

1

Wednesday, 4 June 2025

2

(10.00 am)

3

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

4

study hearings in relation to Phase 9 of our work in

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which we're looking into the provision of residential

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care for children in need of healthcare provision,

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additional support provision and disabled children.

8

Now, we were going to turn immediately this morning

9

to an oral witness, but I understand there's had to be

10

a change of plan, Ms Innes; is that right?

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

12

We're going to start with read-ins this morning.

13

LADY SMITH: Thank you.

14

MS INNES: The read-in that I'm going to begin with is

15

a statement of an applicant who remains anonymous and is

16

known as 'Liam'.

17

LADY SMITH: Thank you.

18

'Liam' (read)

19

MS INNES: His witness statement is at WIT.001.001.8472.

20

Parts of his statement were previously read in on

21

Day 448, 31 May 2024, during the investigation into

22

secure care.

23

'Liam' says in his statement that he went to

24

Ovenstone Residential School from the age of 9 and was

25

there for about a year.

1 We have records showing that he was enrolled in the
2 school in [REDACTED] 1977 and left in [REDACTED] 1978.

3 'Liam' was born in 1969.

4 He also spent time in Melville House. In his
5 statement, he indicates that he first went there for
6 a week's trial when he was around 14 and then spent two
7 separate periods there. First, when he was around 14
8 and the second when he was around 15-and-a-half. He
9 says that he remained at Melville House until he was 16.

10 The records we have reflect this, but provide some
11 more specification. He initially attended
12 Melville House for a week in [REDACTED] 1985, which was
13 when he was aged 15.

14 He then attended at various times in 1985. First
15 from [REDACTED] until [REDACTED]. And then again in
16 [REDACTED]. And then on a voluntary
17 basis from [REDACTED] until [REDACTED]. So several
18 shorter periods during the course of 1985.

19 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

20 MS INNES: As I said, 'Liam' was born in 1969. The Inquiry
21 has previously heard that he lived with his brothers and
22 stepsister. He originally stayed in Stirling but then
23 moved to Dunfermline.

24 He says that his parents were constantly splitting
25 up and getting back together again before a final

1 separation after they had moved back to Dunfermline.

2 Social work became involved with the family because
3 his mum was struggling to cope with the separation and
4 'Liam', his brothers and sister all spent time with
5 foster carers.

6 The Inquiry has previously heard that, being in
7 foster care, was the worst two weeks of 'Liam's' life.

8 'Liam' says that he went to visit Ovenstone with his
9 mum when he was in Primary 2 or 3. He didn't think
10 anything of the visit at the time and just thought they
11 were going to have a look about.

12 He says he eventually was sent to Ovenstone because
13 he was not behaving at school.

14 So moving to page 3 of his statement and
15 paragraph 10, describing Ovenstone:

16 'It was a mixture of boys and girls. We were all
17 about the ages of 7 and 9. We were all wee. In total
18 there were maybe about 30 kids there. There were more
19 boys than girls. I think there were maybe only about
20 four girls there. The kids who went there went because
21 they had been disruptive at school.

22 'I think Fife Council ran the place. It wasn't
23 a List D school or an approved school. It was just
24 a residential place. I don't know what it came under.
25 I don't know whether you would call it a children's home.

1 because it was more structured. In some ways, it was
2 more like an approved school.

3 'It was an open place. The grounds were not
4 secured. If you wanted to run away you could have. You
5 didn't think like that at that age. The regime of the
6 place was mad. They were quite strict.

7 'I went there from the age of approximately 7 years
8 old. That means I probably went there in about 1976.'

9 As we know, I think it was [REDACTED] 1977, so quite
10 close:

11 'I was there for about a year.'

12 That's correct:

13 'I used to go there during the week for five days
14 and then go back to my mum's at the weekends. I did
15 that throughout my whole period there. I went there on
16 my own. My two brothers and my sister stayed with my
17 mum.

18 'I don't remember there being any chats with
19 a social worker before I went to Ovenstone. There were
20 no children's hearings. There was nothing like that.
21 I eventually found out the reason that I was sent there
22 was because I had been disruptive at school and my mum
23 couldn't cope with me.'

24 LADY SMITH: That's not unusual, as a given reason for
25 children going to Ovenstone. Nothing more specific than

1 that.

2 MS INNES: Exactly, my Lady. He then goes on to refer to
3 [REDACTED] SNR-GBB and his wife who also worked there. She
4 was also a teacher and the other teacher in the school
5 was called Grant Munro. And that's similar or the same
6 as we heard yesterday from an applicant who gave
7 evidence:

8 'There were two other staff members in our wing who
9 looked after us. The first was called Aunt Miriam. She
10 stayed in Lundin Links. I remember being taken to her
11 house a few times. I can't remember anything happening
12 there. There was another houseparent who stayed near
13 the school.

