

1

Tuesday, 3 June 2025

2

(10.00 am)

3

LADY SMITH: Good morning, and welcome back to our hearings

4

in relation to this phase, Phase 9, where we're looking

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into the provision of residential care for children with

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healthcare needs, with additional support needs and also

7

disabled children.

8

Now, although we were hoping to start immediately

9

with an oral witness this morning, I gather there's been

10

a hiccup with his travel, but we were planning to do

11

some read-ins of statements today anyway so maybe we

12

could do that now?

13

MS MCMILLAN: Yes, my Lady. I think that is the plan: to

14

begin with a few read-ins and then hopefully by that

15

time the witness will be in attendance.

16

LADY SMITH: Thank you.

17

MS MCMILLAN: The read-in, my Lady, that I'm going to start

18

with is the read-in for 'Phil'.

19

LADY SMITH: Thank you.

20

'Phil' (read)

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MS MCMILLAN: The reference for 'Phil's' statement is

22

WIT.001.001.6194.

23

In 'Phil's' statement, he talks about the time he

24

spent at Melville House. 'Phil' doesn't say in his

25

statement when he went to Melville House but he does say

1 that he left to go to mainstream schooling when he was
2 in his third year.

3 Records that we've been able to obtain show that he
4 went to Melville House in [REDACTED] 1983, aged 12, and he left
5 in [REDACTED] 1985, aged 13, nearly 14.

6 'Phil' was born in 1971. He lived in East Weymss
7 and was the eldest of four boys. In his statement,
8 'Phil' tells us that he was 9 years old when he was put
9 into the care system. He got into trouble with the
10 police and was sent to a List D school called
11 The Dale School, which was in Arbroath.

12 [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later

13 [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later 'Phil' says he
14 left school because, as far as he was aware, it was
15 closing down.

16 'Phil' then talks about how he was placed in
17 Melville House and his experience there. Beginning at
18 paragraph 33, on page 7, he says:

19 'When I went home, I went to Coaltown of Wemyss
20 school. I was sent there rather than to my old primary
21 school because they thought that I would have been
22 abused by the other kids at my old school as they would
23 all have known I had been in The Dale School.

24 'Whilst still in primary, I smashed a bus window and
25 got put back into List D school by the panel. They sent

1 me to Melville House which was just outside Cupar.

2 'Melville House was an amazing place and I was there
3 for about two-and-a-half years. There was no education
4 as such, but the main thing was that there was no sexual
5 abuse. They took us fishing and canoeing almost every
6 week and there was lots of hillwalking. It was council
7 run.

8 'There were about 40 boys there, all aged between
9 about 12 and 18. It was a children's home that was
10 a big private mansion. It had a full-size football
11 pitch, with a river and a forest nearby. It was SNR
12 three men, who I think had all previously been Welsh
13 monks and who dressed casually.

14 'There were loads of other staff as well. We didn't
15 wear uniforms.

16 'There were four to five boys in each dorm. We
17 would get up, wash, then have breakfast and go to
18 school. There would be meetings in a big hall then back
19 to school. After school, we would have tea then you
20 could play games until bedtime. In the evenings, the
21 boys could play pool or table games, football or go for
22 a run.

23 'There was a room where you could watch TV and there
24 were also plenty of books to read.

25 'There were plenty of showers and baths and you

1 could have a shower whenever you wanted.

2 'The food was brilliant.

3 'Jack Mills was the English teacher but basically
4 took us fishing all the time. Mr Mathie taught us
5 woodwork and joinery but you could really do whatever
6 you liked. There was a woman teacher but you just read
7 comics in her class. PE was really just me doing
8 cross-country running.

9 'You would get home every week. You would leave on
10 the Friday night and come back on the Sunday evening.
11 My mum would come and visit me on occasion.

12 'Lorraine Penman was one of my social workers.
13 I went to various meetings with her, my mum and the
14 staff. They spoke about the usual things like how I was
15 getting on and what sort of progress I was making.

16 'My dentist was in Cupar and if a doctor was needed,
17 one would be brought in.

18 'Abuse wasn't a problem in Melville House. I wasn't
19 bullied. Perhaps if you were fighting with another boy,
20 a member of staff might jump in to break it up and give
21 you a wallop as he did so, but that was about it.
22 I wouldn't consider that abuse.

23 'The one occasion where I suppose you could say
24 I was abused happened after an incident on a Thursday
25 night. I had been playing pool and one of the teachers

1 came in and told me to tidy away all the games. I told
2 her I hadn't been playing with them and she grabbed me
3 and dragged me across the chair. I hit my head off the
4 radiator and was so annoyed that I lashed out at her and
5 punched her in the face which immediately caused her eye
6 to swell out.

7 'The next day I was outside when [one of the men SNR
8 SNR] grabbed me. He then battered my head off
9 the minibus a few times. I wasn't injured. I want to
10 add though that I thought that man was brilliant to me
11 during my time there. I remember he used to always let
12 me walk his dog.

13 'Because of this, I ran away with two or three
14 others to Glenrothes. The next day the rest went
15 shoplifting but I just handed myself into the police.
16 I got taken back to the home but there were no
17 repercussions for having run away.

18 'Halfway through second year, the headmaster of
19 Buckhaven Secondary School used me as a guinea pig to
20 try and get me out of care and into mainstream. I went
21 between the two places for about six months then in
22 third year I went to Buckhaven full-time. That was me
23 out of the care system.

24 'I left school before I turned 16 and I lived at
25 home till I was 18.'

1 'Phil' then goes on to talk about the impact of his
2 time in care. At paragraph 52 he says:

3 'The last 37 years of my life have been a lie. It's
4 not been real. The life I should have had is one
5 I never had because of this. I fought everybody because
6 of it for years. I fought my mum and dad. I fought the
7 law. I fought everybody.'

8 LADY SMITH: Ms McMillan, would you like to just push the
9 microphone, perhaps, down a bit so that you are speaking
10 over it, it's blurry at times, try that.

11 MS MCMILLAN: Is that slightly better?

12 'Phil' then tells us that he spent time in prison,
13 which he puts down to his time in care, because he
14 became so anti-system. He hated Fife Council. He says
15 his education was non-existent in care and as a result,
16 he was always telling his children to get an education.

17 He also says that it affected relationships
18 throughout his life and it made him a stricter parent.
19 He fought to ensure that his son -- it would not end in
20 care.

21 'Phil' now does voluntary work for a charity and has
22 four children. At paragraph 68, he says that he has no
23 objection to his witness statement being published as
24 part of the evidence to the Inquiry and he believes that
25 the facts stated within are true.

1 'Phil' has signed his statement and it is dated
2 1 November 2017.

3 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

4 MS MCMILLAN: My Lady, I'm now going to pass over to
5 Ms Innes for another read-in.

6 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

7 MS INNES: My Lady, the witness has arrived so I'm going to
8 do one further read-in during which Ms McMillan will be
9 able to go and speak to him, I think.

10 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

11 MS INNES: Just bear with me a moment while I switch on the
12 relevant technology.

13 The read-in I will do is that of 'Jordan'.

14 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

15 'Jordan' (read)

16 MS INNES: This is the statement of an applicant who is
17 anonymous. He will be known as 'Jordan'. The reference
18 for 'Jordan's' statement is WIT.001.001.8460.

19 'Jordan' was born in 1962. He tells us that he was
20 in Ovenstone for two separate periods: the first when he
21 was around 5 years old and the second when he was 7
22 years old.

23 From the limited material that we have been able to
24 obtain, they show that he was placed there in [REDACTED]
25 1971 aged 9. He appeared to be discharged in

1 [REDACTED] 1971. He was then readmitted in [REDACTED] 1971
2 until [REDACTED] 1973.

3 'Jordan' firstly tells us about life before care at
4 paragraphs 2 to 5 of his statement. He grew up in
5 Kirkcaldy with his mother and father. He was the
6 youngest of 11 children. He says he had a hard
7 existence at home and that the family were extremely
8 poor.

9 He started school at North Primary School, where,
10 due to the financial constraints in the family, he would
11 wear his sister's shoes to school, which resulted in him
12 being bullied. He stopped going to school as a result
13 and social work became involved.

14 From paragraph 6 of his statement, he tells us how
15 he ended up at Ovenstone and his experience. So reading
16 from paragraph 6:

17 'Mr Cuthbert was my social worker and he arrived at
18 the house one day and took me away to Ovenstone
19 Residential Home. This was the first time I had met
20 him. I think he told me it was because I was not
21 staying at school.

22 'Mr Cuthbert took me to school in a car. I don't
23 remember much of the day when I arrived, but I do know
24 that it was a really long building. In the centre of
25 the building were the offices for the nurses and other

1 staff and from there, they could observe the other
2 dormitories. The nurses were usually dressed in their
3 uniforms. Mr Christie was one of the nursing staff
4 there.

5 'In the main building was the dining area. There
6 was a TV room and next to that was a library. Then
7 there were the dormitories and there was a big grass
8 area outside for playing. The only other staff I can
9 recall at that time were some ladies who helped with the
10 laundry. I did get to help there sometimes and there
11 was a lady called Kate who always looked after me. It
12 was great because it was really warm in there.

13 'The dormitories had about 15 to 20 beds on each
14 side of the room. They were all single beds. The first
15 time I was there it was all boys, probably about 30 of
16 us in total. The eldest boy would have been between 9
17 and 11 years old. It wasn't until my second time at
18 Ovenstone in 1969 that I saw that girls were being
19 housed there.'

20 As I've said, I think it's later than 'Jordan'
21 thinks.

22 LADY SMITH: Of course, yes.

23 MS INNES: 'The staff nurse who was on duty during the day
24 would wake us in the morning and arrange for us to get
25 washed and dressed. They supervised us just to make

1 sure everyone was okay, but they did not interfere with
2 you. If you needed it, they would help you get dressed.
3 We then went to the dining hall for our breakfast.

4 'After tea, we would play for a while and then it
5 was inside to watch TV. We would be there maybe for
6 an hour, possibly a little longer. The nurses would
7 help you get ready for bed making [to make] sure you
8 washed and got dressed in your pyjamas.

9 'On a Sunday, we all went to church and we were
10 given a kilt to wear for the service and the bible class
11 there. They did not make us do anything else religious
12 if we were not interested.

13 'I don't remember much about the food but we all sat
14 together for the breakfast. It was usually porridge
15 with maybe some toast. I don't remember being hungry
16 while I was staying there. Lunch was usually soup and
17 maybe a pudding and at tea time it was a main meal.
18 Sometimes I would be given an extra portion if there was
19 anything left. The food was really good while I was
20 there.

21 'For school we all had grey shorts, a jersey and
22 shoes which were all supplied for us. I did not have
23 any of my own clothes there because I didn't have any.
24 The only clothes I would wear was what was supplied by
25 Ovenstone.

1 'The school was situated within the grounds of
2 Ovenstone and we were all in one class. The kids in the
3 class were all different ages and we sat together.
4 An older teacher would come from outside to teach us and
5 I liked going to the school there. I had clothes to
6 wear and there was no mickey taking. You got to know
7 all the kids while we were at school. I don't remember
8 the teacher's name but she was nice.

9 'We would be in the dining hall for lunch and back
10 to school and play until we were back in class for the
11 afternoon. After school, we played in the grounds until
12 we were ready for tea. There were no toys or balls or
13 anything else to play with.

14 'There was a library where I could take books out if
15 I wanted but I never did. We didn't get in there very
16 often as it was usually locked. At most I would have
17 been there only twice.

18 'I think it was the second time I was at Ovenstone
19 when we were taken to the pantomime. I don't think we
20 had any other visits anywhere.

21 'I cannot recall any visits from social workers,
22 including Mr Cuthbert, when I was there. My mum tried
23 to visit every few months but that meant a long bus
24 journey from Kirkcaldy to Pittenweem and then
25 a three-mile walk from the bus stop along the country

1 path. I did not see any of my brothers or sisters
2 during my time there.

3 'Because of the abuse there were four or five of us
4 who decided to run away. We stayed on an old boat
5 moored at Anstruther and were there for a few days.
6 Eventually we were found by the police and returned to
7 Ovenstone. Until this time I had not discussed the
8 abuse with Mr and Mrs Rolland.

9 'The first time I was at Pittenweem I was maybe 5 or
10 maybe a little older and I stayed there for over a year.
11 This was probably around 1967/68.'

12 Again that doesn't coincide with the timeline that
13 we have.

14 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

15 MS INNES: It was a short period to begin with and then
16 an extended period on the second --

17 LADY SMITH: A month or so and then from [REDACTED]
18 [REDACTED] up until he was about 11.

19 MS INNES: So 1973, so [REDACTED] 1971 to [REDACTED] 1973, so
20 18 months.

21 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

22 MS INNES: He says:

23 'During the night Mr Christie would wait until the
24 other boys were asleep, come into the dormitory and take
25 me out of my bed. He took me through to his bedroom

1 where he sexually abused me. After abusing me, I was
2 returned to my own bed. This would happen regularly
3 before I returned home to my parents. Whilst there, the
4 first occasion I did not see any others being sexually
5 abused.

6 'Although I was not in trouble while I stayed there,
7 I did see other boys being punished. When the boys did
8 something wrong the nurses used their hands to slap the
9 kids around the face and body. There was one boy who
10 tried to cut himself and the nurses would slap him and
11 take him to the ground and eventually control him. He
12 was then taken to another room until he calmed down.'

13 Then he again refers to going back to his parental
14 home for a period, which, as we know from the records,
15 was in the course of 1971.

16 LADY SMITH: Yes.

17 MS INNES: He says that during that time he even went to
18 school. It didn't last long. When he stopped going to
19 school, Mr Cuthbert again placed him in care in
20 Ovenstone:

21 'I was about 7 years old', he says, when he went
22 back and again he thinks it was in 1969, because he
23 connects it with the moon landings.

24 He says:

25 'It did not take Mr Christie long to start abusing

1 me again. It would happen during the night when he was
2 working. He would again wait until the others were
3 sleeping, take me to his room and sexually abuse me.
4 This time I learned to pretend to be asleep and when he
5 believed this, he would take another boy from his bed,
6 take him to his room and sexually abuse him. I dreaded
7 when he came in and would only get any sleep when
8 someone else was taken.

9 '[There was another male nurse at Ovenstone]. Next
10 to the laundry was a garage. This male nurse would take
11 some of us into or come into the garage when we were
12 there and touch our privates. This happened to me
13 a couple of times when I was in the garage. He was
14 abusing others in the home. Some years later I gave
15 a statement to the police regarding [another boy].

16 'After the court case involving Mr Christie,
17 I stayed at home until I was about 11 years old. I then
18 stopped going to school again and was returned to
19 Ovenstone.'

20 Again the timing there is probably wrong.

21 LADY SMITH: Not quite right.

22 MS INNES: 'During this short spell I was there for a few
23 months and there was no abuse or other issues, although
24 [the male nurse] was still working at the home. He did
25 not come near me during this spell.

1 'During the first time at Ovenstone there was no one
2 I could report the abuse to as there were no visits from
3 either Mr Cuthbert or any other social worker.'

4 He then says when he arrived at Ovenstone the second
5 time there was a new head nurse, Mr Rolland. He stayed
6 in the grounds with his wife in one of the cottages:

7 'I got on really well with his wife and was allowed
8 to visit their home and sit in their garden during the
9 summer. During one of my visits it must have been
10 obvious how upset I was and she asked if there was
11 something wrong. I told her about Mr Christie abusing
12 me. Later that day Mr Rolland asked me to confirm what
13 was happening and he reported it to the police. The
14 police must have spoken to some others at the home, as
15 the case ended up in Cupar Sheriff Court during the
16 early 1970s. I would have been around 9 or 10 and along
17 with some of the others we gave evidence at the trial.'

18 At the end of the trial he thinks that Mr Christie
19 was sent to prison.

20 At paragraph 30 he then refers to being at Ovenstone
21 when the Rollands were there and things being much
22 better. He says that they made attempts to adopt him
23 but his parents wouldn't consent to that and he was
24 returned home.

25 He then says that he left Ovenstone and initially he

1 was looked after by his father. He then started at
2 Viewforth Secondary School before deciding that he did
3 not want to go.

4 'Jordan' then goes on to tell us about his life
5 after Ovenstone. He was sent to Balgowan in Dundee and
6 enjoyed his time there, however he began to run away
7 around the age of 13 and was subsequently sent to
8 a secure unit in Edinburgh. He was then sent to
9 Kerelaw.

10 He tells us about his time there before he went to
11 a young offenders institute, before he was transferred
12 to Saughton. From paragraphs 43 to 52 of his statement,
13 he tells us about the impact of his time in care. He
14 says that when the police were investigating abuse at
15 a later stage, he ended up having a heart attack.

16 Moving to page 10, at paragraph 46, he says:

17 'I have been in trouble most of my adult life. In
18 my opinion, I was fighting against the abuse I received.
19 When I was in Perth Prison I was introduced by one of my
20 pals to heroin. It was good because it only lasted
21 three days in your system and you knew when you were
22 being tested so it was easy to fool the test. I have
23 been clean for 12 years now.

24 'My mental health has been greatly affected by all
25 this and with my time in prison. I have spent almost

1 35 years of my adult life in custody. I know if I was
2 never abused I would not have turned out to be the
3 person I am now. The abuse completely destroyed my
4 life. It is hard to explain my life in crime but it is
5 like I needed to get some sort of revenge. There was
6 no one there to see what was happening to me and no one
7 to listen to me when I was being abused.'

8 'Jordan' then goes on to say that at the time of his
9 statement, he was out of prison but had been struggling
10 to get work. He was supported by his family, in
11 particular his sister and brother-in-law.

12 He says that he was married and has five children
13 and had nine grandchildren.

14 If we move on to paragraph 52, on page 11 of his
15 statement, he says:

16 'I have absolutely no trust for anyone in authority.
17 Those people have done nothing but tell me lies and
18 abuse me throughout my life.'

19 He then goes on:

20 'I am seeing a lawyer who is trying to obtain
21 compensation for the time I was abused in care. We have
22 tried to get access to my records but both Fife Council
23 and the social work have been difficult to get anything
24 from them. They are not even handing anything to my
25 lawyer. I told them I was looking for the dates I spent

1 in Ovenstone and their answer for not supplying the
2 information is because I do not have any photographic
3 identification. I took my driving licence to them and
4 was eventually supplied some papers but they were so
5 heavily redacted they were not of any use as it does not
6 show the dates I was there. The only thing not redacted
7 was Christie's signature and the date he signed the
8 reports.

9 'I have tried to get information from Cupar Sheriff
10 Court and have been told that records are only kept for
11 20 years at Cupar and Edinburgh and they are no longer
12 available. I just want closure and an apology for the
13 abuse I received. The abuse has destroyed my life.
14 None of the rest of my family got into any trouble or
15 sent to prison. All this because I did not go to
16 school.

17 'I hope by telling my story stops anything like this
18 happening to any other kids and to stop those kids'
19 lives being completely ruined like mine. The
20 authorities just don't seem to care.'

21 Then at paragraph 57 he says:

22 'I have no objection to my witness statement being
23 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.
24 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are
25 true.'

1 And he signed his statement on 3 May 2018.

2 Sadly, 'Jordan' died after giving his statement to
3 the Inquiry and during the course of his civil claim
4 against Fife Council. The council, as 'Jordan' did, had
5 difficulty in establishing the fact of
6 Alexander Christie's conviction. However, the Inquiry
7 has obtained information from a news article that
8 Mr Christie was convicted of sexual offences which
9 coincide with 'Jordan's' time at Ovenstone.

10 I wonder please if we can look at INQ-0000000891,
11 which is now on the screen.

12 Your Ladyship will see that this says that
13 Alexander Thomson Christie was fined £70 by the sheriff
14 after trial at Cupar Sheriff Court on Friday:

15 'The charges were that between July 2, 1971 and
16 March 3, 1973, at Ovenstone children's unit, Pittenweem,
17 he used lewd and indecent practices towards two
18 10-year-old and two 11-year-old boys on separate
19 occasions.'

20 Now, obviously that tells us that he was fined
21 rather than put in prison. The date of this article is
22 from the Leven Mail on 18 July 1973.

23 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

24 MS INNES: The Inquiry also has information from a police
25 statement given by another staff member at a later stage

1 that 'Jordan' was one of the complainers in the trial.

2 In an updated response to Part B of the Inquiry,

3 Section 21 notice, in relation to Ovenstone,

4 Fife Council accept that the allegations of abuse made

5 by 'Jordan' against Mr Christie are likely to be true,

6 albeit, I think, at the time that was prepared,

7 Fife Council didn't have access to the information that

8 the Inquiry had, that enables us to link the conviction

9 with 'Jordan'.

10 LADY SMITH: That's very helpful. Do we have a date for

11 that newspaper article?

12 MS INNES: Yes, it's 18 July 1973.

13 LADY SMITH: So the case must have been in court just a few

14 days before that?

15 MS INNES: Yes.

16 LADY SMITH: Whenever Friday was.

17 MS INNES: Yes.

18 LADY SMITH: 18 July 1973?

19 MS INNES: That's correct, my Lady.

20 LADY SMITH: I don't suppose there's any information as to

21 whether it was after trial or on a plea of guilty?

22 MS INNES: It says it was after trial, my Lady.

23 LADY SMITH: Oh, it does say after trial. Thank you.

24 MS INNES: Certainly, there is evidence that we have, that

25 evidence was given and that the children involved were

1 taken to court. This is not the only applicant who
2 speaks to this issue. We do have another read-in from
3 another applicant who also speaks to this conviction.
4 LADY SMITH: Thank you.
5 Thank you very much.
6 MS INNES: My Lady, I think we're probably ready to move to
7 oral evidence after a break.
8 LADY SMITH: I'll take a short break and we'll check that
9 all's ready with the witness. Hopefully it won't be too
10 long and we'll get to the oral evidence. Thank you.
11 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady.
12 (10.29 am)
13 (A short break)
14 (10.35 am)
15 LADY SMITH: Ms McMillan. I gather the witness is ready to
16 give evidence now, is that right?
17 MS MCMILLAN: Yes, my Lady. The witness is ready. The
18 witness is by the name of 'Stewart'. He was a resident
19 at Melville House, so will be talking to us about his
20 experiences there, my Lady.
21 LADY SMITH: Thank you.
22 'Stewart' (sworn)
23 LADY SMITH: 'Stewart', thank you for coming along this
24 morning. It's very good of you to have agreed to come
25 and help us with your oral evidence in addition to the

1 very helpful written statement I've already had from you
2 and I know that you've had a bit of a hiccup with your
3 journey this morning. I hope that's okay and it's
4 sorted out.

5 What will happen, as we go through your evidence, is
6 you've got the written statement there in front of you,
7 in the red folder. So it will be available if you want
8 to use it. We'll also bring it up on the screen and
9 take you to the particular parts that we'd like to
10 explore with you.

11 We're not going to go through it all, paragraph by
12 paragraph, because we have already got that as your
13 evidence, as I've said.

