUZ [REDACTED] left the unit with a cardboard box with his belongings in it. He just got into his car and drove off. KZB [REDACTED] ran from the unit, shouting to staff who had gathered outside that LUZ [REDACTED] had left and got a job at a [REDACTED]. We were later advised that the investigation had been dropped because LUZ [REDACTED] had left. Looking back, I always thought LUZ [REDACTED] must have been prompted to leave.
156. After LUZ [REDACTED] left, we had a meeting. We were taken into the big conference room in the secure unit. Duncan McAulay and/or Lesley McEwen were present. I'm almost sure that both were there and Lesley McEwen sat in silence. They announced to the team that they weren't going to proceed with the investigation because LUZ [REDACTED] had left his position. They talked about "horseplay" that had got out of hand. The investigation was almost over just as soon as it had started.
157. Later, Frank Phelan organised a meeting with the staff. I think it might have been on the same day as the meeting with Duncan McAulay and Lesley McEwen. He gave us a speech about the "good ship Katharinos" and how the rats were deserting the ship and trying to bring us down. He said that none of the rats would take us down. I stood up in the middle of that meeting and said that he was an utter disgrace and that he was there to protect children. I walked out.
158. After the meeting, I ran after Frank Phelan as he went to his car. I told him that children were being bitten on their faces and that children were being injured. I asked him why he was giving that speech and why he was doing nothing. He just looked at me, said nothing and walked away. I do not consider that the concerns I raised were remotely



addressed. Over the years, I've observed that the department used divide and conquer. You're told that you're the only person who has raised a concern. You then meet other staff who tell you that they've experienced the same thing. It works as a technique.

159. I think that LUZ [REDACTED] left about a month and a half before I did. After he left, it was much quieter. I think he was the only member of staff who resigned when I was there, but I don't know what reasons he gave for his resignation. I'm not aware of any staff being the subject of disciplinary action because he or she was found to have abused or mistreated a child. Other than LUZ [REDACTED] it was many of the same staff when I left.

### **Reports of abuse and civil claims**

160. I wasn't involved in the handling of any reports of abuse or civil claims concerning historical abuse at St. Katharine's.

### **Police investigations/criminal proceedings**

161. I'm not aware of any police investigations into alleged abuse at St. Katharine's when I was there. I don't know whether anybody who worked at St. Katherine's had been convicted of the abuse of a child or children there. I read in the papers that Gordon Collins was convicted of the abuse of children, but I don't know whether he worked at St. Katharine's when I was there. He looked familiar to me, but I don't really remember him.

### **Other Staff**

LUZ [REDACTED]

162. LUZ [REDACTED] was SNR [REDACTED] of St. Katharine's for most of the time that I worked there. I think he was in his thirties or forties. He was older than me. He was [REDACTED]

██████████. The seniors would have reported to ██████████ and I reported to the seniors. He was always omnipresent without actually always being there. It was very much LUZ ██████████  
██████████

163. LUZ ██████████ was quiet. He said more in his quietness than the others did by shouting. His quietness might have been a look. It might have been tearing up a complaint form in front of you. It was purposeful and it was enough to intimidate you. For example, when he told me I would never work in social work again if I raised anything.
164. LUZ ██████████ always seemed to know about things that should have been personal. For example, supervision is supposed to be confidential unless there's something about harm, but he seemed to be aware of a lot of my supervision discussion. I was open in supervision that I was interested in moving on, but I didn't want to leave the kids at all. I also couldn't stay there for my own sanity and professionalism as the practice was so poor. I just thought that I was never going to change it. When LUZ ██████████ found out that I was interested in looking for other posts, it was then that he told me that he would make sure that I would never work in social work again.
165. When an opportunity came up for a secondment, which Peter Fleming okayed, I needed a reference from LUZ ██████████. Eventually, he did provide me with some sort of reference. I don't remember asking him for it but it had to come from him as SNR ██████████ ██████████. He wrote that I was new and I didn't really know anything. He said that I didn't know anything about the set-up of residential. He wrote that I was from Northern Ireland and implied that our social work wasn't the same. I kept that reference for a number of years and found it during a clear out in 2013, 2014, but it was too painful to read and I tore it up.
166. I saw LUZ ██████████ with his own kids at St. Katharine's. He brought them into the secure unit a few times, which I didn't think was appropriate at all. This is because some of the children in the unit presented a risk of harm to themselves and others. I didn't see LUZ ██████████ interact with kids at St. Katharine's very much. To me, he presented as standoffish. I didn't see him discipline any kids. I didn't see him abuse any kids. He wasn't around enough for me to see anything.