14 'One Monday everybody was acting weird about me.
15 I was put in a car with my mum and social worker. I was
16 taken to Ovenstone. I was taken into one wing of the
17 place. I think my mum was taken into the other.
18 I thought I was going to get taken home after that.
19 However, that was it. I was left. That was me in
20 there. I didn't see my mum again until the following
21 weekend. I was then taken to the wing I would be
22 staying in. I was shown where my bed was and where
23 I would be staying.

24 'It was the same routine every day. You would get
25 up at 7.30 or something like that. You would then make

1 your bed. Then you would get your breakfast in the
2 dining room. They used to ring a bell to tell you that
3 it was time to go to the school block. School always
4 started at nine. Classes went on through the morning.
5 I think we had a break mid-morning. I think we got to
6 go back to our dormitory for 15 minutes to have a juice
7 and a biscuit. We later had lunch in the dining hall.
8 We spent the afternoons mostly in class.

9 'There were two afternoons a week when we went to
10 the leisure centre. The place was called the
11 Glenrothes Institute. We mainly did swimming there.
12 There was also a wee assault course for us. On Fridays
13 we finished about 12. That was when we would be taken
14 home.

15 'On the days we weren't going home, we finished our
16 day at about three. We would then go back to our
17 dormitories to change into our day clothes. In the
18 evenings we got to play in the grounds. We were
19 supervised. We would play football or play around
20 a climbing frame that was in the shape of a fort. In
21 the evenings, they would sometimes take us to the local
22 swimming pool or take us for a walk in the country.
23 There were always a member of staff with us.

24 'Dinner was had at about four. Later on in the
25 evening, we had supper in a wee dormitory which had

1 a kitchen. It also had a games room outside it. We
2 would have hot chocolate. After that, we went to our
3 own dorm for bed. We were always bedded by eight.
4 That's when the lights went out.

5 'We slept in dormitories. I can't remember exactly
6 how many beds were in my dorm. I think there were three
7 bunk beds and a couple of single beds. I slept in
8 a bunk bed. It was all boys in my dorm. Downstairs
9 there were a couple of wee rooms where the girls slept.

10 'There were two members of staff assigned to each
11 dorm. The staff used to sleep in a wee bedroom by the
12 dorm. They had a wee window so that they could look out
13 into the dorm. The window was curtained. The staff
14 could open the curtains to see whether we were sleeping.
15 There was a toilet right by the dorm. My bed was right
16 by where the toilet was. You could go to that through
17 the night if you needed to go.

18 'I think we all used to shower and wash together in
19 the morning. I think there were a couple of showers in
20 the toilets. I don't think we showered every day.

21 'There was a dining hall. We all had to eat our
22 dinner in there. They made sure that you ate
23 everything. There were always a couple of us who
24 couldn't eat something. If you didn't eat your food you
25 would be given that for your next meal. If you didn't

1 eat it then, you would get it for the following meal and
2 so on.

3 'I didn't like boiled potatoes. SNR-GBB
4 made sure that I would get them the following meal if
5 I didn't eat them. One time the stuff had been lying
6 for two days. I refused to eat it. I was trying to
7 hide it in my pockets. SNR-GBB caught me. He
8 then pulled my head back and tried to force the potatoes
9 into my mouth. I saw that happen to another boy as
10 well. That happened on a few occasions to me. It was
11 mad. They wanted you to eat everything put in front of
12 you. There were incidents when SNR-GBB would
13 rub boys' faces in their dinner if they weren't eating
14 it. He was trying to force them to eat it.

15 'All I had was a set of school clothes and my
16 clothes to wear at night. All my clothes were supplied
17 by my mum.

18 'You were only allowed two pence pocket money.
19 There was a wee van that used to come into the grounds
20 of the place. You would get to spend your two pence
21 there. It was like a tuck shop. You could buy chews
22 from there with your two pence.