14 'Stewart', if at any time you've got any questions,
15 don't hesitate to ask. Or if you want a break, that's
16 quite all right. Just let me know. And can I add this,
17 'Stewart': that I do know it's quite difficult talking
18 about your own life, your private life, your childhood
19 in particular, in a public forum like this and I know
20 that it can be upsetting at times. So if you need
21 a pause or it just all feels a bit difficult, there's no
22 problem with that. Just let me know what I can do, if
23 anything, to help you. All right?

24 If you're ready, I'll hand over to Ms McMillan and
25 she'll take it from there.

1 Ms McMillan.

2 Questions by Ms McMillan

3 MS MCMILLAN: Thank you, my Lady.

4 Good morning, 'Stewart'.

5 Just before I ask you about some of the stuff that
6 you say in your statement, we have to do some
7 formalities. If I can ask you please to look at the
8 final page of your statement, which is reference number
9 WIT-1-000000525. That is page 19.

10 If we scroll down we can see there that it is dated
11 on 16 November 2020 and do you remember signing that
12 statement?

13 A. I do.

14 Q. Thank you.

15 We can turn back to the first page of your
16 statement.

17 At this point, you talk about your life before going
18 into care and I understand that you were born in
19 Paisley. You lived with your father, your mother and
20 your siblings. I think you are one of six?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. And you tell us that your dad worked, your mum had some
23 part-time work, but she spent most of the time raising
24 the family?

25 A. That's right.

1 Q. And then you go on and talk about the move that the
2 family went through, which was from Paisley to Carlisle
3 and then you moved to just outside Cupar?
4 A. Yeah.
5 Q. And then you go on to talk about your experience in
6 primary school and I understand from your statement that
7 you had a relatively positive experience in
8 primary school?
9 A. Brilliant, yeah, really, really good.
10 Q. And I think you do tell us that you enjoyed your time
11 there?
12 A. Yeah.
13 Q. And then you go on, at paragraphs 5 and 6, of your
14 statement to talk about your change from primary school
15 to Bill Baxter High School briefly before ultimately you
16 then started to stay away from school and you began to
17 teach yourself at home?
18 A. Well, yeah, it was my brothers that taught me.
19 Q. Your brothers taught you?
20 A. Yeah, yeah.
21 Q. And I think after that, you talk about how you would not
22 really go to school and, ultimately, a decision was made
23 to send you to Melville House?
24 A. Yeah.
25 Q. Can you tell us a wee bit more about how you ended up

1 there, if you remember?

2 A. Er, well, when I was at high school, first year, er,
3 I just didnae fit in. I was too much. At the time,
4 even the teachers, a couple of teachers were right -- I
5 was swearing -- I didnae get on with 'em, let's put it
6 that way.

7 Er, I just felt like a loner, left out at high
8 school. So I ended up just not going. That's basically
9 it. To be fair, I learned a lot of my education before
10 it, you know, rather than going to school, I was
11 learning a lot off my brothers and that. I know that's
12 no excuse for not going to school. However, I just felt
13 basically, yeah, I felt like an outsider, if that makes
14 sense.

15 Q. Yeah.

16 So because of that, and because of you not going to
17 school then, do you remember any discussion about the
18 plan to send you to Melville House?

19 A. No. I remember going to -- there was a few things.
20 Social services got involved. I went to, I think,
21 a child psychologist and that, er, kind of -- called
22 Playfield House and that and this has been start of them
23 getting involved.

24 Basically saying -- well, they never exactly said
25 it, but it came to me that they tried to blame my

1 parents for it all, you know, and I wasnae happy with
2 that at all.

3 I told them that I wasnae going. That -- I told
4 them exactly what I'm telling you just now, that I feel
5 like an outsider, I just didnae fit in. I tried to get
6 a better understanding, you know, a better way of going
7 to school, but no, next thing I know I was in
8 a Children's Panel.

9 Q. And then from the Children's Panel, was that then the
10 decision that was made to send you to Melville House?

11 A. Aye.

12 Q. You do talk about, at paragraph 14 of your statement,
13 you say that the social work made comments to your mum,
14 during some of their visits, that if she did not do as
15 they were instructed, they would take you off her on
16 a permanent basis.

17 Do you remember the social work coming to visit and
18 saying anything like that?

19 A. Yeah, yeah. More than once.

20 Q. You say more than once?

21 A. Aye.

22 Q. Was that before you went into Melville House?

23 A. Yeah. My mum tried really hard. It's not her fault
24 with what happened, same as my dad. They were just
25 basically hard-working people, you know, big family.

1 They worked all the, you know, hours they can get, blah,
2 blah, blah. We had to grow up as quickly as we can.
3 I'm sure youse can appreciate that.

4 LADY SMITH: Was it hard for you to see the point of school?

5 A. I wouldn't say it was hard to see the point. I loved --
6 even back then, even now, I love learning. It was when
7 I went from primary school to high school. I wished
8 there was some kind of in between, because I went from
9 maybe a very small primary school, I went to a school
10 like the classroom alone was bigger than the school.
11 Er, I tried so hard to go.

12 When I went, when I did go, I just put my head down,
13 but just wasnae to be, because a lot of stuff -- it may
14 have been a lot of stuff, especially when I first went,
15 I already knew that stuff. I was wanting to learn
16 different stuff or more advanced stuff, I don't know,
17 because honestly I was doing -- basically doing first
18 year work but I was on the level of third year, you
19 know, in my own brain, if you understand that, and when
20 you're trying to explain that to the teachers and all
21 that, they all wanted to keep you on the same par as
22 everybody else. And that was a big issue as well.

23 So after a while I thought: well, what's the point?
24 I preferred being at home. Not to skive, not to
25 deliberately, like, go and do something else, but just

1 what is the point?

2 I could open one of my brother's books or one of --

3 you know, school books or something and teach myself off

4 of that, you know?

5 LADY SMITH: And were these brothers who, although they were

6 older than you, were still at school?

7 A. Yeah -- well, yeah, different age. My sister was older

8 by a coupla year and then my brother a coupla year and

9 another brother, yeah, so maybe it's six, seven years,

10 the oldest one it was.

11 LADY SMITH: But all of you still at school at that stage?

12 A. Not all of us. Some were at college and that but,

13 all -- we were all still in education, oh yeah.

14 LADY SMITH: Thank you. That helps me understand.

15 Ms McMillan.

16 MS MCMILLAN: Now, we were just talking about the decision

17 then to send you to Melville House.

18 And you say that, again at paragraph 14, you say:

19 'They made all sorts of promises to her that I would

20 get home at weekends and that she would be able to see

21 me at school when she wanted.'

22 Was that something from your experience that ever

23 happened?

24 A. No. Mum never, ever went to Melville House.

25 Q. Did you get home at weekends?

1 A. When they could be bothered sending me home, yeah, to be
2 fair. I know that sounds a bit crude but it all depends
3 on their -- what their rota, you know, what they were
4 doing. Er, all depends if I behaved or not. As far as
5 I'm concerned, it was a prison, you know. I look at it
6 that way. If you're on good behaviour, that's what it
7 was, good behaviour. If you behaved, you were out.

8 Q. We'll come to talk about the discipline at the school --

9 A. Aye, you were asking me about -- well, about the
10 weekends and that, sorry.

11 Q. And just going to paragraph 15 of your statement, you
12 talk about the reputation that Melville School had and
13 you say it was not a good place to be sent. So it seems
14 to be something that you knew of it before you went
15 there?

16 A. Yeah. It was only about a mile-and-a-half from my
17 house, from where I stayed.

18 Q. Okay.

19 And when you talk about the reputation, what sort of
20 reputation did it have?

21 A. It was a -- back then, I thought it was like a hard --
22 you know, basically like a prison, it was like -- but if
23 you went there, it's a two-fold thing. If you went
24 there, you were able to have all your friends and that,
25 you know, you'd say, 'Oh, I'm from Melville House',

1 things like that. You got a wee rep and then, back
2 then, you get the girls and that kind of thing, but on
3 the other hand you also had the 'Oh, sugar', ken, I'm --
4 'Never go there', ken, it was pretty rough.

5 Q. When you got there, what were your first impressions of
6 it?

7 A. I'm not sure. I remember crying. We arrived with my
8 mum and the social worker. Er, it was like a daze eh.
9 It was like -- I remember visiting the head person, we
10 took a wee walk around the place and all that. And that
11 was it. I got shown where my bed was, things like that,
12 you know? It was scary. Looking back, it was scary, so
13 it was.

14 Q. The first time you went there, were you feeling scared?

15 A. Oh, aye, I was -- yeah, very. I keep watching my words
16 there.

17 Q. And you go on to say, at paragraph 17, that when you
18 arrived, you were given a brief rundown of the rules and
19 you say that one of the things that stuck in your mind
20 was that if you wanted to run away, you were told it
21 wasn't an issue, the door was always open. Why did that
22 stick in your mind?

23 A. It just sounded like they didn't care, you know, like,
24 if I got upset, I could just run away, you know, that's
25 what it felt like. It was like, well, why am I here

1 then if you're just not bothered? That was the attitude
2 I took.

3 Q. And then you go on to talk about the people who were SNR
4 SNR at that time and you say that you loved both SNR
5 SNR and SNR ?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. Why was that?

8 A. Because they were approachable. They were like us, like
9 grandad, you know, they were, like, kinda right old
10 gentlemen, but they were also, they were approachable,
11 you know, and I don't know, they just made you feel part
12 of a family, if that makes sense, you know, they were
13 really easy to get on with, and they were
14 disciplinarian, don't get me wrong, but that's what
15 I liked about them, like my da, like my own family.
16 They were -- you knew where you stood with them,
17 basically. But they also -- to approach them, you know,
18 they were open arms, you know, that sort of -- it's hard
19 to explain, but they were easy to approach but at the
20 same time, don't mess with them, if that makes sense.

21 Q. So if you felt you had an issue perhaps in the house,
22 would you be able to go and speak to them about it?

23 A. No.

24 Q. Why not?

25 A. You had to go through the -- you had to go through

1 like -- depends what senior was on at the time, you'd
2 have to go through the protocol or, you know -- but
3 first of all you'd --
4 Q. Do you --
5 A. Sorry.
6 LADY SMITH: No, no, carry on.
7 MS MCMILLAN: Sorry, that was me talking over you.
8 A. You'd have to ask for a -- like, depends who you've got
9 an issue with, an RSW, a residential social worker and
10 if -- if you were there, you'd ask them and if they
11 couldn't solve it then they would, you know, refer it to
12 whoever and then -- stupid like, but that's how it
13 worked.
14 Q. So you would have to go through other people and then
15 they would take it forward for you?
16 A. Yes. Yeah, like a ladder, yeah.
17 Q. How frequent would you say your interactions were with
18 SNR [REDACTED] and SNR [REDACTED] ?
19 A. We'd meet them -- well, as a whole, you would meet them
20 twice a day. We'd have meetings, er, you'd have
21 a meeting at 10.30 in the morning. That would be the
22 whole, the whole home -- that was to discuss certain
23 things, you know, like the previous night and that with
24 -- you know, and then you'd have one round just before
25 tea time. Similar, how the day went.

1 Q. And I think you tell us about that meeting at
2 paragraph 25 of your statement. You call it a sort of
3 handover meeting in the morning. Was everyone present
4 for it?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. So pupils, other boys?

7 A. All the staff, the night shift and the day shift staff
8 as well.

9 Q. And what sort of things do you remember being discussed
10 at it?

11 A. Everything. If there was an incident the night before,
12 with people or whatever, that would be raised. Business
13 of the day, you know, if there's anything happening.

14 Q. Were there ever sort of private issues discussed?

15 A. Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. That's what I meant. Any
16 issue -- like, I know for a start there was a wee boy --
17 came from -- wee [REDACTED], he used to wet the bed, right,
18 and they would bring it up every day. How embarrassing
19 is that, you know? He clearly had a medical issue, eh,
20 but let's talk about [REDACTED] for five minutes. You know,
21 we actually all ganged together to protect the boy, eh,
22 the best we can, because we werenae happy. It's no
23 nice.

24 Q. I think what you're saying from that is that you felt
25 uncomfortable in those meetings when others were being

1 discussed?

2 A. Yeah, I mean, I was even brought up. I mean, there was

3 a time where I think I had a medical performed by the

4 nurse, I still question her medical qualifications,

5 but -- and, er, yeah, that was brought up, because I had

6 an issue with my medical. That was brought up in the

7 middle of everybody. But that happened with everybody.

8 Q. So just going back then to the sleeping arrangements at

9 Melville House. Did you have your own room? I think

10 there was dormitories?

11 A. It was dormitories, yeah.

12 Q. How many people were in a dormitory, if you can

13 remember?

14 A. I think in my dormitory about eight maybe.

15 Q. And was it boys at a similar age or was it --

16 A. Just everybody.

17 Q. Everybody?

18 A. Could be a 12-year-old or a 16-year-old, they were all

19 in the same -- sometimes 17/18.

20 Q. What about your personal belongings, where would they

21 go, if you had any?

22 A. They had to go in a wee wardrobe, in drawers.

23 Q. Is that beside your bed?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Did you take many personal belongings?

1 A. No.

2 Q. Why not?

3 A. They'd be nicked. You see, what happened was, like,
4 especially clothes and that, you'd have a laundry and
5 you would put your stuff in your laundry, and my number,
6 I won't forget this number, [REDACTED], go down the stair into
7 breakfast, take your laundry with you and you then put
8 it into -- what you called your laundry basket, you
9 know, in the cupboard, number [REDACTED], put it in and then at
10 night, at tea time, you would -- that would be all ready
11 for you and you'd take it back up the stair again.

12 But half the time, the stuff that goes in there,
13 doesnae come out. Doesn't come back. Things like that.
14 Anything like watches and all that, no. I wouldn't even
15 -- I wouldn't put them in.

16 Q. And when you say that they would be nicked, was this
17 by --

18 A. Aye, they would get nicked.

19 Q. Do you know who would steal them, was it other pupils?

20 A. Aye. Well, I don't want to -- they just got nicked.
21 I can't say. I'd like to think it was other pupils, you
22 know, 'cause I'd hate to think that staff were doing it
23 and all.

24 Q. Now, you go on in your statement to talk about the
25 routine and we've touched on that morning meeting, but

1 you said, before that, that every morning, you would
2 wake up at seven and you would have to go on a run?
3 A. Aye. Supposed to go on a run, yeah.
4 Q. How often did that happen?
5 A. Every morning.
6 Q. Even if it was bad weather?
7 A. Oh, especially if it was bad weather, oh, aye, like,
8 snow, rain, sleet, wind, round the loch there.
9 Q. And were all the boys --
10 A. Supposed to be, aye.
11 Q. -- on the run?
12 A. Mm.
13 Q. What about staff with you at that point?
14 A. It would be two members of staff. What would happen is
15 that you'd start off on the run and the minibus would be
16 behind ya with a few boys -- staff members.
17 Q. So they would be in a minibus behind you when you were
18 running?
19 A. Aye, aye.
20 Q. And how would you know the route to run?
21 A. It was just round the loch. Everybody knows where to
22 go, eh.
23 Q. What about your clothing for the run?
24 A. Well, just your Melville shorts and T-shirt. Sometimes
25 you would take a tracksuit. Depends on how bad the

1 weather was, you know, but mainly just your shorts and
2 that.

3 Q. So if the weather was bad, you would get to wear the
4 tracksuit?

5 A. Aye, sometimes there were wetsuits in the van, in the
6 minibus, I think. Aye, that's what -- aye.

7 Q. So it wasn't a case of, 'The weather's bad, it's snowing
8 outside, so we'll cancel the run today'?

9 A. No, no, no. One of the guys was one of those, er,
10 adventure boys, you know, he loved his outdoors,
11 mountain -- I can't name him obviously, but he loved his
12 mountaineering and canoeing and all that, he loved all
13 that kinda -- he wasnae bothered about the weather.
14 I think that's why we done it.

15 Q. And you say that nearer the end of your time at the
16 school, they stopped the run?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. Do you know why?

19 A. No. I only know that I stopped it, 'cause -- I'm not
20 going into my medical stuff, but I've not been well for
21 a long, long, long, long time. I didn't know what was
22 wrong, but then fortunately I got diagnosed and that,
23 and er -- but they wouldn't listen to you, you know.
24 You'd at least have to walk it and all that. You'd
25 still have to do it. That was the attitude, eh.

1 Q. So even if you had a medical condition that would maybe
2 stop you from running or you couldn't take part, you
3 would still have to go out and walk the route?

4 A. Yeah, yeah. As long as you could walk, you were able to
5 do it. That was the bottom line. You didn't have to
6 run it but you still had to do the course.

7 Q. What would then happen when you came back from the run,
8 what was the routine after that?

9 A. Er, well, you'd go back up the stairs, make your beds,
10 make your beds, get washed, take your laundry doon the
11 stairs, have breakfast. Sorry, I'm just referring to
12 this. It's basically what I've just said, er -- aye,
13 that was basically it.

14 Q. I think you say you had breakfast and then there's this
15 meeting and then after that?

16 A. School.

17 Q. School.

18 Can you tell us a wee bit about what the schooling
19 was like at Melville House?

20 A. Well, personally, it was like kindergarten, personally.
21 I know there was some kids in there that weren't able --
22 werenae great with their education and that, even
23 writing, reading and writing, you know, simple things,
24 but I just feel that shouldnae have affected the rest of
25 us as well. We were all in one classroom, you know. It

1 shouldnae affect, if you know what I'm saying, if
2 someone couldnae read and write, you know, you
3 occasionally try and help them and that, but you're
4 wanting to do well as well and you're -- I know there
5 was like a 16 or 17-year-old boys there doing almost
6 primary stuff, you know, and the only way to really do
7 anything was just do that and then some of them did go
8 on to -- go to high school, that's what I don't
9 understand. Some of them managed to go out every day to
10 go to high school and come back again. Others, the
11 majority of us didn't. I don't understand that one.
12 I always questioned that one as well.

13 Q. So you weren't sure why someone got to go to high school
14 and you all didn't?

15 A. No.

16 Q. When you say that the school was like kindergarten and
17 it was all at the one level, what sort of things were
18 you being taught? Was there a curriculum that you
19 followed?

20 A. No, there was just the one teacher. Er, I can't mind
21 her name but it'll no matter. You would just do your
22 basic arithmetic. There was nothing like geography or,
23 er, algebra or anything. Just basic maths.

24 English was none -- there wasnae really English.

25 There was geography, basic geography again. History,

1 and I say basic history. Honestly it was just basic, it
2 was --

3 Just like geography, you're just learning about the
4 continents and the countries and all that. You weren't
5 actually learning -- you only learn about places. You
6 weren't actually learning about the places. You were
7 learning where they were, you know. And same history,
8 you only touched on the Battle of Hastings and Battle of
9 Bannockburn, you know, 1314, and all that, but you
10 werenae getting into that, so details were the things.
11 I always thought you should be, but you werenae like
12 getting -- you were only getting a brief, you know --
13 weird, but I don't know. I mean, 'cause every child
14 would have been different, different levels, so I cannae
15 -- I can only talk for myself, if you know what I mean.

16 Q. You, as someone that quite liked primary school and
17 quite like to be challenged academically, how did you
18 find that transition to the work that you were doing at
19 Melville House?

20 A. I hated it. I thought -- well, see, I thought by going
21 to Melville House I was going to get -- because
22 apparently I didn't get structure. That's basically
23 what they're trying to say, you know, the whole public
24 thing. And what they've done is they've stripped
25 everything, the structure, even the structure that I did

1 have, no matter how upheaval or anything it was, the
2 structure, they took all that away and never replaced
3 it. That's how I feel. All they've done was -- sorry,
4 I'm getting angry a wee bit, but I just feel the social
5 workers were just ticking their box, tick that box,
6 there you go, he's in Melville House, forget about him.
7 That's how it feels. It still does to this day.

8 Q. Now, just touching on, then, what would happen after
9 school; do you remember what sort of things were
10 available for you to do when school was finished?

11 A. Yeah, er, after school you'd have another meeting. What
12 happens is each child was on a points system. This
13 sounds stupid, I don't know, but out of ten, how well
14 would the teacher say you done well at school and
15 everything, yeah, you know. According to that, you'd
16 have -- you know, you'd have the meeting, there would be
17 a set amount of things you could do that night. You
18 know, maybe an RSW will say, 'Right, let's go to' --
19 I think we went to Dundee a couple of times to -- roller
20 skating or that, or there was, you know, other
21 activities.

22 And depending on your point system, you get first
23 choice to see what you want to do, sort of thing, if you
24 know what I mean, and that would go on from about
25 6 o'clock to about 9 o'clock, you know, depending on

1 what you're doing or where you are.

2 LADY SMITH: So were you getting points totted up every day?

3 A. Yeah, yeah, yeah, for the whole day, yes.

4 LADY SMITH: And it would depend on how good your score was,

5 what you were able to choose to do in the evening?

6 A. Yeah, it was like, you know, for the star prize, you

7 know, you must get ten out of ten and even then if a lot

8 of people got ten out of ten, it was just whatever that

9 person is organising that he got to pick the names which

10 ones could do that activity.

11 LADY SMITH: So were there a limited number of children that

12 could do each activity?

13 A. Yeah, there would have to be like -- you know, if it

14 would require transport and that, you know, the minibus,

15 it only takes ten people. So there was limitations and

16 I think then -- I think there was a law about how many

17 children per social worker, if you know what I mean?

18 LADY SMITH: Yes.

19 A. So, yeah, there was that as well.

20 MS MCMILLAN: You tell us a wee bit more about that points

21 system and how it operated at paragraph 34 of your

22 statement: and you say that you would start on ten

23 points and then points would be deducted throughout the

24 day and obviously that has a bearing on what you could

25 do at night, but for what reason would points be

1 deducted?

2 A. Er, Well, the most serious ones would probably be
3 fighting and things like that, amongst yourselves; er,
4 challenging staff, you know, you got asked to do
5 something and you didn't want to do it.

6 Yeah, just basically, 'Do as you're told or else'.
7 You know, I mean, if you didn't, that's you, dock
8 a point.

9 Q. And you and the other boys, were you sort of scared of
10 points being deducted? Was there --

11 A. No, I think when you first start, yeah, but then when
12 you got into the routine or the way things were run, you
13 start to -- ken somehow, no, 'I'm not bothered, you can
14 take all my points away, I don't care'. You know, it's
15 almost like a rebellious type streak, eh. That's how
16 a lot of the kids started to feel. They weren't
17 interested. And that -- then the strictness and the
18 structure just -- it wasnae there because they couldnae
19 enforce anything. Once you take away -- yeah, you know,
20 when -- like -- everybody turned -- all the kids turned
21 and said: 'Right, we're no interested, we're just going
22 to go our beds tonight', I mean, what's the staff -- you
23 know, what can the staff do about that? They've took
24 away all the so-called 'fun' times, taken that away and
25 that's what happened.