167. Years after I left St. Katharine's, we had a social work student on placement in my team in Edinburgh. She asked me if I'd ever heard of LUZ because he was one of her lecturers in social work at that time. She advised that students were speaking about him because he was saying very inappropriate things in lectures. She said that LUZ had told the students that it was common when he worked in residential childcare to take kids home and it was common to shower with them at the unit. I was shocked by what she was saying. I said that I did know him and that he knew that wasn't appropriate behaviour.

168. At the time of his statements to the students, the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry was gathering momentum. LUZ had also given an interview to the papers, questioning the convictions of those working in residential childcare who had been charged with child abuse. I advised the student that his comments were worrying. I had concerns that he was still being used as a point of contact and an adviser for Edinburgh youth justice and residential services. I was also concerned that he was teaching a whole new generation of social workers.

KEI

169. KEI was older than me, in his late thirties, forties. I think that he was a senior. KEI was the person who was toy fighting when I arrived at St. Katharine's on my first day. He gave me a bit of an induction. He always came across as okay to me. However, towards the end of my time at St. Katharine's, Peter Fleming found KEI with the missing paperwork in relation to the girl and the contraceptive pill. He was sending it to KEH. On reflection, I would say that he was one of the group who appeared complicit in what was going on.

170. Physically, KEI was really tall. He was often present in the unit. He seemed to be involved in the daily activities of the unit and busy. I don't have any memories of him disciplining the children. I never heard of him abusing any children at St. Katharine's, but the focus was on the louder staff.

KEL

171. I think KEL was roughly in his late thirties, early forties. Many of the staff were older than me. KEL was a care officer. I think he had a background as a Community Psychiatric Nurse (CPN). I can remember him mentioning that he kept up his registration as a nurse. This always struck me because it felt like he had one leg in, one leg out of the place. I didn't have any personal issues with KEL. I can't specifically remember seeing KEL interacting with children. Nothing sticks out about him in my memory, other than his CPN status.

IDJ

172. IDJ was a care officer. I think he was about the same age as me. He was one of the members of staff who would always show up at the door if I'd gone in to see if a girl was okay. I never saw IDJ doing anything. Practice wise, I can remember an incident when we had a boy in the secure unit for stealing cars across Edinburgh. IDJ brought in a video game similar to *Grand Theft Auto* and let the child play for hours. To me, it was blurring all the boundaries and negatively encouraging the child's criminal activities. It encompassed everything that was wrong with the unit. It just lacked insight, but this is the only incident I remember.

KEM

173. I think KEM was a care officer. I think he had links to army cadets. I did see him interact with the kids, but often he barked orders. On occasion, he would also name call. I have already referred to an incident with a girl who I think was called [REDACTED]. I witnessed KEM hitting her full force on the back with a ladle in Alison Unit. He also used to call her [REDACTED] because she was struggling with a bad aerosol addiction. I can't remember whether I heard him call other children names, but it sticks in my head. I had written in my blue notebook as well.
174. One day, I found [REDACTED] in a field near Captains Road, collapsed with a can up her arm. She was only about fifteen and she was out of it. I managed to get her back to

the unit and into bed. We called the doctor so someone came out to check that she was okay. When she woke up, I made her some soup and bits and pieces. Around the same time, [KEH] was wandering about shouting "[REDACTED]" at her. It was the total antithesis of how you would care for someone.

[KEH]

175. [KEH] was a senior at St. Katharine's. I believe he may still be working in social work services in the UK. I've already referred to an incident when he physically assaulted me in the unit, in front of the kids. He presented as extremely aggressive, but I can only speak to myself. He had a presence throughout the unit.
176. I saw [KEH] interacting with the kids, he was just as aggressive. He would call children names and was physical with them. [KEH] seemed very close to [LUZ] and held a lot of sway and a lot of power. You could see other seniors, such as [KEI] responding to him. [KEI] seemed to jump when [KEH] asked him to do something. [KEH] and [KZB] also appeared particularly close. He presented as dismissive of female members of staff.
177. I saw [KEH] restraining children. I never heard of him abusing any children.