23 'There was a school there. There were two teachers:
24 IAL and Mr Munro. We were split up
25 between the two teachers. It was all mixed, boys and

1 girls. I think most of the time I was there I was in
2 [the female teacher's] class. We did things differently
3 with her. You did things like English and maths.
4 'If you weren't doing it right or misbehaving, in
5 [her] class you would be sent up to SNR-GBB .
6 If you had to go to [his] office, you knew you weren't
7 just going to get spoken to. You knew you were going to
8 get punished. He would hit you with his gym shoe.
9 'It wasn't a religious place. There was nothing
10 like that.
11 'There was nothing like trips or holidays away from
12 the place during the week.
13 'I think there was a TV in the wee dorm. The wee
14 dorm was like a playroom. There were games and you
15 could do things in there like colouring in.
16 'I think I had a birthday in there. Birthdays were
17 never celebrated there. That didn't happen. I remember
18 my birthday just being another day. I think we got home
19 for a week at Christmas time. After that we were picked
20 up and taken back.
21 'Nobody came to visit me during the week. Social
22 workers didn't come to visit. There was nothing like
23 phones or anything. There was no contact with the
24 outside world.
25 'I remember one meeting with a social worker. My

1 mum was there. That was the only meeting I remember.

2 'There were never any inspections or inspectors that

3 came in.

4 'We got to go home at 12 o'clock on Fridays. They

5 used to take us home in a minibus. They would take me

6 to my mum's. I stayed at my mum's over the weekend.

7 I was picked up from my mum's house on a Sunday at about

8 two or three. That's when I went back to Ovenstone.

9 '[The houseparents] drove the bus. Sometimes SNR-GBB

10 SNR-GBB used to come along. I never used to get

11 back to the place until seven or eight in the evening.

12 It was always dark. We got in so late because we had to

13 go around to collect all of the kids from their homes.

14 'I can't remember seeing a matron or a doctor.

15 I think there was maybe a doctor that we got taken to if

16 we were ill. I don't remember anyone coming in.

17 'The first night I was there, I had a bed wetting

18 problem. I don't know whether the social worker told

19 them about it. SNR-GBB came in the following

20 morning. He went round feeling all the beds. He

21 discovered mine was wet. He made me stand by the side

22 of my bed. He took off his slipper and made me bend

23 over. He hit me on my backside. That carried on

24 throughout my time there. If you wet your bed you were

25 made to strip your sheets and take them to the laundry.

1 'I had a pair of shoes. I remember the front one of
2 them got a hole in it. I was using them to brake when
3 I was on my bike during the weekends at home. SNR-GBE
4 SNR-GBB said to me before I went home for one
5 weekend, "Tell your mum that you need new shoes".
6 I told my mum, but she didn't get me any. When I went
7 back on the Sunday, the first thing that happened was
8 that SNR-GBB asked me whether I got any new
9 shoes. I told him I hadn't. He gave me the slipper for
10 that. You would have thought he would just have spoken
11 to my mum. I think it was all just an excuse to assault
12 me.

13 'Sometimes when the minibus came to collect us on
14 Sundays, there were kids who didn't want to go back.
15 They would be crying when the minibus came to pick them
16 up. There was one incident with a girl ... from
17 Kincardine. She cried every time she was getting picked
18 up. On one occasion, SNR-GBB was hiding behind
19 one of the seats in the minibus. When [she] got on the
20 bus she sat down. As soon as the bus started moving,
21 SNR-GBB jumped out from behind the seat. He
22 had a gym shoe in his hand. He threatened [her] that if
23 she didn't stop crying she would "get it". She didn't
24 stop crying. They then stopped the bus in the country.
25 [She] was taken behind a bush by SNR-GBB and

1 battered with the gym shoe. We all used to be petrified
2 if he was there.

3 'Years later, I thought about [this girl and SNR-GBB
4 SNR-GBB]. Looking back, I think that she was being
5 abused by [him]. She was really, really frightened to
6 be in his company. [He] wasn't shy about getting the
7 driver of the minibus to stop the bus so he could take
8 her behind a bush. I never saw anything but I remember
9 her always being really upset.

10 'Sometimes SNR-GBB would grab you in
11 a headlock and rub your head. He would think it was
12 playful but it wasn't. He was always assaulting kids.
13 When I think back now, it was sly, some of the things
14 that [he] did. He was just a bully. If he didn't like
15 you, that was it, you were picked on.

16 '[The female teacher] whose class I was in was
17 really bad. She was a bitch. She once wrote something
18 on the blackboard for us all to copy out. I copied it
19 out a few times. I thought that was what she had told
20 us to do. It wasn't what she wanted me to do though.
21 She had an internal phone up to SNR-GBB
22 office. She rang [him] and told him that I was coming
23 up. When I went up I stood outside his office. He
24 roared at me to come in. I didn't get a chance to
25 explain myself. He made me bend over the desk. He took

1 my trousers down. He then hit me with his gym shoe on
2 the bum and the back of the legs. It was like
3 a plimsoll. It had a rubber sole.