1 Q. You go on in the next paragraph and you say that at
2 worst if you lost most of the points, you were in danger
3 of losing your privilege of going home for the weekend.
4 Was it classed as a privilege to be able to go home?
5 A. Well, they classed it as a privilege. It wasnae, it was
6 a right, so. Sorry to bang on about these things but it
7 was a right to be able to go home.
8 Q. And, for example, if they were using that points system
9 and you lost your points, were you not able to go home?
10 A. No, you'd lose your pocket money and all that, all your
11 pocket money. That was legally supposed to be yours
12 anyway, but they would take that away from ya.
13 Q. How did that work?
14 A. Well, I used to get -- I think it was £5 a week you used
15 to get and there would be a tuck shop. It would be
16 open -- and at that time you could buy cigarettes and
17 everything, yeah, I know that sounds terrible, but you
18 were able to do that, as most of the kids did, er ...
19 Yeah, that's -- and it's the same, you'd lose
20 50 pence here or 10 pence there and all that, it depends
21 on your points, it all comes back to your points. So
22 many times you never -- I wouldnae care, I wouldnae
23 care.
24 Q. And I don't know if you're able to tell us this, but if
25 a pupil or a boy continually lost their points and

1 wasn't allowed to go home for the weekend, would that
2 keep going until they managed to get more points or they
3 behaved?

4 A. No, no, it gets reset every day, but if you ever had
5 a bad day on a Friday, you may as well just stay there,
6 pal, 'til the Monday and that's it and you start again.

7 Q. So even if you've had a good day, for example, the
8 Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, if you have a bad
9 day --

10 A. Yeah, it's a daily -- sorry, it's a daily thing. It's
11 not a weekly thing, a monthly thing or anything, it's
12 a daily thing. You get your ten points every day you
13 behave -- you know, there was no such a thing as
14 a relapse or, you know, a bad day as a kid. You weren't
15 allowed to have a tantrum or anything, you weren't
16 allowed to say no, you weren't allowed to do this, you
17 weren't allowed to do that. You had your ten points, if
18 you lost 'em, tough, it's your fault.

19 I mean, it did happen to me once but I was fortunate
20 in the way I reacted, you know, I got -- so my father
21 came up and took me out on the Friday. He actually
22 physically took me out.

23 Q. When you found out that you weren't able to go home
24 because your points were taken off you, what did you do?

25 A. Phoned my dad. Got in touch with my dad.

1 Q. And he came in?

2 A. Came and took me. 'Cause going by -- just to explain,
3 just going by the -- I wasn't -- I was only there on
4 an educational basis, right? So -- but the way the
5 social worker worded it, I was in a home. However, that
6 was only Monday to Friday. You know, the weekend was
7 optional. My dad's quite clever -- was very clever at
8 the legal -- you know, going down, well, the nooks and
9 crannies or things like that.

10 Q. Just give me a minute.

11 So we've spoke a bit about the leisure activities
12 but then turning to paragraph 41, you talk about again
13 running away and I know we touched on this at the start,
14 but you go on to give an experience of where a group of
15 12 of you had been in the woods and built a den within
16 a thick area in the middle of the trees and you stayed
17 there for about three days.

18 Can you tell us what happened with that? How did
19 that all come about?

20 A. We just had enough of the way things were going. I keep
21 mentioning there was a boy that a lot of us took on like
22 a little brother. He was an orphan. He was in there.
23 They gave him so much time, so much grief, the staff,
24 and, er -- we just -- we were like big brothers to him.

25 But anyway, it got so much, and we just decided --

1 I can't mind if it was in the school or, you know,
2 during an activity or something, but he was getting
3 picked on for nae reason and it wasn't just picked on,
4 it was shouting and bawling in his face, attitude, as we
5 would call it nowadays. And, er, that was it. We just
6 decided, 'cause we'd previously built it there as
7 a hobby --

8 Q. Yes.

9 A. -- right, you know, just as kids do, you know, and we
10 just said, no, had enough. Let's go.

11 Q. So the boy that was being picked on, was this by staff?

12 A. Aye.

13 Q. And from what you could see, what sort of thing was he
14 doing --

15 A. Nothing.

16 Q. -- to merit that?

17 A. The poor boy was doing absolutely nothing. He was
18 missing his parents. He'd no got parents. If I mind
19 it, his parents had died a few years beforehand or
20 something. He was lost. The wee boy was lost. I mean,
21 I say wee boy, he was only a year, two years -- you
22 know, he wasnae tiny, he was actually taller than me if
23 I mind right but he was lost, you know, he had naebody
24 to talk to. We all talked to him. He tried to talk to
25 staff but staff were too busy. I think there was one

1 lady there, bless her, that everybody got on with, she
2 was like -- she was 'Gran'. I don't know if
3 I've mentioned her anyway but I don't know if I can
4 mention names, but she was brilliant but she could only
5 do so much, you know, sadly. She was only there --
6 I think she was a part-time -- coming in as a part-time
7 social worker and she could only do so much. It was
8 a shame for her, eh.

9 But aye, apart from her, the boy would get bullied.
10 He would -- if you done something wrong, all right, we
11 weren't -- mind -- we were kids. If I done something
12 wrong, and I don't mean something serious wrong, I mean
13 just something like your kids or something might do,
14 kind of like, I don't know, draw on the walls or
15 something, you know, and (noise made) and something so
16 trivial, but they made it so serious.

17 Q. Did you feel like the sort of row and the trouble that
18 he was getting into was --

19 A. It was unmerited. It was unmerited. I mean, there was
20 physicality, that being involved and that, there's nae
21 need for that.

22 Q. When you say physicality is involved, what sort of
23 things do you mean?

24 A. Oh, it was just -- not just him, but he was slapped
25 aboot and that, you know, but, aye, 'You wee idiot', you

1 know, this is by grown men. I mean, if I done that
2 nowadays to my bairn, I'd be locked up, but in there,
3 yeah.

4 Q. And you obviously talk about this den and that seems to
5 be the reason why you built that and you stayed there
6 with him and the others?

7 A. Aye, that was probably the best -- the best three or
8 four days I had up there, I'm not joking.

9 Q. So did you know if staff were coming to look for you?

10 A. They wouldnae find us. They were so stupid. They
11 couldn't even look -- rather than looking, like, a
12 hundred yards down the road, they were looking like
13 miles towards, away, where we live or whatever. It was
14 well funny though, well planned.

15 Q. What happened, did you go back to the school yourself?

16 A. Aye, we went back, 'cause we were kind of wet and we
17 were hungry. You know, just the usual. The excitement,
18 the fun, the adrenaline was finished.

19 Q. Was there any sort of punishment when you got back or?

20 A. I can't remember exactly what it was, but, er, we did
21 lose all our privileges for a few days. The police even
22 talked to us apparently about, you know, that they were
23 looking for us and all this crap, and everything. With
24 all due respect to the police, but it wasn't their
25 fault, was it? The door was open for us apparently, so

1 -- 'cause we kept saying that, that's what I remember
2 that we kept using that, they kept saying: 'The door's
3 always open if you want to run away'. Well, we did.
4 That was it. They asked us why we done it and we telt
5 them the truth, 'cause of [REDACTED]'s getting bullied all
6 the time and it's no fair on him.

7 Q. When you say that they asked you why you'd done it, was
8 that the police or was that the school?

9 A. Well, it was the police and the school. They were all
10 there. It was a meeting we all had. Social services
11 and I think the health visitors, they were there for
12 some reason and also a psychiatrist, if I mind right,
13 child psychiatrist and the police. The police were
14 there. All one meeting, aye.

15 Q. And did they do anything when you told them the reason
16 why?

17 A. No, they just asked us for names and that. We never
18 give 'em the names.

19 Q. As far as you were aware, did anything follow that?

20 A. Nah, nah. I mean, I can go into worse things than that
21 happened up there, personally, but, nah. Just to
22 understanding the whole thing, the police -- the police
23 only worked on the say-so of the social services. They
24 were corrupt -- or were corrupt. That's all I'll say.
25 I'll say it in public. And I can prove it, so ...

1 Q. Now, you go on in your statement and you talk about
2 family contact and I think, as you have already told us,
3 you went to school during the week and went home at the
4 weekends.

5 You talk at paragraph 45 about one time when you
6 went home for the weekend, you were fed up with all the
7 slapping that you were getting and I think you told your
8 dad.

9 Can you tell us a wee bit more about what happened?

10 A. Aye. I remember I must have -- the final straw must
11 have been the Friday before we came home. What had
12 happened was you would actually get dropped off at your
13 house in the minibus, you know, like a big taxi service
14 going all over Fife.

15 If I mind, I got slapped about a few times. Why,
16 I can't exactly remember why. Er, probably just being
17 a cocky wee guy or something, I don't know. Anyway,
18 I got slapped a few times and that and then -- it would
19 happen quite a lot, to be fair, you know, it's no like
20 just there but that was enough, you know, I had just had
21 enough that day.

22 So I went hame. I remember my dad coming hame fae
23 his work and, er, he just asked me. He goes: 'How was
24 your week?' and I just started greeting and telling him.
25 So I think he talked to my mum and that and then next

1 thing I ken is he went up to Melville House.

2 Q. Was that that same day?

3 A. Aye.

4 Q. Were you with him?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Do you know what happened?

7 A. Aye.

8 Q. Can you tell us?

9 A. Aye. He grabbed the social worker by the throat

10 basically and said: 'You hit my bairn again, I'm going

11 to kill ya', or words to that effect.

12 Q. What happened when you returned after that weekend

13 visit, did things change in the school?

14 A. No, not really. They backed off a bit on me, you know.

15 The person that my dad grabbed, I hardly really seen

16 him, to be fair, after that. He was still there, but

17 I never really had any -- ken, he wouldnae come up to me

18 and ask me to do something or -- kinda kept away from

19 me. Well, he was telt to keep away from me, I think,

20 anyway.

21 LADY SMITH: And that was a man who you said had been

22 regularly slapping you?

23 A. Yeah.

24 LADY SMITH: On the head?

25 A. No, not just the head but if you were in his vicinity

1 and if he chooses to walk past you, you know, he'd walk
2 past you (noise) like that, you know, just a random slap
3 now and again, or something a bit more, you know, it
4 wouldn't necessarily be just on the head. If you were
5 actually having a confrontation with him, you know, it
6 would probably be your face or something.

7 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

8 A. Never a punch or anything like that. But it was either
9 a slap or a backhand, you know, it was never a
10 full-force punch or anything like that.

11 LADY SMITH: That doesn't make it much better, does it?

12 A. Well, to be fair, my attitude, it was -- see, then my
13 father wasnae exactly brilliant, aye; looking back,
14 although he was my dad and I loved him to bits, he would
15 slap me, right? My problem was that I thought that when
16 I went to Melville House, they were like my mum and dad
17 and all that and everything. So to me at the time,
18 there was nothing different, you know what I mean, if
19 that makes sense?

20 LADY SMITH: Yes.

21 A. But then it got so much.

22 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

23 MS MCMILLAN: And this slapping, had that started when you
24 arrived at Melville House? Was there --

25 A. I wouldn't say it started like straightaway. I mean, it

1 was a few weeks, you know. Once you got into a routine
2 and that, er, you know. I tend -- if I remember right,
3 I've done it all my life, I tend to sit back in the
4 shadows all the time anyway, so it was more to do wi' as
5 soon as -- the light shines on me or something, or
6 something on me, that's it, you know, so it was only
7 a few weeks before all that started, yeah.

8 Q. Now, moving on, you mention in your statement about the
9 bed wetting and I think again we have covered that
10 briefly.

11 A. Aye.

12 Q. But you talk about that the staff had put a rubber sheet
13 on the bed and then when that didn't stop, they would
14 put a wire mesh on the bed with a buzzer attached?

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. Can you tell us a wee bit more about that?

17 A. Yeah. I developed a bed wet problem. What they did was
18 they put a heavy rubber sheet down and all that to start
19 wi'. And then they put on a -- well, as I remember, it
20 was two square wire mesh, you about, about two foot by
21 two foot, two of them, and they would put them
22 underneath the rubber -- no, on top of the rubber. Two
23 of them. So you had a single bed, about six foot long,
24 and they would be connected to a wee brown box, you
25 know, with wee wire things and as soon as water

1 basically hit it, then a big buzzer, like an alarm would
2 go off.

3 Q. And was this still in the dormitories with other boys?

4 A. I don't know. I think there was a few guys but I'm not
5 quite sure about that.

6 Q. And I think you then say that at one point you got so
7 fed up with it you threw it out the window?

8 A. Aye; yeah.

9 Q. Again, I think we've talked about that, but bed wetting
10 was something that would be brought up at the morning
11 meeting?

12 A. Mm-hmm. Aye, one big, vicious circle.

13 Q. Moving on in your statement, you talk about the abuse at
14 Melville House and you have spoken this morning about
15 the slapping and the loss of the privileges.

16 Was there anything else that you were -- let me
17 just -- you go on in paragraph 51 and you talk about the
18 meetings again and you found it embarrassing, but you
19 say:

20 'I found this extremely embarrassing as I had not
21 been assaulted by anyone and had not been the victim of
22 any sexual abuse.'

23 Was that in relation to the medical issue they were
24 discussing?

25 A. Well, what happened was -- what I remember is I had

1 a medical by the nurse. Er, I don't know whether it's
2 a compulsory thing, I don't know if it's a regular
3 thing, anyway I had one. I think other members of the
4 pupils did as well. And the next morning, well, the
5 next day, yeah, she brought up that I had bruising
6 around my groin area. And I thought, 'No', attitude,
7 but she brought it up in front of everybody, you know,
8 the usual crap. In front of everybody else. I mean,
9 what can I say? 'No, that's not me, that's not --
10 you can't be a bloody nurse if that's what you think'.
11 You know, 'cause I never sustained an injury or any
12 abuse or anything like that, you know what I mean?

13 LADY SMITH: Do you remember any other times when children's
14 medical problems or findings were openly referred to at
15 these meetings?

16 A. Oh yeah. On that day alone I think there were a few
17 other kids with bruising and that, that they brought up.
18 There was -- if I mind it, there was one kid who had got
19 nits. I remember that one getting brought up. There
20 were a few, they just mentioned that they went to
21 hospital.

22 There was one kid that actually broke in and stole
23 [REDACTED] and tried to commit overdose or something.
24 That was all brought up. It should never have been
25 brought up, especially in front of other kids. Yeah,

1 honestly, anything medical that's a concern, had to be
2 addressed at the meeting, same as any other concern.

3 LADY SMITH: In front of everybody?

4 A. In front of everybody. 'Cause I even questioned all
5 that myself and I got in trouble for saying: 'Well, what
6 are you talking about? You shouldn't be talking, you
7 should be talking to my mum and dad'. This is a policy
8 that they had. Sorry, but I do have a lot of anger
9 towards certain people.

10 LADY SMITH: There's no need to apologise. It's helpful to
11 me to know exactly what you remember and how you feel
12 about it.

13 A. I remember a lot. I honestly do.

14 MS MCMILLAN: My Lady, I do have some further --

15 LADY SMITH: A wee bit still to go? I would normally take
16 a break about now, the morning break for about
17 15 minutes. Would that work for you if we do that?

18 A. If you wish.

19 LADY SMITH: Let's do that just now.

20 (11.28 am) .

21 (A short break)

22 (11.45 am) .

23 LADY SMITH: Welcome back, 'Stewart'. Are you ready for us
24 to carry on?

25 A. I am, thanks.

1 LADY SMITH: Thank you. Ms McMillan, when you're ready.

2 MS MCMILLAN: Thank you, my Lady.

3 Just before the break, we were talking about abuse

4 at Melville House.

5 So can I ask you now to look at paragraph 54 of your

6 statement and you say in this paragraph that when you

7 went for your bath, you would make sure that the cubicle

8 door was closed and locked and the reason being that

9 there was a staff member who was really creepy and most

10 occasions when you were in the bath, you could hear him

11 outside? Do you see that? Is there anything else you

12 can tell us about that?

13 A. Not really. Er, it's one of those scary situations, er

14 -- aye. I mean, you're scared but you're ready in case

15 something happens, that attitude, eh.

16 Q. And you say at the bottom of that paragraph, that, apart

17 from rumours, you saw no evidence of this staff member

18 doing anything sexual with the boys.

19 The rumours, where did they come from?

20 A. Just amongst the boys and that, you know, just ...

21 Q. What sort of things did you hear?

22 A. Well, I told them that -- he would -- there was rumours

23 that he would like -- occasionally he slapped his thing

24 out and that in front of somebody, other boys and that,

25 you know, but just rumours, eh.

1 LADY SMITH: When you say his thing, you mean his penis?
2 A. Yes, sorry.
3 LADY SMITH: No, that's all right. I know, some people
4 are embarrassed about using it but I thought that was
5 what you meant.
6 A. I was trying to be polite, that was why.
7 MS MCMILLAN: Were you aware of those rumours in such a way
8 that you would make sure that the door was closed and
9 locked?
10 A. Yes, oh yeah.
11 Q. Did you hear any other rumours about any other staff
12 members?
13 A. Yes.
14 Q. What sort of things did you hear?
15 A. Er, well, I've actually even witnessed a few, you know,
16 fights between -- quite serious -- bad fights between
17 pupils and staff members and that, you know, really
18 quite abusive.
19 Q. Can you tell us about an example of one of them?
20 A. Well, there was one time when one of the boys was
21 arguing, it was over a pool table, I remember that, and
22 there was -- I mean, don't get me wrong, the boy was
23 hitting the staff member and that as well but, I mean,
24 there was pool balls and pool cues getting used on both
25 parties by both parties.

1 Q. So the staff member was using a pool cue?

2 A. Yeah, yeah. Oh, aye. Aye.

3 Q. And pool balls?

4 A. That particular staff member, aye.

5 Q. Do you know why they were fighting?

6 A. Do you need to know? To be fair, I mean, I didn't know

7 exactly what was fighting, but I mean there's force,

8 there's whatever, but there's excessive force, you know,

9 and it's like one person, 'Oh, you slapped me so I took

10 a knife out on you'. Does that make it right? No.

11 That was the attitude. I come to the conclusion that

12 staff members, at the very worst they could ask -- they

13 could go and get help from another member of staff or

14 something.

15 Q. So did you feel then, looking at the situation, that

16 staff were going overboard, they were using weapons,

17 they weren't getting help?

18 A. Well, for me, I thought the staff -- half the staff

19 should have been in Melville House, no the pupils.

20 Maybe that's the way they've been brought up and they're

21 expecting us to be brought up the same way, but we're

22 supposed to be the bad ones or -- well, that's what we

23 were deemed to be, you know? We were there because we'd

24 done something wrong but they're the ones that are --

25 make sense?

1 I feel that half the time they were the ones that
2 were -- well, they were the ones that were in the wrong,
3 being adults for a start and in their profession that
4 they were in, they should have known better, looking
5 back on it all.

6 Q. So just looking back then, if there was a problem that
7 had arisen between staff and one of the boys, do you
8 think there was better ways that the staff could have
9 handled that?

10 A. Of course there is, there always is, yeah.

11 Q. You go on in paragraph 57 to say that there was never
12 really any fighting amongst the residents, between the
13 boys?

14 A. That's true, yeah.

15 Q. So most of the fighting was between staff and the boys?

16 A. Yeah. I think when the boys are in there, they became
17 a big club, you know, a big family, a big club, and
18 because of the -- don't get me wrong, I'm not saying
19 Melville House was a 100 per cent evil place, however
20 the rotten apples that were there, all the pupils knew
21 who they were and we all stuck together when it came to
22 them, whether they were right or wrong. You know, we
23 just took a total dislike, almost hatred, if I can use
24 that word, towards those members of staff.

25 Q. Now, you go on in your statement then to talk about how

1 you left Melville House and you describe your experience
2 at the Children's Panel and then you went back to the
3 house and I think you were talking about this earlier
4 this morning.

5 And you go on at paragraph 59 to say that you'd
6 packed a bag, you were in an argument with a staff
7 member, you packed your things, you told him that you
8 were leaving and there was nothing that he could do to
9 stop you and I think you say that he pushed you on the
10 shoulders to make you sit down on the bed. Can you tell
11 us what happened at that point?

12 A. I remember him saying that: 'You're no getting out. We
13 can keep you here until you're 18'. He was -- the
14 gentleman in question, he was quite a -- I don't know if
15 he had a military background, but he came across like he
16 did, you know, quite authoritative, I felt
17 old-fashioned, Victorian-type person, and, yeah, he
18 basically said: 'Nah, you've no chance. We're keeping
19 you in here', you know, like, what were we meant to
20 think.

21 Of course, by that time I knew where I stood when it
22 came to, dare I say, the law. I knew enough.
23 I wouldn't say I was qualified in law, but I knew the
24 fact that as soon as I'm 16, there are certain things
25 I can do that would make it really hard for them to keep

1 me in there, you know.

2 Q. And I think you'd said that you'd sort of read up on the
3 matter before you went to the Children's Panel?

4 A. Yeah. I read up -- from the minute I went into
5 Melville House, I started reading into all this, 'cause
6 -- I still do it now. You know, like, if my car breaks
7 down, I'm not a mechanic but, you know, I'll try and
8 learn about that. I love cooking. You know, I love
9 learning. I still do to this day. And so, yeah, I went
10 into -- I've studied this for -- the child aspect,
11 child's law and I'm very good with human rights and all
12 that now, things like that; only because of me being in
13 Melville House, right?

14 Now, I told them straight. I just said: 'Well,
15 I tell you what, when I'm 16, I can buy my own house,
16 I can buy my own car, I can work, I'm getting married.
17 Are you going to try and stop me doing all that?
18 Because you cannae'. You know, it became a 'I'm in the
19 right here this time'. You know, I'm a -- this was,
20 like, two days before my Children's Panel 'cause my
21 Children's Panel was the day of my 16th birthday, you
22 know, so I was ready for all this, I was really ready.
23 It's been building up for years and I knew I was going
24 to, you know, get the last laugh, if you can call it
25 that, 'cause I just went home.

1 Q. I take it from what really what you wanted was just not
2 to go back to Melville House?

3 A. I wasn't going back. It wasn't I wasn't wanting to,
4 I wasn't. Sorry. That was me. There was no way on
5 earth anybody could force me -- I mean, what would've
6 happened if I had said I'm going in the army, I'm going
7 in the navy, which was my plan, you know, to go into the
8 navy, and, er, what, somebody was going to stop me? No.
9 I didn't know the full law at that time but I know when
10 you're a 16-year-old, you're a legal adult, it's
11 a children's home but you're an adult in a children's
12 home. It doesn't make sense. Anyway, I started playing
13 games with the social services at that time.

14 Q. Just reflecting on that and the time towards the end of
15 your time and now looking back, what did you think about
16 some of the policies that were in place?

17 A. Barbaric: totally illegal and they still are to this
18 day. You just need to look at the human rights charter.
19 'Cause, sorry, I'll keep referring to the human rights
20 'cause that's what I am good at.

21 The policies for the social services, unfortunately
22 even now, are still getting outweighed -- they're
23 outweighing the law. You know, their policy is above
24 the law and this is the biggest problem even to now,
25 even now. You know, my main concern back then was the

1 fact that they never asked my mum and dad what was best.
2 They never tried to mediate with my mum and dad, you
3 know. They never mediated with me. They never even
4 asked me why I didn't go to school.