*Kevin Glancy*

178. I think that Kevin Glancy was a care officer. Kevin presented as quiet and very amiable. Subsequently, he was arrested for being in possession of indecent images of children. I saw Kevin interact with the kids. He was always involved in the restraints. I didn't see him abuse any children at St. Katharine's.

[KEJ]

179. I remember the name [KEJ], but I can't remember any details about him.



KZB

180. KZB was a care officer. He was always there. I have already referred to him being involved in biting a child and a lot of restraints, as well as going missing with a fifteen year old girl and sending her text messages. After I left St. Katharine's, I was made aware that he had been arrested for drugs offences. Other than the incidents I've mentioned in my statement, I can't recall any other specific occasions when I saw him disciplining or abusing children.

KEO

181. KEO was a care officer. I have already mentioned that I can remember him tearing up an inspection report. I remember KEO often making comments about LUZ. He often seemed to have information in relation to concerns or investigations. I can't confirm how he was aware of that information. I can't remember seeing him disciplining kids. If there was a restraint then most of the men on duty would be involved, but I can't remember anything specific with KEO.

*Vicky Grant*

182. I'm not sure about the name Vicky Grant. I vaguely remember the name, but I don't have specific memories.

KTS

183. I'm aware of a KTS being mentioned at St. Katharine's while I was there and being informed that she had raised concerns. Years later, I met her while working in another team. She confirmed that she had been the person who had worked at St. Katharine's and advised that she had raised numerous concerns. She never said what those concerns were.

## **Leaving St. Katharine's**

184. I'm not sure when exactly it was that I left St. Katharine's. I wasn't there for long, maybe eight or nine months. I think I left in the summer of 2000. By that stage, I was exhausted. I had seen a secondment opportunity and I was supported by Peter Fleming to leave. There was a realisation that I wasn't able to change it.

## **Reporting of concerns about St. Katharine's – after leaving**

185. Years after leaving St. Katharine's, I had a meeting with a social worker from another authority when I was working in Waverley Court. It was around 2008, 2009. She had reached out because she had a similar job to me elsewhere and she wanted to get ideas about progressing the role. We were discussing each other's backgrounds and what led to this current role. I mentioned St. Katharine's. Naively, I presumed that because she was in another authority she wouldn't know anything about it. In response, she immediately asked me if I had heard of LUZ [REDACTED] and his brother, who I think was called [REDACTED]. She also mentioned KZB [REDACTED]. She also asked if I was aware that LUZ [REDACTED] brother had taken over a unit and had been taking children home and giving them substances. She expressed concern that nobody had listened to her and I expressed concern that this was still going on, ten years later.
186. I was good friends with the lead of the Child Protection Committee and discussed it with her before then speaking to my manager in supervision and putting it in writing. After a period of silence, my manager came back to me and told me that I had to be careful about what I was saying. He said that I was going to be sued. He said that they had spoken to the social worker and she denied saying anything to me. Years later, I was aware that at the time this was happening and I was being told to stay quiet, a member of staff at St. Katharine's, Gordon Collins, had been arrested in relation to sexual offences in the unit.
187. After my concerns were written down in 2008 or 2009, I had no real involvement with St. Katharine's until the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry was announced. Lots of my



clients were coming forward with information about abuse. There were several people who had worked at St. Katharine's with me that I'd stayed in touch with over the years. We were talking amongst ourselves and discussing whether we should go forward with our concerns again.

