

**Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

PCF [REDACTED]

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is PCF [REDACTED] and that was my name at birth. My surname during my time in care was PCF [REDACTED]. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1966. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

**Life before going into care**

2. I was born in [REDACTED] in Dumbarton. I lived with my mum, dad and my younger brother, [REDACTED]. I was three and a half and he was nine months old when my mum and dad died. My mum was called [REDACTED] and my dad was called [REDACTED]. My dad murdered my mum and then killed himself. It happened in front of me. My mum was buried on her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. My dad was only 24.
3. There was a dispute between the two sets of families over where [REDACTED] and I were going to live. In the end, my dad's family agreed for us to live with my mum's parents on the basis they were able to see us too. It didn't turn out that way. My mum's parents changed my name to PCF [REDACTED] because they didn't want to be reminded of my dad.
4. My brother, [REDACTED] and I were put into Crosslet House Children's Home in Dumbarton.

## Life in care - Crosslet House Children's Home, Dumbarton

5.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later



6. After that, we went to my gran and grandad's in [REDACTED] Alexandria. I thought that I would be staying with them forever. I went to the nursery next to St Mary's Primary School in Alexandria. I started St Mary's Primary School and was there for two days. Apparently, I was telling the other boys and girls about people being stabbed in the stomach and neck. I can't remember saying it.
7. I can remember bunk beds and a rocking chair in my bedroom at my gran's house. I used to have visions of my dad sitting in the chair and holding out his hands to me, saying he was sorry. I used to say there was a bad man.
8. I was taken to Yorkhill Children's Hospital in Glasgow. I remember playing with toys there. I went to see a psychologist called Dr Stone and I can remember his name being used a lot around that time. My gran didn't like me because of what my dad had done so I went into care. I was five years old. My gran kept my wee brother.

## Lady Mary School, Colinton, Edinburgh

### *First day*

9. I was taken to Lady Mary's in Colinton in Edinburgh. It had a long, dark, spooky driveway. I thought it was a castle. The Good Shepard ran it. I was taken by my gran and a social worker. The social worker was called Mrs McIntyre. Mrs McIntyre told me

that I was going to see a nice place but she didn't tell me that they were leaving me there. I was frightened and I didn't know anybody.

10. I think Sister **MHT** showed us around. She was **SNR** There were classrooms and a living room downstairs, on the ground floor. There was also a room where we had our lunch.
11. There was also a space upstairs where we ate our breakfast and had our tea. The bedrooms were also upstairs. There were three bedrooms upstairs, and I had my own bedroom. I was the only girl on that unit, the other two rooms had boys in them. There was maybe four in one room and five in the other. There was a small bathroom with a sink and toilet in it next to my room.
12. There was another part of the house with more children. I saw them at lunchtime and if we were watching the television. The boys in my bit were from my age, and up to about eleven years old. I don't know if there were children older than that.

#### *Staff*

13. The nuns were in charge. I can remember Sister **MHV**. There were house-parents too. One of the house-parents was called Brian Dailey. I am not sure but I think he would have been about the same age as my dad. Brian stayed in a room down beside one of the toilets. It was down a set of stairs to the left of the kitchen. I think there was another house-parent called 'Rosie'.
14. The house-parents only really worked in the dorms

#### *Mornings and bedtime*

15. We used to get up early, at about eight o'clock. I can remember putting my clothes on and having my breakfast. Sometimes the staff or the nuns would come into my room and open the curtains. They would tell me to get up. I got washed in the sinks next to my room. There was a bathroom next to the houseparents' room.

*Mealtimes/Food*

16. At meal times, we sat in an area near the dormitories. There were a couple of tables. I think the Sisters or one of the house-parents looked after us while we ate. We had cereal and toast. The best bit about the food was lunch. It was nice. We were given nice things for lunch and I would eat all of them. I would push my luck sometimes and ask if there was anymore.
17. You could choose your favourite meal when you were leaving. I chose rice pudding with pears on top of it when I was leaving the home.
18. The nuns took care of the lunch. The kids got into trouble from the nuns if they didn't eat their dinner. They would tell the kids that there were people out there starving and that they were lucky they had something to eat.
19. One day, I took two rich tea biscuits because I was hungry. I hid them under my pillow and I thought that I would eat them later. I panicked because I took them without asking and thought that God would tell the nuns so I took them back. I just remember the nuns walking up and down the lobby and thinking they were talking to God. One of the nuns told me that "it proved I had a conscience".