5 One minute I'm no going to school, next minute I'm
6 their pal, next minute I'm in a home. There's no
7 mediation. There was nothing. They just wanted to tick
8 a box: 'He's having problems, let's put him in a home'.
9 And I'll speak for a lot of children, a lot of folk that
10 went down that road. There was nothing there. There
11 was no support, and even when I was in the home, there
12 was no support for my mother and all that getting to
13 come to see me, because my dad with a motorbike, you
14 know, and my mum had to basically walk -- she never
15 came, but if she had to, if the social services is
16 promising that they'll take her, you know, no. They're
17 just ticking boxes. They're not interested in the
18 emotional actual needs of the child. Sorry, but that's
19 my opinion.

20 Q. That's very helpful, 'Stewart'.

21 And when you talk about there being no support, when
22 you left Melville House, I think you say in your
23 statement that you didn't have any preparation really
24 for being an adult on the outside world?

25 A. No. Fortunately, when I left I actually -- I actually

1 basically almost walked to my sister's house, my sister
2 put me up and then that was it really, I just -- then I
3 had to go and work out what to do for a job. Well, what
4 I did was I went back to be re-educated and done my
5 Highers and my diplomas and that and then, you know.

6 Q. I think you go on in your statement to talk about the
7 fact that you went back to high school and you actually
8 went to a class with fifth year students so that you
9 could get some qualifications.

10 A. That was brilliant, that.

11 Q. Did you find that the education at that point was --

12 A. Well, I was told that I was above it but it was more --
13 yeah, it was a lot better, a lot better. It was more
14 what I thought school should be. You know, I mean,
15 you're able to question or ask a question, you know what
16 I mean?

17 Q. You noticed --

18 A. I was learning. I was able to learn.

19 Q. So there was a big difference between what you had at
20 Melville House and what you experienced when you were
21 out?

22 A. Yeah, but this is what gets to me. I had that in
23 primary school. I would have had that in high school if
24 the social services had, you know -- it shouldn't have
25 just been like: 'Oh, you're not going to school, you're

1 in a home'. It should never have been like that. They
2 should have been asking me why I wasn't in school or at
3 least mediate between the school, myself and my parents,
4 but, no, there was none of that, it was just a case of
5 tick a box: you're in a home. I would have had that
6 years earlier. Sorry, but that annoys me. It's so
7 simple to see. I'm not a qualified social service
8 person. You know, I'm not a judge. I'm not a lawyer,
9 I'm not anything like that, but it's so bloody blatantly
10 simple.

11 Q. And then you go on to talk in your statement again about
12 other aspects of your life after care and you say that
13 you never really fitted in any more with your family and
14 you sort of felt separate from them?

15 A. Aye. I sadly do, aye.

16 Q. And is that because you spent some time away from them?

17 A. Mm-hmm. Unfortunately I'm a wee bit angry 'cause I just
18 lost my mother a few weeks ago, eh, and I always
19 regretted my mother -- I used to blame my mum for it all
20 and it wasn't her and I didn't realise that 'til years
21 later, eh.

22 Q. And you I think go on then to talk about the reporting
23 of abuse at Melville House, and we have covered some of
24 that this morning, but did you feel like you could
25 report anything that happened?

1 A. To who?

2 Q. To the school, to the police, to the social work, to
3 anyone?

4 A. The police were reported -- my father, going back about
5 the incident you mentioned earlier, my father reported
6 it to the police and I was interviewed and that, but
7 nothing happened, but ironically, the day that my father
8 grabbed that person by the throat for doing that, my
9 father was charged, so where's the justice in that? Are
10 they looking to keep -- stick to their own attitude, you
11 know, look after their own, the establishment? Sorry,
12 but that's how I feel. So they'd sooner hear a child
13 get abused rather than an adult. I know this is going
14 back a few years, but I still feel ...

15 I mean, my dad told them straightaway, he would do
16 it again, he would have done it again. And if my
17 brothers had found out, then, I'm sorry, my older
18 brothers, you know, it would have been one big -- and
19 then not just them but then it would be other people and
20 all that. It could have been a really messy time.

21 Q. And we have spoken about some of the sort of lasting
22 impacts of your time in Melville House today, but what
23 do you think the impact of your time there has been on
24 you?

25 A. Well, the impact it had on me at the time -- well, up to

1 a few year ago, was I hated my mum. Something I should
2 never say, like, but I had a lot of time for my mum and
3 dad and that but I feel that they threw me out,
4 attitude, you know, they weren't interested, which is
5 totally untrue.

6 Anyway, apart from that, I managed to talk about it
7 all with my mother, we came to talk a lot about it. The
8 impact with me when it comes to -- unfortunately with
9 social services, the police, can't stand 'em, you know.
10 If I see somebody getting murdered in the street,
11 I wouldnae report it. That's how bad it's got and
12 I'm ashamed to say it but that's the way I feel the
13 justice system works nowadays, 'cause -- well, basically
14 'cause the Crown's not accountable.

15 Every day I'm having to sort of apologise for
16 things -- I've got to a stage where -- like, great
17 example, like, with my wife and that, I've got -- I'm
18 saying: 'Excuse me, I'm going to the toilet' or 'Excuse
19 me, I'm going to do this' or 'Excuse me, I'm doing
20 that', you know, I'm like that, that's what I've become,
21 or if there's something happened: 'Oh, I'm sorry'.
22 I feel like I've created -- I've done -- I don't know,
23 maybe I was trying to do a wee painting job and that and
24 knackered it up, I hate it. Hate myself for it. I've
25 knackered it. You know, that's what it come to. You

1 had to be perfect. They made you feel that if you're
2 not perfect in every shape and form, you're nothing.
3 You're useless and I still feel like that.

4 I mean, I'm lucky I've got a good wife and good
5 children and that now. But I still feel like that. I
6 cannae let Melville House go. No matter how much I try,
7 I can't let it go. I feel anger. I feel regret for
8 being there. I feel -- I mean, why was I there? Why
9 did I get put there? 'Cause I never went to school?
10 But when I went to school, what did I learn? Nothing.

11 You know, I had to learn myself, you know. It's
12 a big wide spectrum, you know, Melville House. It's not
13 so much the place. The place was lovely. The idea of
14 the place was brilliant. You got well fed. I can't
15 knock the food. The clothing, I can't knock the general
16 thingy.

17 The apples that were in there were rotten. I hate
18 it. I still get myself worked up about it and I'm not
19 proud of it. I'm not proud to say I was in
20 Melville House and I should be 'cause at least I went
21 and got an education. A lot of people have never had
22 educations.

23 Q. I think you do tell us in your statement that when you
24 apply for jobs --

25 A. Oh, no, no, I never mention it.

1 Q. -- you never mention anything to do with Melville House?

2 A. No. It's the stigma that it became unfortunately. Like

3 I was saying earlier, when I was at high school, before

4 I went to Melville House, everybody is going, 'You going

5 to Melville House? You must be hard.' It's a boy

6 thing, eh. I'm going to Melville House. That's what it

7 felt like. It really did. Although I was scared

8 I wasn't going to let them ken, nah, 'I can handle

9 myself' attitude. That's a kids' thing, you know, but

10 once you hit the reality, oh, nah. They stripped every

11 ounce of yourself, your human self, they do. They're

12 very good at it.

13 Q. 'Stewart', just finally, you talk about, in your

14 statement, about some of the lessons that the Inquiry

15 can learn from your time in care and you say that for

16 example the Children's Panel, if they'd spoken to you,

17 then perhaps they would have found out information from

18 you.

19 Do you have any other lessons that the Inquiry

20 should take from your experience in care or anything

21 else that you would wish to tell us?

22 A. I do wish that -- I mean, this is all focused on social

23 services 'cause it's them that does it all. I just do

24 wish that they would focus on not just ticking boxes,

25 but the needs for the child rather than the needs for

1 them, if that makes sense. That's basically the bottom
2 line, because the fact that they're going above the law
3 all the time as well doesn't help. I'm not happy about
4 that at all.

5 As you know, I'm fighting another thing at the
6 moment and that's -- they're trampling on all the rights
7 a human can have, even now unfortunately.

8 MS MCMILLAN: 'Stewart', I don't have any further questions
9 for you.

10 Thank you.

11 A. Thank you.

12 LADY SMITH: 'Stewart', nor do I.

13 But I do want to thank you again for coming here
14 today and talking so openly and frankly about your
15 experiences. It's of enormous assistance to me to have
16 heard that for the purpose of the work we're doing here
17 so I'm really grateful to you.

18 A. Thank you. I could talk all day, to be honest with you,
19 I don't mind.

20 LADY SMITH: It would be a pleasure, but I think you need to
21 probably go and sort out your car --

22 A. I've sorted it out.

23 LADY SMITH: -- and we have to get on with some other work,
24 but seriously, thank you and do feel free to go.

25 A. Okay, thank you.

1 (The witness withdrew)

2 LADY SMITH: Ms McMillan.

3 MS MCMILLAN: Thank you, my Lady.

4 I'm going to pass over to Ms Innes. I think there's

5 going to be another read-in at this stage.

6 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

7 'Peter' (read)

8 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady.

9 The statement I'm going to read in is for a witness

10 who is anonymous and will be referred to as 'Peter'.

11 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

12 MS INNES: The reference for 'Peter's' statement is

13 WIT-1-000000550.

14 In 'Peter's' statement he talks about the time that

15 he spent at Ovenstone and Linwood Hall. He says that he

16 went to Ovenstone when he was 10 years old and was there

17 for around nine months. Records show that he attended

18 Ovenstone from [REDACTED] 1970 until [REDACTED] 1971.

19 He says that he went to Linwood Hall when he was

20 around 12 years old and was there for approximately

21 ten months, although no records have been recovered in

22 respect of Linwood Hall to enable us to look at that

23 timeline.

24 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

25 MS INNES: 'Peter' was born in 1962. In his statement he

1 talks about life before he went into care. He had three
2 half-brothers and two half-sisters. He started
3 St Kenneth's primary school, but was expelled because of
4 his behaviour. He then went to another primary school.

5 When he was 6 or 7, he was admitted to the
6 Playfield Children's Unit at Stratheden Hospital. He
7 was an inpatient there for just over a year.

8 He talks about his experience there in his statement
9 from paragraph 16 to paragraph 124. He says that
10 a staff member threw a hammer at him, that he was
11 sexually assaulted, forcibly restrained, sedated and
12 verbally abused.

13 Towards the end of his time there, he says that the
14 staff were fed up with him and decided to send him to
15 Ovenstone. 'Peter' says he was looking forward to that,
16 because the teachers taught five days a week and he had
17 not experienced that at Playfield.

18 So turning to page 17 of the statement and
19 paragraph 125:

20 'I was about 10 years old when I went to Ovenstone.
21 Mrs Bain, my social worker, took me in a car.

22 'We drove up a driveway to a large, white building.
23 It was more modern than Playfield. We went inside with
24 my suitcase and met the matron who was in charge.
25 I don't remember her name.

1 'When Mrs Bain left, a nurse came and showed me
2 where my bed was. It was in a big dormitory.

3 'On the ground floor of the building there was a TV
4 room, dining room and main duty room where the staff
5 sat. The dormitory was up a few steps and there was
6 a verandah.

7 'It was called a residential school but it had
8 nurses and medical staff there. I don't really know
9 what the place was.

10 'It was called a school and was for primary school
11 aged boys. There were about 18 boys in there from about
12 4 or 5 years old up to 11 years old.'

13 He then sets out the names of some staff he
14 remembers, including Mr Christie and a nurse called
15 Kate.

16 At paragraph 132, he says:

17 'Matron would ring the bell in the morning to get
18 everyone up. She stayed in the building and was there
19 all the time.

20 'Then you would get up, go to the bathroom to get
21 washed, brush your teeth and get your clothes on. We
22 just wore our own clothes and got them back after they
23 were washed. I never got any new clothes when I was in
24 there. I got hand-me-downs if I needed something.

25 'We made our own beds then went for breakfast in the

1 dining room. We had then had chores to do.

2 '~~We~~ did chores until the bell rang, then we went to
3 school which was in a separate building. Then back to
4 the main building for lunch and then back to school in
5 the afternoon.

6 'After school, we had our tea and were allowed to
7 play for two to three hours. There was a big grassy
8 area with a football pitch where we could play. There
9 was also the remains of a castle-type thing that we
10 played in or we went for walks to the reservoir which
11 was about three miles away. Playing outdoors was
12 enjoyable.

13 'We would get some supper after playing, then got to
14 watch a bit of telly.

15 'Three nurses would be on duty at night.

16 'I would stay at the school every weekend while the
17 other boys went home every fortnight. That was because
18 my mum didn't want me home. The matron would be around
19 at weekends unless she was out. There were other staff
20 members around too.

21 'We went to church every Sunday, which was down the
22 road. We wore kilts and walked there. I don't remember
23 the name of it but it was a Protestant church. We had
24 to go as it was just the done thing.

25 'We had all of our meals in the dining room. The

1 staff sat with us at meal times.

2 'We had to eat everything that was given to us. We
3 didn't have a choice. If you tried to sneak anything
4 away in your pocket, you would get caught because there
5 were eyes everywhere and you were made to sit and eat
6 it.

7 'If anybody didn't want their food, the staff would
8 physically force them to eat it. This happened to me
9 and I saw it happen to other kids. One of the members
10 of staff liked doing that.

11 'If anybody was sick they'd be excused at that
12 point. I was never sick but I saw other kids being
13 sick.

14 'One time I snuck liver in my pocket and got caught.
15 I was made to sit back down by a member of staff and eat
16 it. You just did what you were told.

17 'The school was in a separate building in the same
18 grounds. It was like a proper primary school, but just
19 for the boys in Ovenstone. We didn't wear uniforms or
20 anything.

21 'All the classes were in one big, open-plan room.
22 There weren't different classrooms. I went into
23 primary six when I was there.

24 'There would be about four or five professional
25 teachers who came from outside.

1 'They would each take your class or group to
2 a different area of the room to teach. I was with the
3 older boys at one end of the room. I don't remember my
4 teacher's name.

5 'The school was all right, but I struggled because
6 I hadn't been to school or had any schooling for four
7 years. I don't know if the teacher knew this, because
8 she just expected me to do the work. If I couldn't do
9 it, I would just be made to colour in or something.

10 'I struggled at school because my IQ was low. This
11 is something I've read in my records as an adult.

12 'We had chores to do like sweep the verandah, clean
13 the metal bits along the doors, clean the walls and the
14 toilets. We did this in the mornings before school.

15 'I also had to do chores at the weekends, even when
16 I was there on my own.

17 'There were two baths in the bedroom and they were
18 used at the same time. They were in separate cubicles
19 so there was some privacy. Most of the boys there were
20 older so we were able to take a bath ourselves.

21 'There was a set bath night, and so many boys would
22 go one night and so many on another night.

23 'There would be a member of staff lurking about but
24 they wouldn't be watching you.

25 'I was still wetting the bed so the nurses who were

1 on duty at night would get me up to pee during the night
2 so they could catch it before I wet the bed.

3 'They were a bit strict about the bed wetting in
4 there. The nurses would verbally embarrass me by
5 telling me that I was too old to be doing that. Other
6 boys wet the bed too and they got the same treatment.

7 'The nurses would strip the bed and change it when
8 someone wet the bed.

9 'I wasn't seeing a psychiatrist when I was in
10 Ovenstone. I don't remember seeing a doctor or dentist
11 whilst I was in there.

12 'Nurse Kate or some of the other nurses would give
13 me a medication for peeing the bed. I don't remember
14 what it was. It was like a sweet orange juice thing.
15 It had a braw smell.

16 'Nurse Kate and the other nurse would ask you how
17 you were getting on and were nice ladies. I don't know
18 if they were assessing me in any medical way. They
19 didn't have much to do with the routine so I don't
20 really know what they did.

21 'I didn't go on any trips in the nine months I was
22 there or on any holiday.

23 'I was the only kid there over the holidays because
24 the other boys went home to their families. I was made
25 to do chores every day of the holidays when I was there

1 by myself.

2 'Mrs Bain came a couple of times in the nine months
3 that I was there. I was able to talk to her alone, but
4 I didn't feel I could talk about the sexual abuse that
5 was going on.

6 'I didn't tell her about the physical abuse from
7 another member of staff or the bullying from other boys.
8 It was just one of those things; you just accepted it.

9 'My mother came to visit me once and took me to
10 Anstruther.

11 'We sat on wee boxes that had cushions on them when
12 we were watching telly in the evenings. They were
13 against the wall. We had to sit really quietly. If we
14 made any noise, the staff member would get angry and
15 take pleasure in hitting you with a slipper or a belt on
16 your bare bum. He did that to me and I saw him do it to
17 other boys as well. I think I'd be bruised but never
18 saw a doctor.

19 'He would also use the belt if he caught you
20 swearing or caught you fighting with another boy. He
21 just carried the belt around with him, which was like
22 a school belt.

23 'There was a lot of fighting and violence between
24 the boys. There was a lot of bullying going on and that
25 happened to me. I don't remember the names of any of

1 the boys who done it. I don't think the staff would
2 have known what was going on. It was done out of the
3 way.

4 'My abuser was called Mr Christie. I'm sure he was
5 employed by the hospital because he wore a white jacket.

6 'All the children went home every weekend. I was
7 left there alone at weekends, summer holidays, Christmas
8 time and every other holiday. The only staff that would
9 be there at the weekend would be the matron every
10 weekend and Mr Christie every other weekend. The nurses
11 would sometimes be there too.

12 'There were times when the matron and nurses
13 wouldn't be there and it would just be me and
14 Mr Christie and he took advantage of that.

15 'I was allowed to go to the staff sitting room when
16 I was there by myself, where they had a fire and
17 a colour TV. Mr Christie would be alone there and he
18 asked me to sit on his knee. I didn't want to and sat
19 on the furthest away seat from him and he asked me to
20 sit on his knee again. I kept saying no but he told me
21 to, so I reluctantly went and sat on his knee. Then he
22 started sexually abusing me.

23 'Christie would even come to get me on the weekends
24 he didn't work and take me to his home in Cellardyke
25 overnight. He must have got permission from matron to

1 do that. He would pick me up on a Friday and I'd stay
2 the night at his house and he'd abuse me there. That
3 happened on four occasions.

4 'He would make me go to bed with nothing on and he'd
5 come to bed naked as well. He would get an erection and
6 rub it up and down my back and on my backside and then
7 he would ejaculate all over me. Then he'd turn around
8 and fall asleep.

9 'He tried to penetrate me once but I moved away and
10 let out a huge scream. Then the other times I went
11 I was always scared that he was going to try and do it
12 again.

13 'One day when I was at the school on the weekend and
14 Christie was on duty, Nurse Kate kept telling him all
15 day that they were going out that night and to remember
16 to lock the doors.

17 'At night, the nurses all went out and left me and
18 Christie in the school. He started to abuse me in the
19 staff sitting room.

20 'I remember Nurse Kate coming into the room with
21 tea, juice, biscuits and crisps. I remember her kicking
22 the door open and she caught him abusing me. She
23 shouted at him and called him a dirty paedophile
24 bastard. She told me to get out the room and go
25 downstairs to Nurse Anne.

1 'I went down to Nurse Anne and she was standing with
2 a policeman who was Nurse Kate's boyfriend. Anne told
3 me to go for a ride with him in his police car, which I
4 did. We put the light on and he drove me around
5 Anstruther. It was good being in the police car.

6 'When I got back, Christie was away and I slept in
7 Nurse Kate's room at the bottom of her bed.

8 'I found out later that they had parked the car in a
9 layby up the road and walked back to the school and come
10 in through the back door. They must have had their
11 suspicions about him.

12 'I gave a statement to the police shortly after.
13 They came to Ovenstone to take it.

14 'Christie was caught abusing me on the Saturday and
15 on the Tuesday of the following week, my social worker,
16 Mrs Bain, turned up. My things were put into her car
17 and I was taken away, back to Playfield. Mrs Bain never
18 spoke to me about it.

19 'I was at Ovenstone for about nine months before
20 I left.'

21 'Peter' then tells us that he was sent back to
22 Playfield. He told a doctor about the abuse at
23 Ovenstone. The police spoke to him again and on
24 page 25, at paragraph 191 he says:

25 'The court case against Christie was in 1974.'

1 He thinks. We know it was in 1973:

2 'I had to go to court and give evidence against him.
3 The corridor at court was lined with other boys who went
4 in to give evidence. I didn't hear them give evidence
5 but I think they were other boys he had abused.
6 Christie was fined £75 [it was £70] and banned from
7 working with children.'

8 As already noted from the material that I referred
9 to this morning, the council had difficulty in
10 establishing the fact of Alexander Christie's conviction
11 and the Inquiry has the information from the news
12 article to confirm that Mr Christie was convicted of
13 sexual offences.

14 Furthermore, the Inquiry also has information from
15 a police statement, given by a staff member, believed to
16 be Nurse Kate, referred to in 'Peter's' statement, that
17 he was one of the complainers at the trial.

18 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

19 MS INNES: In her statement, what she says is consistent
20 with what 'Peter' says in his statement about her
21 discovering the abuse.

22 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

23 MS INNES: In an updated response to Part B of the Inquiry,
24 Section 21 notice in relation to Ovenstone, Fife Council
25 accept that the allegations of abuse made by 'Peter'

1 against Mr Christie are likely to be true. And, as
2 I said earlier, in fairness to the council, they, at the
3 time that was written, were not aware of the additional
4 material that the Inquiry has.

5 'Peter' was at Playfield from [REDACTED] 1971 until
6 [REDACTED] 1975. The council advised that he then stayed
7 briefly with a foster carer for a short break until he
8 was admitted to Linwood Hall on [REDACTED] 1975.

9 He was visited by the man SNR [REDACTED] Linwood Hall.
10 'Peter' describes him as an ex-army man. He took
11 'Peter' out in his Ranger Rover for food and told him
12 that he had made a good impression and that 'Peter'
13 should go to his school. Shortly thereafter, 'Peter'
14 was taken to Linwood Hall.

15 So moving to page 26 and paragraph 201:

16 'I was almost 12 years old when I went to
17 Linwood Hall. Mrs Kidd drove me there and [REDACTED] SNR
18 [REDACTED] met us when we arrived.

19 'It was a huge, old building with big grounds.
20 There was a big wall around it with three different
21 entrances. There was a beautiful summer house, an
22 aviary and about four ponds with big fish in them. They
23 also grew their own fruit and vegetables there. It was
24 really nice.

25 'After Mrs Kidd left, SNR [REDACTED] showed me

1 around the place. The big dining hall was on the ground
2 floor. There were big stairs going up and a corridor
3 going off it, which led to an outbuilding and the boys'
4 dormitories were on each side of a corridor. There were
5 four boys in each room and they had their own beds.

6 [SNR] told me I wasn't allowed to go
7 upstairs, because that's where the girls were.

8 'He told me how the place was run and how he liked
9 things. He told me he didn't want any swearing or
10 fighting, and to stick in at school. He told me kids
11 got rewarded for doing well at school and not getting in
12 trouble. I was told that there would be outings where
13 kids would get taken out on trips.