188. I subsequently contacted the Inquiry around 2017. At the same time, I found out that there was a specific unit of the police set up to work alongside the Inquiry. Concerned that my statement may be buried again, I contacted the police first who I was aware would give information to the Inquiry.
189. Around the same time, we received an email from the children's services department telling us to be open and transparent with regards the Inquiry. If we had any information about four units that were being investigated, including St. Katharine's, then we should come forward. Despite knowing that it was my duty to come forward, I was concerned given my previous experiences about the department's reaction and how this would impact upon me professionally.
190. I'm not certain when I gave a statement to the police, but I think it must have been around 2017. It was around the time that momentum was building with the Inquiry. I contacted the police. A police officer called Sarah Traynor took my statement, along with a colleague whose name I can't remember.
191. However, my fears came to fruition because not long after I gave my statement to the police a senior manager in my then department asked to meet with me and demanded to know what was in the statement and suggested I shouldn't work in their department. She said that the police didn't find anything and therefore I wasn't telling the truth. I said to her that I had done exactly what I had a duty to do as a social worker. I queried why we were being asked to come forward but being pulled into rooms in the background. I told her that I had given a statement in 1999 and three members of staff had all been arrested and convicted for sexual and drugs offences, so I was telling the truth. She just shuffled her papers and said that she didn't know that. I expressed that this was intimidating and concerning and she backed down. Ironically, two months later I was allocated PCX [REDACTED] as a client.

192. At the time, I was made aware by the police that something in my statement had corroborated something that a victim had said in relation to sexual abuse. The police didn't give me any more detail and I was never asked to give evidence at court. I don't know if anybody was ever charged in relation to this finding.
193. After I had spoken to the police, a solicitor for the Council asked to meet with me to speak about Peter McCluskey. Peter McCluskey represented one line in my statement so I was confused about the focus on him. I was then contacted by the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) who wanted to interview me at work about Peter McCluskey in relation to practice, but only in relation to my statement about the drill.

### **Lesson to be learned**

194. I think that children in care would be better protected if we started to reshape qualifications and training for staff. There should be adherence to performance management and regular audits by managers. We have policies and procedures in place in terms of performance, disciplinary, grievance and fair treatment. It was evident that these were just not followed and were sometimes weaponised against people who raised issues. Staff need to be assured that the processes to keep them safe are robust.
195. I think that performance management is key. There's no point in raising a concern in supervision numerous times if nobody's going to take action.
196. In every high profile inquiry, communication has been central. We need to extend our understanding of how we communicate to include information held by SSSC and unions. I would say that unions should identify patterns. Unions in particular have a lot of information that is not necessarily passed on and could help identify patterns.
197. Transparency is key. Information, including complaints policy procedure, should be readily accessible. At every point at which a child comes through the process, they should be given access to feedback about how their service has been. That could be

that you put a QR code at the bottom of review templates. It could be that you put a QR code up on the wall. That way, the child doesn't have to ask staff for complaint forms, for example. They can click on that QR code and send it straight to the department. They can then say, "This is how I'm feeling about this and this is what I'm doing." There are lots of things practically in that regard in terms of shaping the environment.

198. There are lots of things I would do to change the current system for children in care. I would start by having unannounced inspections. I think it's extremely important that staff maintain a level of good practice and good recording that's not just pulled together for an announced inspection. There's not enough senior management visibility in the units. They too should visit unannounced. They need to be present and engaged.
199. In terms of safety for children, you need to think about why you're using the units and how you're using staff efficiently. It's important to have a regular keyworker. I think it's important to have, where possible, regular visits from family and friends and work closely with schools to ensure that there is as little impact to a child's education as possible. I think there needs to be more education amongst external teaching staff about the impact that going into care has on a child.
200. Having social workers in units and having workers with much more of a feel for social work and an understanding of the system would really help. If you put kids into a unit without thinking why they're really there and then you don't support them then all you're doing is placing a burden on the youth justice system and then the adult justice system and then child protection when they go on to have kids. It's just creating a problem elsewhere.
201. If you think about care more systematically and have pre-prepped plans in place, it would be much better. For those children who are unable to engage in the community, have a suite of trainers, employability services and skills based services coming in on a regular basis. Kids shouldn't be expected to source this themselves. A lot of these children have been so traumatised that getting up in the morning and getting out is a difficulty. You need to bring those services to them and have workshops and talk about

how to help them with their CV and supported college placements. You need to bring the outside in. It also breaks up the insular feeling as well. That peer culture is really strong so you bring people in, you have open signs, you have QR codes, you have trained up staff. There are lots of things you can do really quickly to change it.

202. 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...  KTV

Dated... 15 / 10 / 2024