*Washing/bathing*

20. I got a bath about seven o'clock at night. The house-parents used to supervise the baths. After tea, it would be 'T. T. B' which stood for 'teeth, toilet, bed'.

*Bedwetting*

21. I wet the bed. I wouldn't tell anyone. I think I was shouted at by the staff for not telling anyone and they would send me for a bath.



*School*

22. After breakfast, we went to school. Everyone went to school in the Lady Mary building. There were two classrooms. I still have books that I won for my writing. Some of the nuns were teachers there. Some of them were clever.

*Sister MHV*

23. Sister MHV was a teacher and she was my favourite. I can remember Sister MHV more than anybody else because she was my favourite. She liked me too. She called me her "wee princess".
24. I told her that I wanted to be a nurse when I was older, to look after people and to make them better. I had a wee nurse's uniform. She made me wee bottles filled with sweets for my birthday. I think I was about eight or nine years old. The sweets looked like little pills. She pretended they were pills. I pretended that I was looking after my patients and giving them their medication. Sister MHV would pretend to be visiting them. She also took me to learn to swim at the Commonwealth Pool in Edinburgh.
25. Sister MHV stayed with me in hospital when I had to go to the eye hospital in Edinburgh to get an operation. I would like to think that she did that because she wanted to.
26. Sister MHV used to give me cuddles and tell me not to worry if I had nightmares. None of the other nuns showed me affection. They weren't warm like Sister MHV. One time, I had tried to wake her up and she stood up and fainted. I thought that I had killed her so I ran away and hid in my bed. She came into my room and let me know that she was okay.
27. Sister MHV was there for about a year and a half. One minute she was there and the next she wasn't. I cried when I realised she was gone. She was like my best friend.
28. I was in the same room the whole time I was there. After Sister MHV left, if I had a nightmare, I just cried in my bed.

*Leisure time*

29. After school, we sat in a wee telly room. We played outside in the grounds too. I used to play football and climb trees with my friend, [REDACTED].
30. You weren't allowed outside if you had been naughty. I don't know what the other punishments were because I wasn't naughty.
31. One of the nuns taught ballet. I can't remember her name. If you didn't do the move properly and bend your knees, the nun hit you with her stick. You felt it alright.
32. I went to Brownies and was told to leave because I wouldn't take an oath to the Queen. I told them that I didn't want to go back.
33. We were allowed down to the wee shops in the village in Colinton. When I was older, I was allowed to go on my own now and again. I found a purse in a phone box one day when I was out. I had gone to phone home to ask my gran if I could go home and to tell her that I would be good. I took the purse to one of the shops and used the money in it to buy a box of candy lipsticks. I didn't even spend all of the money. I remember thinking of the phrase "finders keepers, losers weepers". It kept going around in my head.
34. Later on, Sister MHT [REDACTED] found out. I don't know if someone had told on me. I had to give the purse back. She told me that I had been bad because I had stolen the purse. I didn't think I had because I found it.
35. After that, I wasn't allowed to go to ballet lessons or to watch telly. I had to stay in my room until I realised what I had done was wrong. It seemed to be for forever. I didn't really think it was fair because I didn't steal it and I hadn't taken it from someone. After a while, I made [REDACTED] go and ask if I was allowed to come out my room, and I was.

*Trips and holidays*

36. I remember going on trips to Aberdour when I was ten or eleven. I can remember going over a big bridge to get there and we stayed in a house. Sometimes it would be for a week and other times it was for a weekend. I can't remember much about it.
37. Sometimes we were taken to Portobello on day trips. We would walk up big hills near Colinton. It was where the British soldiers used to stay. Sometimes everyone would go but other times it was smaller groups. I think they took us on different days because they didn't have a big enough van. I just remember walking up the hills and thinking it was far away.

*Healthcare*

38. I had eye operations during my time at Lady Mary. My dad had accidentally hit me when I was a wee girl, which caused my eye problems. I also had a lazy eye.
39. One time I was taken to the Royal Hospital for Sick Children because I had been carrying my friend, [REDACTED], up the stairs and had fallen. I had smashed my glasses, and some of the glass went in my eye and cut it. Sister <sup>MHV</sup> took me to the hospital. She didn't have any money to pay for the parking but she said that God would understand. I got stitches.
40. Other times, I had to go to hospital for eye operations, and Sister <sup>MHV</sup> would stay in the hospital with me.
41. I was put on Valium when I was about ten and a half years old. Sometimes I would ask the staff "why did my family not want me but they kept my wee brother?" I told them that I wanted to go home. I wanted to be home even though it was bad there too. I just wanted to be beside my brother. The doctor told me that the tablet would make me feel better when I was feeling sad or missing home.