14 'There were about 25 boys there and less girls. The
15 age range was from about 11 years old up to about 16 or
16 17 years old. I think I was the youngest there.

17 'There were about four boys who were about 16- and
18 17-year-old and they had their own dormitory.'

19 He then refers to various staff members, including
20 David Murphy.

21 [SNR] had a house [] and he
22 refers to another staff member staying overnight but
23 other staff members being day staff who would sometimes
24 be there at night:

25 'I was put into a dormitory with boys who were about

1 a year older than me.

2 'You got up in the morning, got washed and dressed.

3 You wore your own clothes in Linwood.

4 'The school was in the building and we went there

5 during the day.

6 'We had three meals a day and the food was fine in

7 there.

8 'I wasn't wetting the bed any more. I think there

9 was a boy who wet the bed. He was ridiculed by the

10 staff and other boys. I made friends with him and

11 didn't ridicule him because I knew what it felt like.

12 'You could go and shower whenever you wanted to in

13 there.

14 'Sometimes I would help out in the garden at the

15 weekends. They grew their own fruit and veg and I liked

16 the gooseberries.

17 'All the boys went home every fortnight and the

18 place would be shut. I would be sent to some other home

19 or foster placement every second weekend.

20 'Nobody from my family came to visit me at

21 Linwood Hall. I didn't see or speak to my mum at all.

22 'Mrs Kidd was now my social worker and she came to

23 see me.

24 'I would tell her that I wanted to leave

25 Linwood Hall because I couldn't keep up with the

1 schoolwork. I also told her that I couldn't handle how
2 they were just sending me here, there and everywhere at
3 the weekends.

4 'She could see that I needed some stability and
5 eventually found me somewhere else to go after I'd been
6 in Linwood for ten months.

7 'The classes were small in Linwood Hall and were in
8 the same building as everything else.

9 'Some teachers came in from outside but some of the
10 staff taught as well.

11 'I was too far behind in my education. I was slow
12 and wasn't able to keep up. The teachers would tell SNR
13 SNR that I was too far behind with my schoolwork.

14 'I got some sex education at Linwood Hall. I had to
15 get an operation on my testicles because [a staff
16 member] had twisted them two years earlier when I was in
17 Playfield Children's Unit. I was having some problems
18 and a lot of pain so I went to Victoria Hospital for
19 that.

20 'I started self-harming when I was in Linwood.
21 I hated a lot of things in my life. I saw my life as
22 having a lot of hatred and the love was only small.

23 'There were some trips out in the vans that were
24 fun.

25 'There were two vans that went out usually with two

1 members of staff in each one. We sometimes went out at
2 night with torches to see deer and once to a caravan
3 park.

4 'The trips out were usually through the week and
5 sometimes at the weekend when everybody was there.

6 'I never went on any holidays.

7 'Linwood shut down every second weekend. All the
8 boys went home to their families and I had to go to
9 other children's homes or foster parents because I had
10 no family to go to.

11 'I was being put into these situations in other
12 homes where I was just dumped and I didn't know the
13 rules. That could lead to issues with boys in other
14 homes and then the home would complain to Linwood staff
15 and I would get battered when I came back to Linwood for
16 being bad.

17 'I went to stay with [a couple] in a house in
18 Arrochar twice. And also with another couple. I went
19 to Martha Frew Children's Home, St David's Children's
20 Home and Rimbleton Children's Home in Glenrothes.

21 Secondary Institutions - to be published later
22
23
24

25 'When I went to stay with [the couple in Arrochar],

1 his family were celebrating someone getting into
2 university. He had had a few whiskies and he told me to
3 come over to him. When I did, he picked me up and put
4 me on his knee and tried to touch me in a sexual way. I
5 was embarrassed, more for him than for myself.

6 'I got off his lap, got my things together and said
7 I wanted to go and wasn't staying there. I asked him to
8 take me to my sister's house. He said it was late and
9 I couldn't because he had been drinking so couldn't
10 drive. I said I'd just walk but I wasn't staying there.
11 He then drove me to my sister's.

12 'On my way to my sister's house at Crosshall, he
13 gave me a fiver and bought me a fish supper.

14 'When I got back to Linwood Hall, I told the staff
15 that I didn't want to go and stay with [the couple in
16 Arrochar] because [the husband] had tried to touch me.
17 I don't know if they did anything about it but I wasn't
18 sent back to stay there. I wouldn't have gone even if
19 they had tried to send me.

20 'The main discipline was putting people on what they
21 called report. That meant that you didn't get any
22 pocket money, weren't allowed out and had to go to bed
23 at 7 pm for a week. I got punished more than most in
24 there, because I was there the most, at weekends and
25 over holidays.

1 'David Murphy was a stickler for anti-smoking so if
2 he caught you smoking, he would pull you hard by the ear
3 or punish you by not giving you pocket money.

4 'If you had an argument with a boy and couldn't sort
5 it out, you would be made to stand outside [SNR
6 SNR 's] office. [SNR] would come and
7 get you and tell you to get outside on the grass and
8 fight it out. There were rules that you weren't allowed
9 to bite, pull hair or kick. [He] would stand and watch
10 you fight.

11 'The fight would only be over when somebody gave up.
12 Boys would get really hurt and could be bleeding in the
13 fight. That happened to me. I was beaten up and had
14 a burst lip and a black eye. My ears were ringing for
15 days after being hit over the head.

16 'I also beat up other boys when told to fight.
17 I'm not proud of it but I had to do it and stick up for
18 myself. I don't remember the names of the boys I
19 fought.

20 'If you were really hurt, the member of staff would
21 patch you up. Other staff knew how the injuries
22 happened. Everybody there knew that was how [SNR
23 SNR sorted things out between the boys. I think
24 that was a method that the army used.

25 'That happened to me three times. The first time

1 the boy sat down outside [SNR] 's] office and
2 said he wouldn't fight. [SNR] punished him
3 by putting him on report.

4 'I went to this foster family one weekend. One
5 night when I was there, I was watching football with
6 [the husband] and the son. After it finished, he sent
7 his laddie to bed and told me I would be sleeping in
8 with him. I told him I wasn't and went to sleep in his
9 laddie's room.

10 'When I got back to Linwood Hall on Sunday, I was
11 hauled out of my bed at some Godforsaken hour by one of
12 the staff. I was dragged and banged through three swing
13 doors and into the staff sitting room.

14 'This staff member had long dark hair, big glasses
15 and was a big guy, about six foot six inches with
16 a really big build.

17 'When he dragged me into the staff sitting room,
18 David Murphy and two other staff members were there too.
19 They told me I was on report for a week which meant that
20 I had to go to bed at 7 pm, wouldn't get my pocket money
21 and wasn't allowed out.

22 'I asked what for and they said I had disobeyed
23 an order. I think that was because I had not done what
24 [the foster carer] had told me to do and he'd complained
25 about me.'

1 At paragraph 255:

2 'I had a feeling that I was going to get dragged out
3 of my bed in the middle of the night again when I got
4 back to Linwood. I wouldn't go to sleep because I was
5 expecting it.

6 'I finally dropped off and the same thing happened.
7 I was dragged out of bed and into the staffroom by the
8 same staff member. The same staff were there and I was
9 put on report again.

10 'I got picked on more than other boys because I was
11 around more and they had reasons to pick on me when they
12 got complaints from other care places.

13 'The older boys would just come into your room and
14 would do an act of violence or ask for money, which they
15 did. I don't remember the names of any of the boys.

16 'Murphy was a paedophile and he was gay as well and
17 fancied young boys, especially if you were good looking.

18 'On one occasion when playing football, he was
19 shooting the ball at me when I was in goals. After
20 about half an hour of doing that, he asked me if
21 I wanted to go up to the attic. I asked what was there
22 and he said there was archery, target shooting, table
23 tennis and a brilliant model railway that he'd give me
24 a shot of. I said okay.

25 'We went up to the attic and he went straight for

1 the train set and I played with the airguns and did some
2 target shooting. He told me to go over and see the
3 trains. There was something about him so I went to the
4 other side of where he was standing. I had sussed that
5 something wasn't right.

6 'He told me to come over to him to have a shot of
7 the controls. I said I wasn't that bothered about
8 having a shot, but he told me to come over and have
9 a shot. I reluctantly went over and took the controls.
10 I felt him pressing up against me so I walked away to
11 leave. He asked me what I was doing and did I want to
12 play with the trains. I said no and he said I'd better
13 go then so I went away.

14 'I think he knew that I had sussed out what he was.
15 Murphy was in his 50s when I was at Linwood.

16 'We went on trips in minibuses. I remember going on
17 a trip in two minibuses with a group of boys. There
18 were two members of staff in each minibus, including
19 David Murphy.

20 'We were driven somewhere near the beach, where
21 there were other cars and vans parked up on a verge.
22 I remember seeing several men getting out of the vans.

23 'We went to a wooded area nearby and there were
24 about six or seven caravans there. I remember seeing
25 the men that had gotten out of the vans had gone behind

1 the caravans.

2 'We all sat around the caravans. There were five
3 other boys from Linwood who I remember being there. It
4 was a school day in late August, I think, because it was
5 still light at night.

6 'I remember being offered a can of beer by the staff
7 and it had already been opened. I drank it and so did
8 the other boys. I had about three tins of beer and
9 I don't remember anything after that. I was about
10 11 years old at the time.

11 'I know what happened. I think I was raped by
12 several people. I remember everything until after
13 drinking the beer so I must have been drugged. It's not
14 rocket science.

15 'The next thing I remember is being back in Linwood
16 the next day. I woke up with a pain in my back which
17 was sore right down to my buttock and I don't know if
18 that was caused by what happened.

19 'None of the boys talked about the trip.

20 'I didn't think anything of it at the time. It
21 wasn't until the police spoke to me as an adult that the
22 penny dropped and I realised I must have been drugged
23 and raped by more than one man that night. The police
24 told me that some boys remembered things about being
25 sexually abused on that trip and others didn't, so the

1 drugs must have not worked more on some of the boys.

2 'The police have told me that other people have said
3 that I was taken to a ceilidh with them when we were
4 boys at Linwood with the same members of staff. They
5 told me that there were between five and eight people
6 who have said I was there. They think I was raped there
7 too, but I remember absolutely nothing about that.
8 I think I must have been drugged before even being taken
9 there.

10 'The police told me that there was a register of
11 outings and they'd seen my name on it as having been
12 taken out to this ceilidh.'

13 'Peter' then goes on to talk about his life after
14 Linwood. He was given a seven-week foster placement
15 before being enrolled at St Margaret's Children's Home
16 in Elie. He left school at 16 and got a job with the
17 National Trust for Scotland.

18 He lived in a hostel for a year. He then took up
19 employment delivering things to pubs which he enjoyed.
20 'Peter' says that life has been hard and he has mainly
21 been on sick benefits because of his sore back which
22 started when he was at Linwood.

23 He now has a close relationship with his niece. He
24 speaks about his family, his children and grandchildren,
25 although his marriage has broken down.

1 'Peter' then talks about the impact his time in care
2 had on him. He says he has been a good man and would
3 not hurt someone, but was made to fight in Linwood Hall
4 which he's not proud of.

5 He has received further medical input. He says that
6 a head doctor specialist told him that he's wired up
7 wrong and that there's a part of his brain that doesn't
8 store information. It took him until his 30s to
9 disclose what happened to him.

10 He says that there has been an impact on his family
11 life too.

12 Moving to page 40 and paragraph 318:

13 'I look at my own children and what they've achieved
14 because they've had a stable home. It makes me think
15 what I could have done and could have been if I had
16 stability and a decent education.

17 'I have back problems and my back is sore at the
18 bottom of my spine. This started after the camping trip
19 at Linwood.

20 'The condition has been diagnosed with a big long
21 name that I don't remember. I went to see a surgeon
22 about it as an adult and he asked if I'd been in an
23 accident. I said I hadn't and he didn't understand how
24 it had happened. I have never been able to work
25 properly because of the pain.'

1 'Peter' then tells us about being approached by the
2 police in respect of abuse perpetrated by David Murphy
3 at Linwood Hall.

4 Moving on to page 41, and at paragraph 325:

5 'The police approached me in 1999 about David Murphy
6 in Linwood Hall because other people had come forward
7 and made complaints about him. They told me that
8 between five and eight guys had named me as being one of
9 the boys who was taken out and abused.

10 'They didn't give me the details of what the other
11 boys had said because they needed to hear my evidence.
12 I couldn't remember anything because I had been drugged
13 but I did learn that I had been abused.

14 'The police told me about a register of outings that
15 was kept by Linwood, which showed that I had been taken
16 out with the other boys.

17 'The police told me that I wouldn't need to go to
18 court if Murphy pled guilty, but I would need to give
19 evidence if he pled not guilty.

20 'The next thing I saw, Murphy was on the news and he
21 got 15 years or something for abusing boys in Linwood
22 and St Margaret's where he had worked before he worked
23 at Linwood. He must have pled guilty. He died within
24 a year of being in prison.

25 'There were also allegations against [another staff

1 member] but he left the country and couldn't be found.

2 'I think the police should still have come back and
3 told me what had happened. Fair enough, I wasn't able
4 to tell them what happened to me because I had been
5 drugged, but other boys were able to say what had
6 happened to me because they'd seen it.

7 'Fife Council had given Murphy a big house in Troon
8 when he retired. It was an absolute disgrace.

9 'I told the police about the abuse at Ovenstone when
10 I spoke to them in 1999. They wrote it down but they
11 wouldn't have done anything about it because it had
12 already been reported at the time and Christie was dead
13 by then.'

14 At paragraph 336:

15 'People who work with kids need to show more love,
16 support and encouragement. They need to consider what
17 the child's future will look like and give them a bit of
18 reasonable discipline that will help them in the future.

19 'I have no objection to my witness statement being
20 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.
21 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are
22 true.'

23 And 'Peter' signed his statement on 30 November
24 2020.

25 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

1 MS INNES: I'll pass over to Ms McMillan.

2 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

3 MS MCMILLAN: Thank you, my Lady.

4 I think we have time for one final read-in before

5 the lunch break.

6 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

7 'Rab' (read)

8 MS MCMILLAN: This is the read-in for someone by the name of

9 'Rab'.

10 And the reference for 'Rab's' statement is

11 WIT-1-000000324.

12 'Rab' is giving evidence on behalf of his son, who

13 had been in care, but has subsequently passed away. He

14 died in 2016. 'Rab' says that his son was around 6 or 7

15 years old when he attended Ovenstone School and that he

16 remained there for four years.

17 Records show that his son was admitted in 1982 but

18 there are no records indicating when he was discharged.

19 In paragraphs 2 to 5 of his statement, 'Rab' talks

20 about his son's experience before going into care. His

21 son was born in 1974 and lived at home with him and his

22 wife and his other children.

23 When his son was around 3 years old, he was involved

24 in a car accident and was found to have a shadow on his

25 brain. His son initially attended the local

1 primary school but eventually, due to his behaviour, he
2 was expelled from that school.

3 This was around the time that social work became
4 involved with the family.

5 He goes on to tell us at paragraphs 6 to 12 of his
6 statement that his son then spent six weeks in care at
7 Playfield House in Cupar. He talked about his son's
8 experience there, which included electric shock
9 treatment. 'Rab' and his wife did not know why this
10 treatment was necessary, nor did they consent to it.

11 At paragraph 13, he goes on to tell us how his son
12 ended up at Ovenstone School and what he remembers about
13 his son's time there.

14 He says:

15 'After six weeks at Playfield House, my son was
16 transferred to Ovenstone Residential School in
17 Pittenweem, Fife. He would have been still 6 or maybe
18 even 7 when he went there. This was supposed to be for
19 about six months, but it ended up being four years. He
20 was at the school Monday to Friday and be home with us
21 at the weekend.

22 'Ovenstone was a large yellow-coloured mansion,
23 which may have originally been part of a large private
24 estate. The school was run by Fife Education Authority
25 before being taken over by Fife Council.

1 'There were only a few members of staff that I can
2 remember [my son] talking about. There was SNR
3 SNR of the school. The other staff he named was
4 the handyman bus driver. All the kids used to call him
5 "Uncle Roger".

6 'The last one of the staff we knew was a teacher
7 there. He used to be a teacher in the unit before he
8 transferred to Ovenstone. He seemed to have spent
9 a career working with vulnerable children and was also
10 involved in coaching children with .
11 I believe he was taken to court last year for serious
12 offences involving some of those children. Part of the
13 letter said if he was in the company of anyone under the
14 age of 16, he was to tell them and any adult present the
15 nature of the charges he was facing. I knew this
16 teacher from school as we were there at the same time.
17 I also played football with him at the Boys' Brigade.
18 His children were in the same classes as my oldest two.

19 'I remember some of the other kids who were in
20 Ovenstone at the same time as [my son]. There was
21 a girl who was trying to make people aware of the abuse
22 that was going on within the school. She says she will
23 not be giving up her efforts to tell everyone about the
24 things she and others suffered. I am not sure how many
25 boys and girls were in Ovenstone. The only ones we

1 really saw were the kids that shared the minibus to and
2 from the home.

3 '[My son] told us that he slept in a dormitory
4 during his time in Ovenstone. He told us there were
5 times when he was moved to a separate room but I can't
6 remember why he was being moved there. Also in the
7 dormitory at that time were [three other boys].

8 'Food was never really discussed but he always ate
9 what was put in front of him. He was a good eater and
10 was never hungry when he came home at weekends.

11 'I do not remember there being a school uniform at
12 Ovenstone. We did have to supply four sets of clothing
13 for him. Although they did not provide any clothing,
14 they did have arrangements in place for laundry.
15 Although there was no sports day, he must have been
16 doing some gym classes as we also had to buy black gym
17 shoes for him.

18 '[My son] did tell us that there were trips outside,
19 one of which they went to an army training camp, which
20 he really liked. He was also taken to the local
21 swimming baths for lessons.

22 'I am not sure of any of the other staff members of
23 the school other than [SNR], the other
24 teacher] and Roger. There were never any parents'
25 nights that you would expect if he was at a local

1 school. We never received any report cards or
2 photographs of his time in the school. At the weekend
3 he was never sent home with any books to do any
4 homework. He must have been doing all right at school
5 because he did quite well when he left Ovenstone and
6 went to Viewforth High School in Kirkcaldy. This was
7 the same high school that his older sister and brother
8 were attending.

9 'One of the issues [my son] suffered from during his
10 stay was he was always getting large abscesses on his
11 arms and legs. He told me that the doctor at Ovenstone
12 used a needle to burst the abscesses. His gran always
13 said that they were a result of him being stressed.

14 'When my son was around 8 or maybe 9 years old, he
15 began self-harming while he was at school. When Roger
16 dropped him off on the Friday, he left him at the front
17 garden gate. Normally they brought him right to the
18 front door. I tried to find out what had been happening
19 but Roger wouldn't tell me anything and immediately made
20 his way back to the minibus.

21 'On the Monday morning when Roger and another young
22 teacher, I don't know his name, came to pick up [my
23 son], I told him I was keeping him at our house. I kept
24 him out of the school for the rest of the week. We were
25 visited by the Social Work Department and threatened

1 that if we did not allow him back to Ovenstone, they
2 would apply for a custody order and keep parental
3 control of [my son] until he reached the age of 16. We
4 had to relent and allow him to go back.

5 'Each Monday morning when Roger came to pick him up,
6 he would play with his toy tractor in the back garden.
7 Other times he would be crying saying he didn't want
8 them to take him back to the school. He was trying
9 anything to avoid going back to the school.

10 'Although he was home with us for Christmas itself,
11 there was never any party provided by Ovenstone and no
12 presents handed out to the kids. This is different from
13 Playfield where they did make an effort.

14 'When [my son] was staying at Ovenstone he was
15 allocated a young male social worker but I cannot
16 remember his name. He was supposed to visit there and
17 check up on him and some of the others under his care.

18 'We tried several times to get the Social Work
19 Department to get help for [my son] but they never did.
20 Sometimes they did go to the school to check how the
21 kids were getting on. The problem was that [my son] and
22 the other children could not say anything because the
23 teacher he was having issues with was always there.
24 I was told by a friend of [my son] that the kids were
25 not allowed to see the social worker on their own.

1 'One of the times when [my son] was being dropped
2 off by Roger, there were some toys on the steps of the
3 house. Roger thought that they belonged to [him] and
4 was shouting at him to pick them up. When we tried to
5 explain that they were his brother's and he was playing
6 with them, Roger never apologised to [my son] for
7 shouting at him. I heard the shouting and went out to
8 confront Roger but he ran back to the minibus.

9 'The school were very reluctant to have us visiting
10 at the home. There was one time I was having to see
11 [SNR] at the school] as he had hit [my son]
12 with a sandshoe on the bare backside. I tried to speak
13 to him about it. He was not available at the time but
14 I was telling [my son] to tell me to buy a set of boxing
15 gloves. I went to the school and told him he did not
16 need a boxing ring and if he came out of the school, we
17 could sort it out. He threatened to get the police on
18 to me.

19 'I remember one bonfire night we were at the school.
20 There was only my wife and I standing with [our son] as
21 the fireworks were on. None of the other parents or
22 teachers spoke with us. If I remember correctly, the
23 way we found out about it was a letter was sent with
24 [our son] when he was on home leave the previous week.

25 'One of the worst things [my son] told us about his

1 time in Ovenstone involved [a teacher]. He described
2 how [the teacher] had sent him to his bed early one
3 night. [The teacher] went to the room where [my son]
4 was alone and used a pool cue to hit him on the legs.
5 As though that was not enough, he then pushed the end of
6 the pool cue into his back passage. We did not find out
7 about this until he was an adult.

8 'Another punishment [this teacher] used was when he
9 was in the classroom. If [my son] or any of the boys
10 had been upsetting him for whatever reason, he would
11 grab them by the back of the head and bounce his head
12 off the desk. As well as this, there were times when he
13 would have the kids place their hands on the open desk
14 and slam the lid down on to their hands.

15 'There was another method of abuse where [this
16 teacher] would poke his fingers into [my son's]
17 forehead, making him bend his neck and head back. [The
18 teacher] was making him look in the eye and he would
19 shout at [my son] at the top of his voice.

20 'At the time [my son] was at Ovenstone there were no
21 reports made to anyone as the abuse involved [SNR
22 SNR], a teacher and another member of staff and
23 there was no one we felt could help.'

24 'Rab' then goes on to tell us after Ovenstone, his
25 son attended Viewforth House in Kirkcaldy, but he had

1 anger issues and could not accept authority figures. He
2 got a job when he left school and then he tried to join
3 the army but could not because of the injury to his
4 head.

5 He was involved in a lot of short-term employment.

6 'Rab' tells us at paragraph 45 about the disclosures
7 his son made about the abuse at Ovenstone. He says:

8 'When [my son] was around 28 years old, about 2002,
9 he saw [the teacher who abused him] at the shops. When
10 he came home, he was crying and really upset and this
11 was the very first time he told us about some of the
12 abuse he had suffered at Ovenstone, including the
13 incident with the pool cue and the things that were
14 happening in the classroom. As much as he told us some
15 of the things, he did not tell me everything. It was
16 too difficult telling his dad about the incidents. He
17 did tell his friend a lot more but I never found out
18 what was involved.'