4 'I was punished a few times by SNR-GBB .
5 [Him] hitting you was the way they punished you. It was
6 the same every time. The only difference was that [he]
7 used a slipper in the mornings and a gym shoe the rest
8 of the time.

9 'One day we were in the classroom. There was a boy
10 who used to make up stories and things like that. SNR-GBB
11 SNR-GBB took the boy into one of the offices. This
12 time he didn't just use his gym shoe. He ended up
13 physically beating the boy. I heard the boy screaming
14 and stuff being moved around. I remember that
15 Grant Munro went into the office and physically stopped
16 SNR-GBB doing what he was doing to the boy.
17 I saw the boy afterwards. He was crying. He was in
18 a state. He had bruises all over him. The bruises were
19 on his arms and his body. He told us about the attack.

20 'My dad has said to me that when I came out of
21 Ovenstone, my bum and my legs were all bruised. He said
22 that must have been from constantly being hit with a gym
23 shoe or slipper by SNR-GBB .

24 'You wonder how some of the other staff didn't know
25 what was going on. They must have known what was going

1 on because they saw SNR-GBB doing these things.
2 I always wondered why [the houseparents] never got
3 involved. They were meant to be looking after us.
4 I don't understand why they turned a blind eye to it.'
5 'Liam' then goes on to tell us about him living back
6 at home with his dad, his experience at Rimbleton House,
7 Dr Guthrie's, St David's and Rossie Farm, which has
8 previously been read in.
9 He then tells us about his time at Melville House
10 and how he ended up there. So moving on to page 32 and
11 paragraph 152:
12 'There was a meeting held at Rossie Farm. My social
13 worker, my dad and the key worker were there. I think
14 they spoke to Melville House after that. There was
15 another meeting. After that meeting I got to go down to
16 Melville House to meet the headmaster. I spent a couple
17 of hours there. After that, it was decided that I could
18 go for a week's trial before I went there to see if
19 I liked it. I did that. It was decided after that week
20 that I could go there full-time. After that, there was
21 a children's hearing. An order was made that I should
22 go to Melville House. I think I then went to
23 Rossie Farm that night with my social worker to pick
24 stuff up. I remember asking whether I could stay in the
25 halfway house that night. I was told I couldn't stay

1 there because they would be breaking the law if I didn't
2 go straightaway. I was then taken straight to
3 Melville House.'

4 LADY SMITH: So the halfway house he was talking about was
5 the one at Rossie, where people who were actually no
6 longer subject to a secure requirement would go before
7 they left Rossie.

8 MS INNES: Yes.

9 He then goes on at paragraph 153 to talk about the
10 times when he was at Melville House and in that
11 paragraph he refers to going on the run. He says that
12 was within the first three months, although the records
13 suggest that he wasn't there for that length of time,
14 but he was there for various periods, as I said, in
15 1985. He says he got taken to a police station and then
16 he was put to Rimbleton House for one night. The
17 following morning, he was taken to another
18 children's hearing and then he went back again to
19 Rossie Farm.

20 At paragraph 154, he talks about going back again to
21 Melville House and he says there that he was told by his
22 social worker in a meeting at Melville House that:

23 '... if I didn't behave I would be handed over to
24 the prison system. That put the fear of life into me.
25 I had no option but to behave. They held

1 a children's hearing before I was sent back to
2 Melville House the second time. When I went back to
3 Melville House the second time, it wasn't as bad because
4 I was going to college and I was also avoiding
5 [a particular member of staff].

6 'It was all boys. There were a vast range of ages
7 at the house. The boys ranged from about 11 to 16.
8 There were maybe 50 lads there. It wasn't a secure
9 place. It was just a big mansion with big grounds
10 around it. They called it a List G place. It was
11 an alright place. It was a good establishment. It was
12 a lot more relaxed than Rossie Farm.

13 ,SNR [REDACTED] dead now [and there was SNR [REDACTED]

14 SNR [REDACTED]. I never had any "run-ins" with SNR [REDACTED]

15 SNR [REDACTED]. The two of them had come up from Wales.

16 '[There was another staff member who was
17 an ex-marine]. He was English. He was in his late 20s
18 and early 30s. His dad was the local minister. There
19 was something not right about the guy.

20 'There was another guy called Danny McGinlay. He
21 was in his early 50s. His nickname was "SAS McGinlay".
22 I don't think I ever had any "run ins" with him.