42. I would tell the staff that I wanted to go home and that I was sad. The staff gave me one of the Valium tablets when they thought I needed it.

*Religious instruction*

43. I had to go to mass on a Sunday. We said prayers every day in the morning after breakfast. However, on a Sunday if we were getting Communion, we didn't eat breakfast.
44. I liked going to mass. Sister MHV used to laugh at me because I would be copying the priest. She said that she had to look away to stop herself laughing a few times.
45. We were taught the Ten Commandments every day. I had a wee bible. I couldn't read it but the nuns would explain things to us. I asked where God was because you couldn't see him.

*Birthdays and Christmas*

46. I can't remember getting any presents other than the wee bottle of sweets from Sister MHV I went back to my gran's for Christmas.

*Visits*

47. The social worker didn't come to visit me. They would just come when they were taking me home during the holidays. I stayed with my gran and then I would go back again.

*Personal possessions*

48. I didn't have anything of my own other than my Celtic teddy and my Celtic scarf, which my dad's brother had given me before I went into care. I would put them under my pillow. I didn't have anything else.
49. My gran gave me my clothes.



## **Abuse at Lady Mary School**

### *Brian Dailey*

50. One of the house-parents, Brian Dailey, used to supervise me when I was in the bath. He gave me a bath every night. He used to say that I was his "wee angel". He would play with my hair while I was in the bath. I had very long hair and used to be able to sit on it.
51. He used to buy me Twinkle comics and sweeties. He used to touch my 'lady,' which was my private parts, and would get me to touch him. He made me perform oral sex on him. I was seven years old when he started doing things to me. I didn't know it was wrong.
52. One time, he did something different to me. It really hurt. There was blood coming out of me and running down my legs. I went to the toilet, saw the blood and thought I was going to go to hell. I was crying. Someone opened the toilet door and threw something that looked like a nappy into the cubicle. I think it was a Dr White. I think the nuns must have known that I was bleeding because it was all over my pyjamas.
53. Brian Dailey used to hurt me all the time but I didn't know it was wrong. It happened every night. He said that I was his friend. If I had known it was wrong, I wouldn't have done it. It went on for a long time but I didn't tell anyone. I didn't know it was bad. I was just a wee girl.
54. When I went home once, I might have told my aunt about my 'lady' being sore and about there being a man in the bathroom. I was about eleven years old by then. My grandad went to the Mother Superior. He came to the home and noticed Brian because he looked dodgy. He worked it out and went off his nut. He was shouting at the nuns. After that, Brian disappeared. Nobody spoke to me about it.

**Leaving Lady Mary School**

55. I left the home when I was eleven years old because my granny told me that I was going to go to a normal school. I thought I would be with my wee brother and I would be able to have friends.

**Merton Hall School, Newton Stewart**

56. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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### **Leaving Merton Hall School**

113. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

114. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

I wasn't given any preparation for leaving.

115. The only thing that the care system taught me was that I would never want to be a human being like the staff in there.

### **Life after being in care**

116. I left Merton Hall when I was sixteen. I went to stay with my gran. I got a job as a cleaner and gave old people their dinners in a care home in Helensburgh. After that, I went for an interview for another job to become a French polisher. I couldn't stay with my gran for long because she constantly brought my dad up and said nasty things to me. She was abusive towards me.
117. The social work took me off my gran again because she was negative and wasn't caring or nurturing towards me. I didn't really know my brother because we hadn't grown up together. People in the area knew who I was but they didn't know me so I had no friends. The social work arranged for me to go to stay in a place run by nuns in Milton Street in Maryhill. I was seventeen when I went there. There were about seven other girls there.
118. I spent my time working or going to the football to watch Celtic. I didn't drink or smoke. I was still going back to my gran's some of the time. However, one day, I left. I told her that I was going to chapel but I didn't go back.
119. I worked as a French polisher until I was twenty. I then became unemployed, as I didn't feel I could work. I tried to take my own life twice. I wasn't depressed, I was just sad. I was still on Valium. I was on all kinds of medication. I was also getting injections. Apparently, they were for schizophrenia. The doctors told me that I had borderline personality disorder and schizophrenia that was man made because of the way I had been treated, and not a chemical imbalance in my brain.
120. I attended psychologists. At one point, I was on so much medication that I couldn't lift my head.
121. Frances Hughes became my social worker when I came out of care. I can remember asking her how you can tell how someone is a good person. She took me to my mum's grave. I told my mum that I was sorry because I couldn't help her.