19 'Rab' then goes on to tell us that his son became
20 involved with drugs and spent some time in and out of
21 jail. He was in a relationship and had two children.
22 'Rab' says that he is now bringing up the two children.
23 His son sadly passed away in 2016. It was three months
24 after his son's death that his son's partner also passed
25 away.

1 'Rab' tells us about the impact of his son's life in
2 care at paragraph 51. He says:

3 'I am sure that if it had not been for his time in
4 care and building up resentment to authority figures, he
5 would have been a much different person. He always
6 preferred his own company and I think being in care away
7 from his brothers and sisters meant he missed out on
8 building up relationships and this carried on into his
9 adult life. Even when his wife and him split up, he
10 wanted to stay in the house on his own.'

11 'Rab' then talks about the difficulties his son had
12 in reporting the abuse he sustained at the school in
13 2004.

14 Speaking of the lessons to be learned, 'Rab' says at
15 paragraph 56:

16 'I think we would have been better informed by
17 a modern school than when [my son] was at his school,
18 especially when he was getting into trouble with
19 teachers.

20 'I hope that by coming to the Inquiry that what
21 happened to [my son] does not happen to anyone else and
22 I hope it might help others who have come forward.
23 I would also like the Inquiry to be able to stop [the
24 teacher who abused him] from being involved with
25 children.'

1 He says:

2 'I have no objection to my witness statement being

3 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.

4 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are

5 true.'

6 He has signed the statement and it's dated 26

7 February 2020.

8 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

9 It's 12.55 so we'll pause there for the lunch break

10 and I'll sit again at 2.00. Thank you.

11 (12.55 pm)

12 (The luncheon adjournment)

13 (2.00 pm)

14 LADY SMITH: Good afternoon.

15 Now, Ms Innes, I think we're about to welcome back

16 a witness who was here quite recently, is that right?

17 MS INNES: Yes, that's correct, my Lady.

18 The next witness is Tommy Harley. He has waived

19 anonymity. Tommy gave evidence on Day 510, that was 10

20 January of this year in relation to his experiences at

21 Rossie.

22 Tommy attended Ovenstone School between 20 October

23 1976 and 23 December 1977.

24 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

25

1 Tommy Harley (sworn)

2 LADY SMITH: Tommy, welcome back.

3 A. Thank you.

4 LADY SMITH: Thank you for coming to help us again with
5 evidence that you have to give in relation to the work
6 we're doing here.

7 You will remember how this works. You've got your
8 written statement. We'll put parts of it up on the
9 screen. But I hope you also remember, Tommy, that when
10 you were here before, I wanted you to understand that
11 I do know that what you're doing is a big ask and it can
12 be difficult talking about your own life when you were
13 a youngster. If you need a break at any time, you just
14 tell me.

15 Also, sometimes we're very bad at asking questions
16 and we don't make sense, and if that happens, that's our
17 fault not yours, so do ask if you've got any questions
18 or you are puzzled about what's going on.

19 If you're still giving evidence at about 3 o'clock,
20 we may be finished by then, we may not. But, at about
21 3 o'clock, I take a break in the middle of the afternoon
22 anyway, so you can bank on that happening but if you
23 need a break before then it's not a problem.

24 I'll hand over to Ms Innes and she'll take it from
25 here.

1 A. Thank you.

2 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

3 Questions by Ms Innes

4 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady.

5 Tommy, can I take you first of all to your
6 statement, please, which is WIT.001.001.6575.

7 Just if we look again at the final page at page 23,
8 paragraph 99 you say:

9 'I have no objection to my witness statement being
10 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.
11 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are
12 true.'

13 And we can see that you signed your statement on
14 15 June 2017, is that right?

15 A. Yes, that's correct, yes.

16 Q. And you've previously given evidence to the Inquiry,
17 focusing on your experiences at Rossie but, at that
18 time, you also gave evidence about your early life and,
19 if it's okay, I'd like to take you straight to page 11
20 of your statement, where you start talking about your
21 experiences at Ovenstone Residential School in
22 Pittenweem.

23 Now we know from your statement that before you
24 moved to Ovenstone, you were at Playfield House?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. And we have your evidence and your statement in relation
2 to what happened to you there.

3 Why was it that you moved from Playfield to
4 Ovenstone, do you know?

5 A. It was never explained to me, ken, like. I just went
6 where I was asked to go, ken, I had no option anyway.
7 They had places set for me and that's where I was to go.
8 It didnae matter -- I always wanted to go back home, but
9 I never, kind of -- they knew best. So when they took
10 me to Playfield House, it was just another place to go.

11 Q. So you tell us that your social worker, Graham McKenzie?

12 A. Aye.

13 Q. Had come to visit you at Playfield House and you were
14 told that you were being moved?

15 A. Aye.

16 Q. And, from what you say here, it looks like he told you
17 that you were moving and you moved straightaway, is that
18 what happened?

19 A. Aye.

20 Q. And you say that you remember it was a Wednesday?

21 A. It was a Wednesday I got moved, uh huh. You know how
22 I know, 'cause always bad things happened on
23 a Wednesday. I used to hate Wednesdays. Ken, bad
24 things happened when I was in Playfield House and it was
25 mostly on a Wednesday and Playfield and then got moved

1 on a Wednesday to Ovenstone.

2 Q. And then you tell us that it was a residential home and,
3 when you got there with your social worker, can you
4 remember your, sort of, first impressions of the place?

5 A. I mind we were -- the bit where you drive down you've
6 got to -- the dorm, that's the dorm there and you pass
7 a big grey dorm there and you've got the two classrooms
8 there, ken, next to the dorms and then you've got the
9 entrance, so when you're driving in, because it's like
10 a country road and you're -- just outside Pittenweem and
11 you drive in and mind you would be driving in and it's
12 just like -- it just looked like eerie.

13 I mind -- I remember shaking, kind of, my nerves. I
14 mind shaking coming out the car, but they actually had
15 a hold of me. Mr McKenzie had a hold of me when I come
16 out the car. He must have thought I was going to just
17 run.

18 Q. Right.

19 And did he take you into the school part or --

20 A. No, because he took me into the office, ken, the office
21 as you walk up the stairs, a couple -- a few stairs and
22 you walk through the door and then the office is on the
23 right. And that's where I first met Mr GBB .

24 Q. Who was Mr GBB ?

25 A. He was SNR .

1 Q. And what was your first impression of him, can you
2 remember?

3 A. I didn't like him, eh. He was a scary man, eh.

4 Q. And can you remember anything about the conversation
5 that you had with him, that first time?

6 A. He spoke. But it was the way he spoke. He was a big
7 man. He was -- I mean, to me he was like a big giant,
8 kind of. I think he was just over six foot tall and he
9 was kind of built like that, a big man.

10 Q. And after you met SNR [REDACTED], were you taken to
11 a dormitory?

12 A. We got to -- we went to the dining room first. We went
13 in there. I think I had a drink of water and I was
14 asked if I was hungry and that and there was a cook --
15 they had a cook there, Aunt Bunty, they called her, eh,
16 she was fae Crail. She was a large woman. She was fae
17 Crail, but she did all the cooking. Aunt Bunty they
18 called her, aye. I remember that just in there.

19 Then there was like -- I couldnae hear anything, eh.
20 Not much -- not much was going in, because my head was
21 just pure -- buzzing, kind of, like. I could not really
22 take anything in, kind of -- it doesn't matter what was
23 said to me, kind of, like, it was like lip service,
24 somebody's lips are open, was talking and I remember
25 just my head buzzing all the time.

1 Q. And were there any children about when you arrived?

2 A. No, they were out, they were, and it wasnae until later

3 on -- they came in when I was in one of the room, just

4 all of a sudden this door opened then all the young

5 people got brought back. They'd been out.

6 Q. And when they arrived, were they -- was it boys and

7 girls?

8 A. Boys and girls, yes.

9 Q. Were they of a similar age to you or not?

10 A. They were different ages, yeah. There was different

11 ages. There was ones getting ready to move on. I knew

12 one of the boys that was in there.

13 Q. Right.

14 A. I knew one of the boys that was in there, aye. Aye,

15 I knew one of them -- but he was getting ready to move.

16 But there used to be, kind of, like you were in there

17 for a certain length of time and then you'd get moved on

18 or because they were going to put me to -- because

19 I wasnae doing what they wanted me to do, but I remember

20 Linwood Hall got brought up and they were going to put

21 me to Linwood Hall but there was a guy -- a wee boy my

22 age, he got brought from Linwood Hall then and I was

23 talking to him and he said, 'Don't go there, don't go

24 there', because he'd obviously told me what was going on

25 in there.

1 Q. So, sorry, he was saying to you, 'Don't go there' or you
2 were saying --

3 A. No, he told me, he says 'Make sure you don't go to
4 Linwood Hall.' Because there was talks between SNR
5 SNR and Mr McKenzie about putting me in
6 Linwood Hall, you know, and I said I didn't want to go.
7 I just wanted to stay where I was.

8 Q. So Mr McKenzie, your social worker, and SNR
9 were talking about sending you to Linwood at some point?

10 A. Aye.

11 Q. So you tell us at paragraph 49 of your statement, that
12 there were -- there was a girls' dorm and a boys' dorm?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. So were all the boys in one room together or were they
15 split up?

16 A. No, the boys in one dorm. There was four dorms all
17 together. Two dorms there and two other dorms there, and
18 there was girls on that side and boys on that side, but
19 they used to change the dorms about, ken, every so
20 often. So what they would do is they'd put the girls
21 into that dorm and the boys back into that dorm so they
22 used to swap about, ken, put the girls in different
23 dorms or, ken, vice versa.

24 Q. And how many boys were in the room you were in?

25 A. It varied because it was bun beds -- ken, kind of like

1 bunk beds, so I think there was roughly about -- maybe
2 about 12 to maybe 14. Because there were a couple of
3 single beds too as you come in the dorm, as you come in
4 the door, because you had a couple of single beds and
5 then you had the bunk beds.

6 Q. I see. Okay.

7 And you say here in paragraph 49 that there was also
8 a TV room and a wee room next to it where you were
9 allowed to play records if you were good?

10 A. Aye.

11 Q. And you say that you tried for a long time to get into
12 that wee room. Can you explain a little bit more about
13 that, please?

14 A. I just couldnae behave. I couldnae behave. I didn't
15 know how to ken like. I didn't know how to be -- kind
16 of, behave. I always got mistreated so any attention
17 was good attention, ken, no matter if you were getting
18 punished or not it was still attention and I was forever
19 getting the size ten slipper over the backside or
20 getting slapped or whatever, getting pushed or whatever.

21 I used to get bullied a lot. I used to get bullied
22 from the older boys.

23 Q. And were you not allowed to go into this room where you
24 could play records if you'd been misbehaving, so to
25 speak?

1 A. No. If you behaved the staff would, ken, right, you've
2 had, ken, a good day, you can go in there and you can go
3 and play records now. But I did get in but I just --
4 then I got hauled back out again. Cause I was like,
5 ken, showing off, jumping about -- because there was
6 a wee square window either side with a square window and
7 the staff would be standing and keeping an eye on you
8 and I'd be jumping about, just acting up and they would
9 come in and haul me out and I wouldn't get back in.

10 Q. So when you were there was a wee square window, was that
11 for the staff to be able to see into the room?

12 A. Aye. Because you were never allowed -- you were never
13 allowed to be on your own.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. There was always staff about. To make sure you weren't
16 getting up to anything or whatever.

17 Q. Now, we'll come back to issues in relation to Mrs
18 IAL in a moment, but if we can look on to page 12
19 in your statement, to what you say at paragraph 52. You
20 talk about the routine. You would get up in the
21 morning, get washed and put your uniform on. So this
22 would be a school uniform, I assume?

23 A. Aye.

24 Q. And you then had breakfast?

25 A. Aye.

1 Q. And then you would go to school and you say, at
2 paragraph 53. Was the school in the same building or
3 was it in a different building from where the dorms
4 were?

5 A. No, different -- when you actually come into -- in the
6 grounds, that's the first thing -- ken, there's two
7 classrooms. It's like two big Portakabins and the first
8 Portakabin was Mrs IAL [REDACTED]'s class and then the second
9 one was Mr Munro's class.

10 Q. Okay. And how -- do you know how you were divided
11 between these two classes? Was one for, you know,
12 a certain age of children?

13 A. I think -- so when I look back now, ken, there was all
14 the good boys that Mrs IAL [REDACTED] had, eh, and the ones
15 that Mrs IAL [REDACTED] didnae have much time for, because
16 they were the good boys, and they got all -- ken, Mrs
17 IAL [REDACTED] always treated them, so -- and the other kids,
18 they -- I just got that vibe when I first met her anyway
19 and I just -- I didn't -- I just -- I never even spoke
20 to her, eh, but I just picked up that she was just
21 an evil woman and then I was in Mr Munro's class.

22 LADY SMITH: Tommy, you remember that we have got
23 a stenography system that's transcribing all the
24 evidence at the time.

25 A. Aye.

1 LADY SMITH: It's very technical and apparently it's having
2 a technical headache at the moment. I'm going to go off
3 the bench and we'll see if we can get it sorted out.
4 I hope it won't take too long.
5 (2.20 pm)
6 (A short break for a technical issue)
7 (2.32 pm)
8 LADY SMITH: Tommy, welcome back. I think we're all right
9 now, the system seems to be working. Sorry about that.
10 Ms Innes.
11 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady.
12 Now, Tommy, just before the break, we were talking
13 about the school and we can see there, in paragraph 53,
14 you say that you were in Mr Munro's class and you talk
15 about the things that you were taught. You say:
16 'I tried to understand what was going on, but they
17 just said'
18 That you weren't listening?
19 A. Aye.
20 Q. Did you feel like you were trying to learn but having
21 some difficulty with what was being taught?
22 A. I didn't understand anything. I couldnae take anything
23 in. I didn't understand, kind of, like -- I didn't
24 understand, ken, English and maths, arithmetic and all
25 that kind of stuff. It didnae matter, ken, when they

1 used to shout at me, ken, like, ken, just called me
2 stupid or whatever, ken, man, but I couldnae take
3 nothing in. I couldnae take anything in. I wasnae --
4 it's not the fact I wasnae listening, eh, it was just
5 like I just didnae understand and they didnae get this,
6 ken, like. They thought, ken, like, he's not paying
7 attention or anything, ken, but I was just like -- when
8 I look back now it was, like, it was a different
9 language and I just didnae understand that language,
10 that they were, ken, saying.

11 It wasnae getting in. It wasnae getting through,
12 when I look back now.

13 Q. So did the teachers not, or Mr Munro not sit down with
14 you on a one-to-one and try and work out what was going
15 on or help you learn?

16 A. No. They used to just shout, just shout at you and just
17 threaten you and everything. They threatened you with,
18 'You're going to SNR' or 'You're going to see
19 SNR' and the only reason you went to see SNR
20 SNR was to get the size ten slipper, was to get
21 punished. That was the only reason you went to see SNR
22 SNR, eh.

23 Q. You talk about SNR at -- just going back to
24 page 11 and paragraph 50, so you've talked about SNR
25 SNR before, about your first meeting with him and

1 then you talk about him giving you the slipper?

2 A. Aye.

3 Q. And would that be over clothes or not?

4 A. Sometimes it was -- you had to -- the majority of times

5 when you got the slipper you were to drop your shorts

6 down, you just your pants on or you had just your

7 pyjamas and it was, ken, that kind of cotton material or

8 sometimes you got it on the bare backside.

9 Q. And when he hit you with the slipper, would it be once

10 or would it be multiple times?

11 A. Multiple times. Usually about six. Sometimes it could

12 be more, eh. You kinda lost count.

13 Q. And you say that you never gave in?

14 A. No.

15 Q. What do you mean by that?

16 A. I wouldnae cry eh, ken, like. I never gave in to

17 anybody. I had a lot of years learning and that, ken.

18 [REDACTED] used to kicked me up and doon with steely boots

19 on. Ken, I just switched off from the pain, aye.

20 Slapped, kicked, punched and then when I went into care,

21 ken, when I went into Playfield, ken, I was raped, ken.

22 That was a lot of pain to suffer, ken, mind, I never

23 cried.

24 Then going into another place where you were getting

25 physically, ken, abused and, ken, you just switched off

1 of the pain and this is what -- I got the mair -- kinda
2 got mair angry and Mr GBB used to get angry,
3 because I just smirked. I just kinda -- I smirked, ken,
4 like. You've taken everything else but you'll no be
5 getting this. I never cried -- I never cried, man.

6 Q. Do you think what he was doing would have changed if you
7 had cried?

8 A. No. It was like, even when I was in Rossie, ken, like,
9 when you got the school belt on the backside, ken, staff
10 wanted to see you cry, eh, and you just wouldnae give
11 them that -- you wouldnae give them that pleasure, ken,
12 man. So I just built up that resilience and even when I
13 was in Ovenstone, it didnae matter what they done, ken,
14 I still wasnae giving in, eh.

15 Q. Now, if we go back to page 12 and paragraph 54, you talk
16 about some things that happened at a tea time, and you
17 say that you used to have afternoon tea at 3 o'clock in
18 the afternoon. Would that be at the end of the school
19 day?

20 A. Aye, aye, aye. Erm, we used to go up to the dining
21 room, eh, and I seen a bit there, I just remembered,
22 I hate scones. I hate scones. I, ken like -- I detest
23 them. Just horrible, just horrible. See when I see
24 them in a shop, they're just horrible looking things,
25 ken, like. I hate raisins, eh. I don't eat anything

1 with raisins in.

2 And that was ever since then, ken, like, 'cause

3 you're sitting at the dining table and, ken, like, the

4 table of four, eh, and I was kind of a wee bit ill, ken.

5 I was white and everything and I wasnae feeling too

6 good, but the scones was thick with butter, man, and

7 there was jam on top, eh, and I couldn't eat --

8 I just -- I couldn't -- I hated it, man.

9 And the staff member come out and I was actually

10 being sick and they were ramming this scone doon my

11 face, man, doon my mouth and I was actually being sick.

12 And obviously the sick went over me and over the table.

13 Then the staff grabbed me by the hair and hauled me oot.

14 Hauled me out the dining room, shouting. Because SNR

15 SNR 's office is there and getting hauled oot and

16 I got taken out to the dorm. Aye, I hate scones. I

17 detest them, man, yuck.

18 Q. When they took you to the dorm, what happened then,

19 after this?

20 A. I got made to strip down and get into pyjamas and in

21 bed.

22 Q. Were you in bed for the rest of the day, can you

23 remember?

24 A. Aye.

25 Q. And was there a staff member with you or not?

1 A. Aye. The staff was at the door: there was always staff
2 there. There was always staff. It didn't matter where
3 you were, there was always staff wi' you all the time.

4 Q. You say in this paragraph that you got the slipper for
5 this from SNR for not telling them that you
6 were going to be sick?

7 A. Aye, just like -- 'cause I mind them coming over, eh,
8 ken, like, and I mind 'em shouting at me, eh, and
9 I tried to tell them that I was feeling -- I wasnae
10 feeling too -- that I was ill. I felt ill. But it
11 didnae matter anyway, ken, like. They tried to say
12 that -- the staff are saying that I done this
13 deliberately so I wouldnae have to eat but I was
14 actually -- ken, like, when I was sitting there with the
15 other wee boys and the girls, I was actually being sick,
16 ken. I couldnae keep nothing doon. As I was actually
17 vomiting then, it was the staff member picked the scone
18 up and tried to ram it in my mouth.

19 Q. Now, if we can go over the page, please, to
20 paragraph 55, you tell us about an incident that
21 happened in which you were made to strip off all your
22 clothes?

23 A. Aye.

24 Q. Are you able to tell us about that?

25 A. Aye. It was that bit in the classroom, aye. So, I got

1 dressed, had breakfast and that and then went to -- in
2 the morning, Mr GBB had a guitar and he was --
3 ken, like, all the two classes were together and we
4 just, ken, we were sitting on our bums, ken, and the
5 teachers are there. Usually Mr GBB would sing
6 songs, 'Kumbaya, my Lord' and all kind of that stuff,
7 ken man, you're just sitting there listening, ken.

8 Then Mr GBB called me up, so I went up and
9 I was -- he was actually sitting with his guitar and his
10 arm resting and then he was shouting me up in front of
11 all -- ken, in front of the two classrooms and all the
12 staff were just standing. Mrs IAL was over there
13 at a table and then I was made to stand there, eh, and
14 Mr GBB says: right, I'll show you how -- it was
15 just to degrade me in front of everybody.

16 He would shout at me to take my school uniform off.
17 I was down to my pants and he told me to take my pants
18 off. I was standing there, eh, and I had to stand with
19 my hands 'cause I went like that (indicating) and he
20 said: no, stand there, like that. And it was like that,
21 but it felt like forever, ken. I was standing there
22 bollock naked in front of the other boys and girls, ken,
23 like, and all the staff.

24 Then I got told to get dressed.

25 Q. And then you say that you also got the slipper later on

1 that day as well?

2 A. Aye, aye.

3 Q. And more recently, have you gone back to visit

4 Ovenstone?

5 A. I have. I've been back there twice.

6 Q. And is that in the last couple of years or so?

7 A. Aye.

8 Q. And when you went back, did you, sort of, remember this

9 incident happening again?

10 A. Aye. I was -- see, the person that's got the building

11 now, the kind of place now, it's an art exhibition, ken,

12 they hire different bits of it. So when I went and

13 I seen -- kind of -- I spoke to the guy and I said:

14 I was here years ago. I'm just up doing a bit of --

15 just looking around, ken. And he said to me, he says:

16 'A lot of peoples drop by that was in here when they

17 were a child'. He did say to me, he said: 'I've heard

18 a lot of bad things about this place'.

19 So I went -- he took me doon to the kind of two

20 classrooms. There was a lot of stuff there in my

21 memory, but, ken, I went in and it was really eerie,

22 ken, when I went in, 'cause that's where I got made to

23 strip naked, ken, in there.

24 Aye. Yeah, it brought up a lot of memories, eh, but

25 it was stuff that I wanted to do, ken. I wanted just to

1 get a kind of -- some acceptance round stuff, eh, ken,
2 man.

3 Then I went round the back. I seen the dorms and
4 I had a look in the window and pictured the bed where
5 I was and all that and then I went round the back and
6 then you had the dining room, 'cause it's a big bay
7 window. I went there, eh, and -- 'cause as you come in
8 the door to the dining room, ken, there was a table
9 there and that's where I usually sat, in there.

10 But, aye. It was eerie seeing it, ken, for the
11 first time. But -- and I went back again. It was all
12 right. It was all right, because I got to accept my ain
13 stuff, ken, for acceptance for myself so I can get moved
14 on from this.

15 Q. And have you ever spoken to the police about this
16 incident specifically?

17 A. I did. I did. Year ago -- I used to be a board member
18 for Wellbeing Scotland, and the Kirkcaldy CID got in
19 contact through my work, so my work told me, so I phoned
20 the CID and they were doing an investigation for
21 Ovenstone. So I got in touch with them. So I had to go
22 through and make a statement.

23 I went through and met them at Glenrothes police
24 station. I gave my statement. As I was giving my
25 statement, I told them about, ken, I got made to strip

1 naked in a wee classroom and that, and I seen the two of
2 police looking at themselves. After I gave my
3 statement, ken, like, one of them said to me, on the way
4 out: 'See what you've just said, it's just corroborated
5 with evidence that we've had off other survivors that
6 has been in. They've never said -- they didn't know
7 your name, but they knew that, ken, the wee boy and you
8 were the wee boy that got stripped naked', eh, so it
9 just corroborated with the evidence that I gave.

10 Q. At paragraph 56, you mention that Mr GBB had two
11 Afghan hound dogs?

12 A. Aye.

13 Q. And you say that you took them out for a walk on
14 an occasion?

15 A. Aye.

16 Q. Was that something that pupils were allowed to do?

17 A. Aye. What they were trying -- ken, 'cause I was --
18 I was quite misbehaving all the time, ken, like. I was
19 showing off and I think they were trying to, ken, like,
20 I think as a reward, take the dog out but I didn't see
21 it as a reward, kinda like, 'Take your ain dogs oot',
22 ken, man, but I did let one of the dogs off the lead.
23 They were Afghan hounds, ken, but one of the dogs run
24 away and they never found him again. So he didnae like
25 -- he hated me, eh. He hated me, eh.

1 He used to have a TR7, blue TR7 and I would -- any
2 chance I got, I'd let his air on his tyres doon, eh, but
3 I was very quick, because the staff, if the staff wasn't
4 about -- or if you were going across, because usually if
5 you're nighttime, ken, you were away to the laundry and
6 you nipped off from your dorm to kinda do the laundry,
7 ken, and do the laundry and see his car oot at the
8 garage, eh, and then just let the air out the tyres.

9 Q. You say that sometimes you had a laugh in there, but
10 nine times out of ten, when you were having a laugh, you
11 got into trouble?

12 A. Aye.

13 Q. And you were being punished, and was that just the
14 punishment with the slipper that you've been mentioning
15 or were there other forms of punishment?

16 A. There was other forms of punishment. It depends what
17 staff was on. Male staff and female staff and sometimes
18 you got a punch. You got a kick up the backside or
19 usually when you got a slap and you felt, ken, you were
20 buzzing, or they grabbed at you and shake you
21 (indicating).

22 Q. And then at paragraph 58, you say that bedtime was the
23 worst. You would lie in bed waiting on something
24 happening.

25 And was that because of what had happened to you at

1 Playfield or was that because of things that were
2 happening at Ovenstone?

3 A. Just, ken, like, I was -- I just hated bedtime, ken,
4 like.

5 I used to just lie there and just think -- I just
6 wanted to be with [REDACTED]. I just wanted to be -- I just
7 wished [REDACTED] would come and get me, ken, like. I'd
8 just used to lie there for ages. Aye. I would live in
9 my ain wee bubble all the time, my ain place, my ain
10 safety net, ken. People would be shouting at me.
11 People would be doing stuff to us, eh, but, ken, like,
12 you would just lie there and, aye, you would -- I would
13 just stare into space all the time.

14 Q. Then if we go on over the page, at paragraph 60, you
15 talk about you tried going home for weekend leave, but
16 it didn't last?

17 A. No.

18 Q. Was that because things didn't work out with [REDACTED]
19 [REDACTED]?

20 A. Aye. And [REDACTED], ken, ken, [REDACTED] couldnae leave me
21 with [REDACTED], ken, man, couldnae leave me with [REDACTED].
22 Aye, she couldnae leave me with [REDACTED] because either [REDACTED]
23 [REDACTED] was going to kill me or I was going to kill [REDACTED],
24 eh.

25 Q. Now, you've obviously told us before about your

1 experiences at Rossie and something of your life after
2 care.

3 But I wondered if I could ask you a little about
4 your reflections on your experiences in Ovenstone in
5 particular.

6 What do you think now about Ovenstone, looking back
7 on it?

8 A. See, now, ken, 'cause, ken, like, there's formalities
9 you have to go through before you even get to work with
10 children, ken. These staff weren't, ken, at that time
11 they werenae registered or they werenae properly
12 checked, like a PVG and a SSSC and all that so you've
13 got to be -- you couldn't work in the care field now.
14 But when I look back, none of these staff had all of
15 this. None of these staff had the training, ken, like,
16 it was just pure brutality, ken, in all these places.
17 Ken, it didn't matter if it was in Rossie or Ovenstone
18 or Playfield House, ken, there was nae checks. So, ken,
19 like, they would work for the money, but also they were
20 violent. They were mistreating young people, which you
21 wouldnae be able to get away with now. It would be
22 unacceptable, ken, man. And that's -- ken, when I look
23 back, ken, it was just stuff that I needed to go through
24 and I'm lucky that I've survived it, ken. I'm lucky
25 that I got to the other end and I'm lucky that I got

1 a chance, ken, to be where I'm at just now. Even though
2 it was a horrible experience, horrible for any child to
3 go through, ken, when I look back, ken, like, I got
4 a chance to try and do something better and help these
5 children for the day and getting a chance to come
6 through here and getting a chance, ken, give my evidence
7 and seen for what it really is, eh, ken, man. It
8 doesnae define me. It was stuff that I needed to go
9 through and I experienced it. It wasnae nice, but I got
10 an understanding, all the emotions and that, ken, all
11 the feelings that I went through, which I never got
12 a chance -- I never got asked when I was in care, ken,
13 what did Tommy want? What could we do for Tommy?
14 I didnae get a chance for that, ken, man.

15 Q. So I suppose you're saying there if somebody asked you
16 if you could turn the clock back and you wouldn't have
17 to go through these experiences, what would your answer
18 be?

19 A. No. I wouldnae be sitting here the day. I wouldnae be
20 sitting in the position -- even though it was nasty and
21 it was horrible, I wouldnae change it for the world,
22 'cause I've got the living experience, ken, man. I'm in
23 the position today that I'm able to help survivors of
24 historical abuse, which I've done for a long time and
25 I'm able to help other children that I help.

1 Ken, I'm learning all the time. I learn every day,
2 ken, like, and identify, ken, like, why these kids are
3 acting 'cause I was like that myself, ken man, so now,
4 ken, I'm learning off of them too, but also they're
5 learning off of me, ken, man.

6 The environment I work with the young children, it's
7 showing them that -- their worth and life's all right,
8 ken, and once you start, ken, break the barriers down,
9 their trust, 'cause that's the biggest one, the trust,
10 but they've got staff there, that care. The staff back
11 then didn't care. They were just in it for the wrong
12 reasons, but it's different now, ken, man. It's
13 different.

14 Q. And in terms of the work and the atmosphere that you
15 think should exist in a residential care setting, would
16 you say that that should be a family atmosphere?

17 A. It is. It is. These girls, ken, like, the place I work
18 in, it's just quite amazing, man, ken, the managers --
19 they're really good. It's just brilliant. The staff
20 team's really good, ken, like, 'cause you know -- 'cause
21 we learn off each other and the girls are, ken, like,
22 you'll take them out for a drive in the car, which I was
23 out yesterday away driving a car, away to the park,
24 doing things that wee girls do, ken, like, or you'll
25 take them oot to get their nails done or you'll take

1 them oot to get their hair done if they've made
2 an appointment.

3 I had one special privilege, right, I got a special
4 privilege last year, it was fae a young girl, right.
5 It's usually the females that get asked, but the wee
6 girl come and said, 'Tommy, could you take me for my
7 school uniform?'. Ken, I was like, I've never done that
8 before, ken, like. I said to my ma -- I said she's just
9 asked me to take her for her school uniform. Well,
10 that's a special privilege, she's asked you, ken. So
11 I took her, we went to Braehead and took her -- 'What do
12 you think of that, Tommy?' I'm like, oh, wow. So, aye,
13 it is a friendly environment. It's a family
14 environment. It's a safe place for them, ken, man,
15 because they've faced a lot of difficulties and people
16 have gave up on 'em, eh. Ken.

17 Q. I think you contrast that then with your experience at
18 Ovenstone, where that wasn't the atmosphere, is that
19 right?

20 A. Aye.

21 MS INNES: Thank you very much, Tommy. I don't have any
22 more questions for you.

23 LADY SMITH: Tommy, I don't have any other questions either.

24 I just want to thank you again for everything you've
25 given to us here in enlarging and enlightening us --

1 enlarging our understanding and enlightening us as to
2 how you see things now after the experiences you've had,
3 which were varied and very challenging. I can see that.

4 Please feel free to go, but remember you go with my
5 grateful thanks.

6 A. Thank you.

7 (The witness withdrew).

8 LADY SMITH: I will rise now for a short break, but before
9 I do that, we have used one name in the course of
10 Tommy's evidence of somebody whose identity is protected
11 by my General Restriction Order. It was Mr GBB
12 and he's not to be referred to as being mentioned in our
13 evidence or identified outside this room.

14 Thank you very much.

15 (2.59 pm)

16 (A short break)

17 (3.09 pm)

18 LADY SMITH: Now, Ms McMillan, where are we going next?

19 MS MCMILLAN: Thank you, my Lady.

20 I think at this point we're going to do another
21 read-in.

22 This is for the witness who is known by the name
23 'Gary'.

24 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

25

1 'Gary' (read)

2 MS MCMILLAN: The reference for 'Gary's' statement is
3 WIT-1-000000110.

4 In his statement 'Gary' talks about his time in
5 Ovenstone and Linwood Hall.

6 He says that he went to Ovenstone when he was 10 and
7 left in 1990 when he would have been around 12 years
8 old.

9 He then went to Linwood Hall [REDACTED] in
10 1990 and left when he was 15. This was in 1993.

11 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

12 MS MCMILLAN: Unfortunately, we haven't been able to recover
13 any records for 'Gary'.

14 My Lady, 'Gary' was born in 1977. He was brought up
15 in Kirkcaldy, where he's always lived, apart from the
16 time he spent in care.

17 He was formally adopted by his stepdad, who he says
18 he did not have a good relationship with. He was
19 violent towards him. 'Gary' ended up in Playfield House
20 from the age of 5, where he remained for about four
21 months.

22 He was under the care of a psychologist, who
23 suspected that he had autism, but never formally
24 diagnosed him.

25 When he returned home, he said the abuse from his

1 stepdad was even worse.

2 He says that his mum and his stepdad got a divorce
3 and his stepdad blamed him for the separation because of
4 his disruptive behaviour. He says that he was also
5 moved from school to school because of his behaviour.
6 But he was showing signs of learning difficulties.

7 He says that the psychologist tried to get him
8 involved with autism groups but the social work blocked
9 it because he was too disruptive and violent.

10 From paragraph 10, he talks about how he came to be
11 at Ovenstone and his experience there. He says:

12 'When I was still 10, the Social Work Department
13 told me that they were putting me into Ovenstone
14 Children's Home. They told my mum that I could go there
15 voluntarily or they were going to section me under the
16 Mental Health Act. Whatever happened, I was going to
17 Ovenstone. I don't know if I was sectioned or not, but
18 others have told me they believe I was.

19 'I went to Ovenstone Children's Home around [REDACTED]
20 1988 when I was still 10. Ovenstone was run by
21 Fife Council and it was a residential school, which sat
22 in its own grounds. It was mostly boys in there, but
23 they started to introduce girls too. There were about
24 14 boys from 7 up to puberty who were residential. Day
25 pupils from outside Ovenstone came into school at the

1 start of the school day, then left straight after
2 school. Some of the day pupils only came to the school
3 for very short periods. There would have been about 50
4 to 60 day pupils. I stayed at Ovenstone from Monday to
5 Friday and went home at weekends. Towards the end of my
6 time there, I lived at home with my mum and went to
7 school as a day pupil.

8 'There were three main buildings. The east part was
9 where I was in. West was where all the gym stuff was.
10 In the main building there was a reception and then the
11 headmaster's office. There was a kitchen and a dining
12 area. There was an area where shoes were kept then
13 a shower cubicle. Upstairs there were baths and
14 bedrooms. Some rooms had six beds with three on either
15 side. I was in one of these rooms. Other rooms were
16 single rooms. Just off that were shower cubicles,
17 toilets and sinks. Downstairs was a big sitting room
18 where there was a television, a store for all the gym
19 equipment. Outside was a store where the bikes and
20 skateboards were kept. There was a separate school
21 block.

22 'I remember some of the staff at Ovenstone.
23 Miss Budd was the receptionist. There were care staff
24 and there were teachers. The care staff did different
25 shifts so there was someone there all the time. Staff

1 that I do remember were Joy and Vivien. I can't
2 remember their last names but they were on the care
3 staff. There was a SNR and a maths teacher.
4 There were two women called Anne, an English teacher
5 called Margaret Smith and a child psychologist attached
6 to Ovenstone. I didn't have anything to do with Jim
7 from Playfield House when I was there.

8 'When I was Ovenstone I was given a dyslexia-type
9 test. When Margaret Smith saw the results she was
10 furious that they'd allowed me to be treated like I had
11 been. The test showed that my reading was at primary
12 one level. She wasn't surprised that it was recorded at
13 Dunearn that I was disruptive and she said that this was
14 me trying to have things explained to me. She helped me
15 a lot. She told me that she wasn't able to record that
16 I had autism and put me down as having learning
17 difficulties. She said that was all she was allowed to
18 do and anything else would have been labelling and
19 discrimination.

20 'There was another social worker, whose name I can't
21 remember, who dealt with me at Ovenstone. He believed
22 me that my adopted father was abusive and he tried to
23 tell this to the other social workers but they didn't
24 believe him. He retired when I was at Ovenstone. He
25 told me that he'd been trying his best for me but no one

1 would listen.

2 'I remember being driven to Ovenstone by a social
3 worker. He was an older gentleman and he took over my
4 case just before I went in there. He worked from the
5 Kirkcaldy social work office. No one really told me
6 where I was going or why. I remember another child
7 showed me around the building.

8 'Whoever was on duty woke us up in the morning,
9 usually around 8 o'clock. I got up, washed and dressed,
10 then went down for breakfast. The day pupils arrived
11 around 8.30 then we had an assembly about ten to nine.

12 'There were staff who used to do the cooking at
13 Ovenstone. The food was all right. We had fish every
14 Friday. There were no issues with the food and it
15 didn't matter if you didn't like or eat certain things.

16 'We showered every night or every second night. The
17 staff would tell us when we were to shower. They didn't
18 supervise us in the shower.

19 'We just wore our own clothes and we wore what we
20 wanted. There was no uniform. We had ribbons of
21 a certain colour sewn into our clothes so we could
22 recognise them.

23 'There were some activities after school. We got
24 taken by one of the teachers to Wade Academy for martial
25 arts and some went swimming. I can't remember her name,

1 but sometimes she would let me drive her mini car in the
2 grounds. There were other activities like football and
3 arts and things like that at Ovenstone in the evening.

4 'I remember going on a trip for a weekend to just
5 outside Edinburgh around April 1989. It was a team
6 building exercise. I can't remember anything about that
7 weekend. It was just children from Ovenstone that went.

8 'I went to school classes in the children's home at
9 Ovenstone. The school building was only a few yards
10 away. There were three classrooms. The classes started
11 at 9 o'clock and finished between 2.30 and 2.45. They
12 tried to put me into mainstream school for a while but
13 it didn't work out. I went one afternoon a week to
14 Buckhaven Primary School. Even when I went home to
15 stay, I still went to school at Ovenstone for a while.

16 'When I was at Ovenstone, I started listening to
17 audio books. Margaret Smith was amazed at what I could
18 remember from the audio books. My comprehension age
19 listening to reading was more like what it should have
20 been for reading at my age. Margaret Smith wrote this
21 on my records which then went to Linwood.

22 'If we needed we went to see the doctor in
23 Pittenweem. If we weren't well enough to go to the
24 doctor, he would come to Ovenstone. There was a mobile
25 dentist van that used to come in to check our teeth.

1 'There wasn't religious instruction in Ovenstone.
2 We didn't have prayers before we went to bed or anything
3 like that.

4 'We didn't really have any chores to do apart from
5 keeping our bed space tidy. Staff occasionally came in
6 and checked that it was tidy.

7 'On my birthday, I got a signed card by all the
8 other children and staff. At Christmas, I went home to
9 my mum but we still got a present.

10 'My gran came in to visit me once and only because
11 she had access to a car. My mum never came in to see
12 me. I think it was too far for her to travel. The
13 social workers came in when it was time for my reviews.
14 I never actually went to these meetings, which took
15 place every three to six months. I might have spoken to
16 the social worker after the review briefly, and he would
17 ask me how I was getting on. I can't remember his name
18 but he retired in 1992. I didn't write to any of my
19 family and no one wrote to me. I managed to
20 occasionally speak to my mum on the phone.

21 'We were given pocket money. We got 30 pence every
22 week. Everyone got exactly the same to be fair. Some
23 of the parents had more money than others so the staff
24 always made sure we all got the same amount of money to
25 last the week.

1 'I never ran away from Ovenstone. I was too far
2 away from anywhere. I wouldn't have known where to go.
3 'Ovenstone had a points system for discipline. You
4 would start off at the beginning of the day with eight
5 points. If you were good, went to class and did reading
6 or chores, you would be given points. If you did
7 something that was naughty or bad, points would be taken
8 from you. If you ended up with less than 12 points at
9 the end of the day, you got sent to your bed early.
10 Good behaviour was rewarded by giving us points. If you
11 did something that was really good, you would be given
12 a token. This token would entitle you to an extra candy
13 bar on movie nights. Other punishments if you lost
14 points might be that you would lose a 15-minute break at
15 school and you would have to stay in the classroom and
16 do classwork. Staff kept a record of points in a book.
17 Looking back, I think it was quite a fair system.
18 'I got sent to bed once that I remember. Things
19 were happening at home and I was lashing out at
20 somebody. I just didn't understand what was going on at
21 home. The staff knew what was going on and at some
22 point they phoned and spoke to my mum. She told the
23 staff about what was happening with my adopted dad so
24 they tried to help me.
25 'Some of the boys wet the bed at Ovenstone. The

1 staff didn't make an issue of it and it was just cleaned
2 up. There was no punishment. I don't think I ever wet
3 the bed there.

4 'There was a boy in Ovenstone who had his own
5 bedroom. He was about the same age at me. He bullied
6 me and he bullied all of the other children in there.
7 He punched and kicked me sometimes. He sometimes
8 watched the other boys when they were in the shower.
9 I never really thought anything about it at the time,
10 but looking back it was wrong. I don't know why but
11 [he] was never allowed to sleep in the dorm with the
12 other boys. He was always in his own room. I saw in
13 the news earlier this year that he had been sent to
14 prison.

15 'There was also another boy who was slightly older
16 than me. He had epilepsy and some of the other children
17 used to bully him to try to induce an epileptic fit.
18 I can't remember these other children. The boy with the
19 epilepsy was only there for a few months. The staff did
20 their best to deal with the other children if they saw
21 it happening.

22 'Staff at Ovenstone were good to me. They had a lot
23 to deal with because they had the aftermath of me having
24 been strangled with barbed wire and all the problems
25 I was having at home because of my adopted dad and

1 because my mum and my adopted dad's divorce was
2 finalised when I was there. The staff helped explain
3 a lot of things to me about what adoption and what other
4 things actually meant. There was no abuse from the
5 staff when I was in Ovenstone.

6 'I remember one time a female member of care staff
7 took me back to her house. She lived in the grounds but
8 I can't remember her name. This was about the time
9 I found out that my stepdad had adopted me. She said
10 that she wanted to explain adoption to me but couldn't
11 do it at school. Together we went through a book which
12 was about adoption. I might have been in her house for
13 three hours. Nothing happened when I was there, but
14 looking back, I don't think it was appropriate for her
15 to take me to her house.

16 'The staff were aware of [the boy who had his own
17 bedroom] was bullying other children and they dealt with
18 it as best they could. If they saw something happening,
19 they would break it up and stop it from developing, but
20 they couldn't be there all the time. I went to them and
21 told them what he was doing and they dealt with it.
22 I can't remember who I told.

23 'Ovenstone was only for children up to the age of
24 puberty. When you reached puberty, you had to leave.
25 When I was at that age, I was told I was going to the

1 first place that became available, which happened to be
2 Linwood Hall School. I didn't have any say in the
3 matter. I went to Linwood Hall [REDACTED]
4 [REDACTED] in 1990. I was 12. Stanley Hall near
5 Dalgety Bay would have been a better place for me to go
6 to, because it dealt specifically with children with
7 disabilities. Because the Social Work Department would
8 not recognise that I had autism and were fighting
9 against me being diagnosed with it, I could not go to
10 Stanley Hall.

11 'By the time I left Ovenstone, I would say I was in
12 a much better position than I had been when I arrived.
13 They had sorted a lot of things out for me when I was
14 there. This was all undone when I went to Linwood.
15 I know that Margaret Smith had written things in my
16 record about my reading and writing but it was all
17 ignored.

18 'Linwood Hall was run by Fife Council. It was
19 called a care home for children with special needs, but
20 it was actually run as a residential school for children
21 aged 11 up to about 16. Children resident there had
22 a range of issues. Some had ADHD, anger issues or were
23 involved in drugs. The fact that it was a care home for
24 children with a history of violence was hidden from the
25 locals. They always played down the behavioural issues.

1 'The children were divided into units. Forth was
2 the name of the unit for the younger children. Tay was
3 for the older children aged up to 16. The girls were in
4 a completely separate building and they were the Clyde
5 unit. There were 11 boys in Forth, Tay had between six
6 and eight boys, and there were about six to eight girls
7 in Clyde.

8 'The headmaster when I arrived was a doctor but
9 I can't remember his name. He lived in St Andrew's.
10 Jim Henderson, or his name might have been Jim Heard,
11 was another teacher and he was good. There was a member
12 of staff called Jim. He was an ex-soldier and he was my
13 key worker. When I was at Linwood I had issues with my
14 autism and especially my reading and writing. Jim, my
15 key worker, tried to get me tested for autism but he
16 wasn't allowed. All the other staff blocked him.
17 Another member of staff was one of the team leaders.
18 There were two teams.

19 'When I was at Ovenstone, I tried to hide my autism
20 and be normal. It didn't really work because I couldn't
21 maintain this outward appearance. This continued into
22 Linwood Hall where I tried to be normal.

23 'When you came in the main gates into the grounds
24 you could see the Clyde unit where the girls lived. It
25 was two cottages which were joined to make one big

1 house. Then there was the coach house which contained
2 a gym full of weightlifting equipment. There was
3 a walled garden where vegetables were grown which we ate
4 in the house. Further up was the rear of the kitchens
5 and the delivery area. Round from that was the main
6 entrance.