122. I married my first boyfriend when I was twenty years old and I had two sons. My husband became violent and abusive. He cheated on me and tried to kill me. He caused me to have two miscarriages and put me into early labour with one of my sons.
123. I was 22 when we separated. I had post-natal depression with my first son and had a nervous breakdown. After a few months, my husband apologised and came back to stay with me. It didn't last and he left again when my youngest son was two.
124. I wasn't very well for a while and agreed to give my sons to their dad on a voluntary basis and temporarily while I went to hospital. My ex-husband and social worker had told me I would get my sons back when I got better. They lied to me. I tried to get them back and went to court lots of times.
125. I ended up losing my boys. The judge thought that they would be better looked after by someone who hadn't been brought up in care and who wasn't addicted to prescription medication, which I was. This was even thought the social worker said I had so much love for my sons, even though I hadn't been brought up with love myself.
126. Losing my sons was the worst day of my life. [REDACTED] was in Primary One and [REDACTED] was in nursery. They stayed with their dad.
127. I fought for seven years. It felt like part of me was missing without them. I felt that I had let them down like I was let down. I wanted them to grow up normally and happily. My youngest son got in contact with me when he was thirteen and I arranged to meet him.



**Impact**

128. I don't trust anyone in authority such as doctors or social workers. I used to raise my voice when I was at the children's panels for my sons and daughters.
129. I am on lots of medication for my health problems. I have asthma, angina, COPD and emphysema. I've had three strokes and a heart attack.
130. I used to be Bulimic. I thought food was the only thing I could control. I am still a very fast eater because the staff in the homes used to take your food away if you didn't eat it quickly enough. I always ate my meals fast. I had to learn to adapt.
131. I think my psychological health has been caused largely due to the way I was brought up in the care system. I think about my time in care every day. There are lots of times when I have broken sleep.
132. I have had a few nervous breakdowns and I used to self-harm. I was trying to get the pain I had inside out of me. I don't self-harm anymore. I think I abused prescribed medication so that I wouldn't think or feel anything. I started drinking about seven years ago. Again, I did that so that I wouldn't think or feel as much.
133. The last psychiatrist I saw, told me that I have "man-made schizophrenia" because it was caused by the way I was treated as a child. I am awaiting a Community Psychiatric Nurse. I am also working with an organisation to find a counsellor to do Cognitive Behavioural Therapy.
134. I think my education was also affected by my time in care. We were just given the basics. I went to the Vale of Leven Academy as a mature student to study for my English, Maths and Biology Standard Grades.

**Reporting of Abuse**

135. I contacted the police last year and I told them everything. PC David Urquhart from Clydebank Police Station came to my house to interview me. They video recorded it. The investigation was then passed to the police in Edinburgh. Someone else came forward to report Brian Dailey. He hasn't been charged yet. The police told me that he was sent to prison last year for abusing children.
136. The police from Edinburgh have come back to me and said that they can't do anything about Brian Dailey abusing me. It is not because they don't believe me, but that they need more evidence, but they are leaving it open.
137. I felt like someone had physically knocked the wind out of me when the police told me they couldn't charge Brian Dailey. I feel like we are told to come forward and speak the truth but then when we do, nothing is done about it.

138. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

139.

**Records**

140. I have asked Alexandria Social Work for my records. I have been told that there are time limits and I haven't been able to access them.

**Other information**

141. I wanted to speak to the Inquiry to give some of the others a voice. I hope that the same mistakes aren't made again. I feel like nobody helped me. There should be

reviews of care and somebody should speak to the child. They should make sure that the home or care provider is doing what they are supposed to be doing.

142. A lot of people in care are vulnerable so the staff should be there to encourage them and reassure them. They shouldn't discourage them. They should let them know that they can be anything they want to be and that it is okay to cry. Somebody should be checking up on the staff.

143. 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.

PCF

Signed..

Dated..

7/8/2019