7 'When you went in the double doors of the main
8 entrance, there was a staircase leading up to the first
9 floor. On the ground floor was the headmaster's office,
10 the kitchen and a big dining room. Opposite the
11 headmaster was a door which led to the stores and a kiln
12 where we did pottery. To the left of the front double
13 doors was a staff office and a big room where we had
14 assemblies. Next was a science lab, a single toilet,
15 then there was a cage where the shoes were locked.
16 Beside that were lockers and a door leading outside.
17 Next to that were stairs leading upstairs. Beside that
18 was a deputy manager's office then there was some
19 classrooms. On the other side were showers and toilets
20 then the laundry.

21 'Upstairs on the first landing was a door which led
22 to the Forth dormitories, bedroom and showers. The
23 bedroom I was in had bars on the window. It seemed to
24 be the only room with bars on the window and I don't
25 know why. Beside this room was the toilet, where there

1 were two sinks and two showers. Next to that was
2 a sitting room, a storage cupboard, then the staff
3 bedroom. Next to that was a big storage cupboard where
4 all the clothes were locked.

5 'The Tay dormitories were opposite the Forth
6 dormitories. In there were six toilet cubicles and
7 sinks. The main dorm was on the left, where there were
8 two sinks, a toilet and two showers. You had to ask for
9 permission to use their toilets if you weren't in Tay.
10 Tay had their own sitting room, staffroom and other
11 bedrooms and a store for the gym. Next to that was
12 a gym. The local community centre was being built
13 during the time I was there, so members of the public
14 were able to come in and use this gym for playgroups and
15 other things.

16 'Just outside Tay were storage cupboards and another
17 stairwell. This led to a corridor and rooms above
18 Forth, where there were more storage rooms then a room
19 with a model railway, Scalextrics and a pool table.
20 Opposite was a room with camping equipment and air guns.
21 Above Tay were the air rifle and archery ranges. There
22 were stairs and ladders from there which led up onto the
23 circular roof terrace.

24 'When you came out the side of the building, there
25 were three separate classrooms. Then there was the

1 assault course which is known as the jungle gym.
2 Through the trees about 50 yards away was Clyde. There
3 was a car park and a small hill which led to a big
4 field. Opposite that was the primary school. There was
5 another building beside the entrance gate which was like
6 a house. Inside was a kitchen and another classroom.
7 This was used more by pupils who came in during the day.
8 They often just came in for a morning or an afternoon.

9 'I remember arriving at Linwood. I was taken to my
10 room and told where I was going to sleep. I remember
11 I was expected to make friends very quickly and there
12 was pressure to fit in straightaway. I wasn't given any
13 help to try and settle in. Because of my communication
14 barriers, I had difficulty making friends.

15 'We got up about 8 o'clock in the morning and we
16 would shower and get dressed and then go down for
17 breakfast. Often when we were having breakfast the day
18 pupils would be arriving. Some would come by taxi. We
19 then went to the school, which started at 9, then broke
20 for lunch at 12. After lunch we would go back into
21 class at one and then school would finish about 3.30.
22 The day pupils would leave and go home.

23 'After our activities in the evening, at 9 we would
24 go back to our units and have some supper. We would
25 then get ready for bed. Forth would be in their beds by

1 9.30. Through the night there was a security guard in
2 the building. I think he was there to look after us and
3 stop us from running away. His niece had been the nurse
4 at Linwood before I arrived.

5 'The girls from Clyde would eat their meals within
6 their house. The boys from Tay and Forth ate their
7 meals together around 5 pm in the big dining room. Some
8 staff would eat with us but only certain boys would be
9 allowed to sit beside them. The staff would tell us all
10 where to sit. It was obvious the staff had their
11 favourites.

12 'There were several vegetables that I didn't like so
13 when I was taking a plate of food I would pick one with
14 the least vegetables on it. The staff would usually
15 tell me that if I didn't finish my main course
16 I wouldn't get a pudding. Otherwise, there was no real
17 punishment.

18 'Beside my bedroom was a toilet and there were two
19 showers in there. You weren't allowed to lock the
20 toilet door, even if you were at the toilet, in case
21 someone wanted to have a shower. There was no privacy.
22 You had to use your own toilet and couldn't use the one
23 nearest the sitting room. The staff had their own
24 toilet and you weren't allowed to use it.

25 'We didn't get any privacy to have a shower. There

1 were two showers side by side in cubicles and there was
2 a toilet. The showers had curtains. You weren't
3 allowed to lock the bathroom door even when you came out
4 of the shower.

5 'At Linwood, we wore coloured sweatshirts depending
6 on what group we were in. Boys in the Forth unit, which
7 is where I was, wore red sweatshirts. Tay wore black
8 sweatshirts and the girls in Clyde wore pinkish-red
9 sweatshirts. Day children who came in for the day wore
10 green sweatshirts. The bright coloured clothes I got
11 away with wearing at Ovenstone were deemed unacceptable
12 at Linwood. I have never had any sort of dress sense
13 and always wore things that were comfortable. The staff
14 at Linwood decided what I should wear. Our shoes were
15 kept in a locked cage. We wore slippers all the time in
16 the house. If you wanted to go outside, you had to get
17 a staff member to unlock the cage to get your shoes.

18 'When I was at Ovenstone, small ribbons were sown
19 into my clothes so I could recognise them. I still had
20 some of these clothes when I was at Linwood. At Linwood
21 there was no similar system for identifying clothes.
22 Our clothes were washed in the laundry but you had to be
23 there when the clothes came back otherwise other boys
24 would steal your clothes. Clothes were often stolen.

25 'Between 6 and 9 o'clock during the week we had

1 activities. We could go to swimming, archery, shooting
2 or walking at Falkland Hill. Some teachers would do
3 extra classes like pottery and some would let you catch
4 up if you were behind in your classwork.

5 'Initially I got home every weekend. At some point
6 a boy came to Linwood Hall from Aberdeen and he stayed
7 over at the weekend. After he came, they introduced
8 residential weekends so some of the boys stayed on these
9 residential weekends to keep him company. I stayed over
10 at the weekend quite often. When I did get out at the
11 weekends, I went to my mum's. Sometimes I would only be
12 allowed home twice in a month. The residential weekends
13 were made out to be team building weekends. One time
14 I was stopped from going home at the last minute. My
15 mum phoned the school to find out where I was because
16 I hadn't gone home. I got the blame for not telling
17 her, even though the staff wouldn't give me money to
18 phone her.

19 'There was one class where there was learning
20 support where we got help but there was just one teacher
21 in the mainstream classes. I struggled in these classes
22 and couldn't keep up with the work. There were only
23 three classes which I enjoyed. They were woodwork,
24 because it was practical, maths, because it was logical,
25 and home economics, again because it was practical. The

1 woodwork teacher was Jim Henderson and he made
2 everything fun. The science teacher would sometimes use
3 Jim Henderson's woodwork clamps and would clamp your
4 thumbs to the table. He did it in such a way that it
5 didn't feel like a punishment. If you managed to
6 escape, he would give you £5. One boy managed and the
7 teacher kept his word and gave him £5.

8 'They tried to send me to mainstream school again
9 when I was 14. I went to Buckhaven High for short
10 spells in the week. Maybe once a week. After a while,
11 they wanted me to go more often but for some reason
12 Linwood Children's Home refused.

13 'There had been a nurse at Linwood before I arrived
14 but she had left. She wasn't replaced. I saw a local
15 doctor when I developed shingles. This caused quite
16 a problem because they had to get permission to access
17 my hospital medical records to confirm that I had
18 previously had chickenpox. This had to be done through
19 the Social Work Department.

20 'At some point, the staff gave me exercises to do
21 just to get me out of the way. They told me they
22 thought would help my dyslexia. It was believed that
23 improving balance would reduce the symptoms of dyslexia.
24 They made me stand on one leg and put my arm out to the
25 side and, keeping my arm straight, rotate my arm in

1 small circles. I was to do it for ten minutes then
2 rotate my arm the other way for a further ten minutes.
3 I then had to swap feet and do it with the other arm.
4 I was given an exercise sheet with the exercises. No
5 one else was given exercises to do and I had to do them
6 on my own. I had to do this three times every day.
7 I did this for around three or four months until they
8 realised it wasn't working. I can't remember the names
9 of the members of staff who made me do this.

10 'I was often picked to help out setting up the gym
11 for playgroups. This was when the others were in the
12 English class. They did this to get me out the way. We
13 didn't have any other chores to do really.

14 'Birthdays and Christmas were very low key. There
15 was no Christmas tree or decorations put up. We usually
16 just got given a selection box. I went home over the
17 Christmas holidays. Nothing really happened at
18 birthdays. There was no card or cake. Some of the
19 staff might have wished me happy birthday but that was
20 all.

21 'My mum was in hospital at some point and the staff
22 took me to visit her. I was taken in a staff car by
23 a male member of care staff but I can't remember who.
24 On the way he went to visit somebody at their house and
25 I had to wait outside in the car for an hour-and-a-half

1 until he eventually came out. There was no radio or
2 anything in the car. I had to just sit there.

3 'The social workers came at other times for reviews
4 but I wasn't invited to these so I don't know what was
5 discussed. Nothing changed as a result of these
6 meetings.

7 'There was a public payphone I could use to contact
8 my mum. If I wanted to use it, I had to get the staff
9 to give me some of my money which was kept in the
10 staffroom.

11 'Beside the beds were cabinets which had two
12 drawers. We could lock the top drawer but the staff
13 could access this at any time as they had keys. Our
14 clothes were in a wardrobe but there wasn't much in
15 there.

16 'I never ran away from Linwood. I thought about it,
17 but didn't know how I would have got back to Kirkcaldy
18 from there so I didn't.

19 'Linwood started a similar points system to that at
20 Ovenstone. It wasn't in place initially when I went
21 there. They didn't send you to bed or anything like
22 that. If you were caught using a toilet you weren't
23 supposed to, you would lose points.

24 'The first few nights I was there I had a plastic
25 sheet on my bed. I think this was normal practice for

1 all new boys when they arrived. If there were any
2 accidents it was just cleaned up. The staff didn't make
3 a big deal if anyone wet the bed. I didn't wet the bed
4 when I was there and I'm not aware if any of the other
5 boys in my room did.

6 'I was told by one teacher at Linwood that I was
7 unteachable. She used to make me sit in the corner and
8 told me I could do anything I wanted as long as I didn't
9 disrupt the rest of the class. She taught English but
10 I can't remember her name.

11 'One evening in 1991, we went out on a trip to
12 Falkland Hill. This is where things went really
13 downhill for me after this night. On the way back, we
14 stopped at the shops in Falkland. The team leader who
15 was driving the minibus drove away and left me on my own
16 at the shop. I didn't know what to do. I started
17 walking and ended up walking about two-and-a-half miles
18 in the pitch dark and found myself at a farm. There
19 were no street lights. It was at the start of winter so
20 it was cold. The people at the farm phoned the school
21 and the team leader drove the minibus back down to
22 collect me. When I got back to Linwood all the other
23 boys said that I had spoiled their night and I got
24 a hard time from them. Some of them punched me. I was
25 sent to my room by a member of staff, but I can't

1 remember who it was, while all the others were having
2 hot chocolate. I was on my own and I was upset and
3 crying.

4 '[The team leader] later came into the room and he
5 was shouting and bawling at me and he raised his hands
6 and I'm sure he was going to hit me. Just at that
7 moment, Jim Henderson came in and he must have seen him
8 so he didn't hit me. Jim told the team leader to go and
9 said that he would deal with me. I was curled up in
10 a ball and was crying. I was confused because I didn't
11 know what I had done that was wrong. Jim Henderson told
12 me that I hadn't done anything wrong. That night
13 a couple of boys hit me through the night when I was in
14 my bed. I don't know who it was that hit me. A short
15 time after this incident, [the team leader] left
16 Linwood Hall. After [he] left, if any of the other kids
17 started picking on me, the staff turned a blind eye. It
18 was almost like they were saying that I deserved to be
19 punished for making [the team leader] leave. Jim
20 Henderson shielded me from some of the other staff after
21 he left. He knew I was vulnerable and he gave me a lot
22 of support and tried to help me. He subsequently died
23 of a heart attack.

24 'I couldn't swim when I went to Linwood. I had been
25 in the swimming pool at school when I was at Ovenstone

1 but I was able to stand on the bottom of the pool so
2 I was fine in there. At Linwood, I asked the sports
3 teacher if I could get armbands. He told me that at my
4 age I didn't need armbands. He took me to the deep end
5 of the pool and pushed me in. I went under the water.
6 I was panicking but I managed to do the doggy paddle to
7 get to the side of the pool. I think I was
8 an embarrassment to the sports teacher and he took
9 a real dislike to me. I wasn't very good at any sport.
10 This teacher also taught geography.

11 'When I was at Linwood I did the Duke of Edinburgh
12 Award in 1992. When I was at one of the camps near
13 Stirling, one of the boys held a lit cigarette against
14 my chest on top of my T-shirt. It burnt a hole through
15 the shirt and burned my chest. The material actually
16 melted onto the burned flesh on my chest. The boy was
17 a pupil from Linwood and was around my age but I can't
18 remember his name. I didn't get any medical attention.

19 'Another time, still in 1992, it was the break time
20 at school and I was playing outside in the grounds of
21 Linwood at a bit called the jungle gym. It was like
22 an assault course. Three girls grabbed me. Two girls
23 held my head and my jaw and another girl put a lit
24 cigarette down my throat. Other girls just stood and
25 watched. I can't remember any of the girls' names. The

1 girl that did it to me, who was about 16, thought it was
2 hilarious. There was no reason for them to do this and
3 there was no lead-up to it. They just thought it was
4 funny. When the girls were coming towards me, there was
5 a member of care staff there called Tina. She was
6 facing towards me too then conveniently turned away so
7 she didn't see what the girls did. She must have known
8 that something was going to happen but didn't want to
9 get involved and didn't want to stop it.

10 'The back of my throat was red. I told Tina that
11 I needed some medical attention. She just told me that
12 I was to go away. She said that the girls didn't smoke
13 so I had made it up.

14 'When I was on one of the residential weekends, when
15 I stayed at Linwood, this was when the worst incident
16 happened that really affected me. We had eaten our tea
17 and were in the sitting room playing while the staff
18 were having their tea. I was getting hit and
19 threatened. The other kids told me that if I didn't
20 show my private parts, I was going to get hit even more.
21 I tried to leave and I went in to speak to the staff to
22 tell them. Before I could get them anything, they told
23 me to leave the room as this was their quiet time.
24 I had to go back and they were still threatening me and
25 the punches were getting more painful. Eventually,

1 I had to give in and I showed my private parts. It was
2 the only way that I could see that the punching would
3 stop. Later on, the staff came looking for me and
4 dragged me into a room. I can't remember who the staff
5 were, but I know that Pearl was the member of staff in
6 charge of that group, although she wasn't actually
7 there. They asked me why I had shown my private parts.
8 They told me that I could be charged by the police with
9 flashing. I tried to tell them I was bullied into doing
10 it. About two hours later the same staff came in and
11 told me that they weren't going to contact the police
12 but they were going to tell the headmaster. They said
13 they were going to tell him that I was just trying to
14 "fit in". They denied that I had gone in and tried to
15 speak to them when they were eating.

16 'On the Monday morning, I went in front of the
17 headmaster. I can't remember his name but he was
18 a doctor. I told him what had happened. I was in
19 tears. He said that he knew the truth. He had spoken
20 to a couple of other boys who had told them that I had
21 been bullied into it but by the time they left his
22 office, they had been encouraged to agree with the staff
23 that I had done it just to fit in.

24 'When I was at the camp and my chest was burned,
25 I told a female member of staff that had I had been

1 burned. I can't remember her name but she organised the
2 Duke of Edinburgh trips. She later went on to work at
3 Stratheden Hospital. She was also a foster mother in
4 Buckhaven or Methil. There was another boy there when
5 my chest was burned. I can't remember his name. He
6 tried to tell the same member of staff but he was told
7 to keep his mouth shut. He was told that if he
8 mentioned it to anyone, he wouldn't get his Duke of
9 Edinburgh Award. I told the same member of staff when
10 I was back at Linwood that the burn on my chest was
11 really sore. I told her it was burning and really
12 painful. I needed medical attention. She just told me
13 to go away and play.

14 'When I was back at Linwood at the end of the camp,
15 the T-shirt was taken from me and destroyed. I was told
16 not to speak about the incident to anyone and not to
17 take part in any sport until it was healed. By the end
18 of the week, the burn wasn't healing and it was so
19 painful I had to rip the melted material and scab off my
20 chest so it would bleed and heal. I was on the ground
21 and I was in tears. I went to a member of staff and
22 asked for help because of the pain. I was told to go
23 away. I can't remember who this was.

24 'After my chest had been burned, I should have been
25 going home that weekend, but at the end of the week, the

1 same female member of staff who ran the Duke of
2 Edinburgh came to see me. She lifted up my T-shirt and
3 saw the red mark on my chest. She said that I wasn't
4 allowed to go home that weekend and wouldn't be allowed
5 to do sport until it had completely healed. This was to
6 hide it from my mum. I think she spoke to the PE
7 teacher and they agreed that I didn't do sport. Another
8 member of staff, but I can't remember who, told me that
9 I wasn't allowed to tell my mum about the burn. I was
10 told that if I told my mum there would be consequences
11 and I wouldn't be allowed to go home at the weekends to
12 see her.

13 'When a lit cigarette was put down my throat I told
14 a member of staff but she just told me to go away.
15 I was told it was just children playing. My throat was
16 red and sore, but she didn't care. She said that none
17 of the children smoked, so it was impossible for me to
18 have a cigarette put down my throat. I can't remember
19 who this member of staff was.

20 'I tried to tell staff at Linwood that I was being
21 bullied and what was going on. I can't remember who all
22 the staff were that I told. They just told me that
23 I didn't understand. I'm sure that all the staff knew
24 that I was being bullied by the other children but they
25 just turned a blind eye to it. They just said that kids

1 were being kids.

2 'When I was in one of my school classes, I tried to
3 tell a teacher. I can't remember their name. I told
4 them about my throat being burned. They didn't say
5 anything apart from that I would be nice and quiet for
6 a while.

7 'I was up in front of the headmaster on a couple of
8 occasions. I told him what was going on. I told him
9 about bullying and the cigarette burns. He told me that
10 he was powerless and that he didn't run the school. He
11 said he was just a figurehead and it was the care staff
12 who ran it. He had to take their word for anything that
13 happened before mine. Yet again I wasn't being
14 believed. He knew I was telling the truth. But he had
15 to back his staff.

16 'After the incident at Linwood, when I was accused
17 of "flashing" my private parts, the staff wanted me out
18 of the school as quickly as they could. I think they
19 realised at that point that this was a good opportunity
20 for me to get tested for autism.

21 'I left Linwood in 1993 when I was 15-and-a-half and
22 from there I went back to Playfield House. This was
23 about a month before the standard grade exams. My mum
24 had been told that if I didn't go there voluntarily,
25 I would be sectioned under the Mental Health Act.

1 I don't know if I was sectioned or not. At some point
2 when I was in Playfield there were a couple of boys who
3 had been at Linwood after me. They told me that some of
4 the teachers had told them about me, naming me and
5 saying that I had flashed just to fit in. I found out
6 that the teachers were telling children this right up
7 until 1999 when the school closed.'

8 'Gary' then goes on to tell us that he went back to
9 Playfield House and was placed in the adolescent unit.
10 He went back to Linwood Hall to do his exams. He was
11 then enrolled in a special needs course at
12 Elmwood College which taught him life skills. He was
13 living with his mum at the time but he was still having
14 problems with his stepdad.

15 'Gary' goes on to talk about life after care at
16 paragraphs 99 to 102 of his statement. He had various
17 mental health support until about 1999. He went to
18 college and got an HND in electrical engineering. In
19 1992, he was diagnosed with Asperger's and he has
20 high-functioning autism, which means that facial
21 expressions and emotions don't mean anything to him. He
22 said he's still under the care of the Social Work
23 Department.

24 'Gary' then goes on to talk about the impact of his
25 time in care. He says at paragraph 103:

1 'I have never been able to move on after I left
2 Linwood. Social work have always held me back because
3 they refused to refer me to mental health groups.
4 I feel that I have been left on my own since I left
5 Linwood and only see a social worker once a year. All
6 they want to do is cut back my support.

7 'My education could have been better if my autism
8 had been diagnosed earlier. It was suspected for
9 a while but wasn't properly diagnosed. My dyslexia was
10 only diagnosed when I went to Ovenstone and things were
11 sorted out for me. This didn't follow on when I went to
12 Linwood and things just got worse.

13 'I think about my time in Linwood quite a lot,
14 especially over the last five or six years. This was
15 not a happy time for me. Sometimes certain storylines
16 in television programmes bring things back to me.
17 Because I have been refused so many things like
18 referrals to mental health groups, I have given up and
19 don't bother now because I realise it's going to be
20 a waste of time.

21 'A few years ago a boy came to do work at my house
22 and he said he recognised my name. I told him I was at
23 Linwood. He told me that he was at Linwood after I left
24 and the staff had told everyone that I had been flashing
25 my private parts. This upset me.'

1 'Gary' then goes on to tell us that he tried to
2 report the abuse he endured to social work frequently
3 but nothing was done about it. He has been attempting
4 to get his records, but again has been unable to obtain
5 them.

6 'Gary' tells us about the lessons that he hopes can
7 be learned and some other information about
8 Linwood Hall.

9 At paragraph 116 he says:

10 'In the future, I would like to see that where
11 a child is diagnosed with possible mental health issues,
12 that Social Work Department don't have the final say
13 about that child. Before any decision can be made,
14 there must be consultation with mental health officers.
15 There has to be an agreement by both of these
16 professions and the child given a say. There has to be
17 evidence found from more than one place. I think the
18 Social Work Department have too much power.'

19 At paragraph 119 he says:

20 'I heard around 2000 that the previous headmaster
21 who had been at Linwood Hall six months before I arrived
22 had been charged and sent to jail. He was convicted of
23 sexual abuse of children in Linwood Hall. I can't
24 remember his name. He subsequently died in prison.
25 When I was at Linwood Hall, I heard that about a month

1 before I arrived, the nurse there had been raped within
2 the school. It was never mentioned who the person was
3 that had raped her. Her father was a police officer and
4 he was told not to pursue the reason why the incident
5 was not being investigated. I later learned that it had
6 all been covered up.

7 'I feel from the age of 5, as I went through various
8 places in the social care system, that social work
9 started to cover up more things that happened to me.
10 I have been told that I am too normal for autistic
11 groups and too normal for vulnerable groups. I have
12 been stuck in the middle for a number of years. I have
13 been pushed from department to department.'

14 'Gary' says:

15 'I have no objection to my witness statement being
16 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.
17 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are
18 true.'

19 He has signed and dated his statement, which was on
20 9 January 2020.

21 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much, Ms McMillan.

22 Well, it's 3.55, so I think that's it for today.

23 We'll resume tomorrow morning. The plan is oral
24 evidence at 10 o'clock?

25 MS MCMILLAN: Yes, my Lady.

1 LADY SMITH: Very well. Thank you. I'll rise now until
2 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

3 (3.54 pm)

4 (The Inquiry adjourned until 10.00 am on Wednesday,
5 4 June 2025)

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