23 'You got up about 7.30. Then you would go to
24 breakfast. You would then go outside for 10 to
25 15 minutes. At ten to nine they held a meeting in the

1 big meeting room upstairs. Everybody went to that.
2 After the meeting you went to your classes. In the
3 summer, they sometimes took you out in the minibus to do
4 activities during the day.

5 'We were in dormitories. They weren't as big as
6 Rossie Farm or Dr Guthrie's. The first time I was there
7 I was in a dormitory with six people. The second time
8 I was there I was in a room to myself.

9 'The food was brilliant. It was like a hotel.

10 'The only stuff you had were your clothes. You got
11 issued your stuff. You wore their clothes during the
12 week and got to wear your own clothes during the
13 weekend.

14 'There was a school built into the place. You had
15 to go there. The school had a gym in it. You were in
16 permanent classes. There was no moving about between
17 classes. You had the same teacher all day. I remember
18 doing a lot of English. I don't think I did any maths.
19 The only time you had a different teacher was if you had
20 PE during the day.

21 'When I went back the second time, I didn't have to
22 go to school in Melville House. I went to a college in
23 Glenrothes. I got to go there for three months. I got
24 to do all different things. It was all stuff about
25 getting you ready for being 16.

1 'When I left college I had another couple of months
2 to go before I left Melville House. I wanted to do
3 catering. They got me to work alongside the cooks in
4 the kitchen. I didn't get paid for that.

5 'I was a Catholic. I used to go down to the chapel
6 at the weekends I was kept in. You had to go. If there
7 were no staff around, [the staff member who was the
8 ex-marine] would make a beeline for me and drag me to
9 his dad's church instead. It was a Protestant church.
10 I didn't want to go.

11 '[This staff member] used to sometimes make us go
12 out at night during the week to help his dad out if
13 there was anything going on in the community concerning
14 his church. You would have to do things like help out
15 at cake and coffee evenings with the pensioners.

16 'I had a couple of holidays with them when I was
17 there. We went to Skye, Eyemouth, Holy Island and
18 places like that. They used take you out to do loads of
19 activities. I remember doing canoeing and hillwalking.

20 'I had my birthday when I was there. I remember
21 going out with my sister for the day. I didn't get
22 a Christmas in Melville House.

23 'I never had any visits there. The social worker
24 only visited me just before I was about to be released.
25 There was nothing like inspections while I was there.

1 'Every morning there was a big meeting held in the
2 old big banqueting hall that they had there. All the
3 staff were at the meeting. Even the cleaners and the
4 cooks. Everybody was there. All the boys would sit in
5 the meeting. If you did something, SNR
6 would get told what you had done wrong at the meeting.
7 SNR would then make you stand. He would
8 single you out. He would belittle you in front of
9 everybody.

10 'It was embarrassing discussing private things in
11 front of everybody. There were things that came out in
12 those meetings that other people shouldn't have heard.
13 He would say things to some of the boys like, "You're
14 not going home this weekend. The reason you're not
15 going home this weekend is because your mum doesn't want
16 you". It was stuff like that. Looking back, I don't
17 know why he did that. Why say these things in front of
18 people like the cleaners, people who had nothing to do
19 with things? It was a weird way of dealing with things.
20 It made you not want to express how you felt.

21 'There was a matron ... There was also a woman
22 called Mrs Mooney who was also a matron. Any illnesses
23 you had you would see them. They would take you into
24 Cupar to see a doctor if you needed to.

25 'There was no place to put anyone who was causing

1 mischief. There wasn't anywhere like the isolation
2 rooms at Rossie Farm. If you needed to get disciplined
3 it was either [the ex-marine staff member] or SNR
4 SNR. They were there to deal with any unruly
5 behaviour. They would take you aside into a room and
6 sort you.

7 'If you met SNR, you would think he was
8 a nice old man. Behind closed doors he didn't think
9 twice about hitting you, punching you or flinging you
10 over a desk. I was assaulted a couple of times by him.
11 I said to [him] once: "You're needing to get [the
12 ex-marine staff member] stopped for hitting boys".
13 I ended up getting assaulted by SNR for
14 saying that.

15 'During my trial week, [the ex-marine] played this
16 game. He called it "the wide game". He used to make us
17 play that throughout my time there. He would split us
18 up into teams and make one team go hide in the woods.
19 The other team would then go and look for the other team
20 in the woods. Me and this boy had a disagreement while
21 we were playing this game. We got into a fight. I bust
22 this boy's nose. [The staff member] found out about it.
23 When we got back to Melville House, [he] took me into
24 a room and pushed me against a wall. And he said,
25 "I'm not having you Rossie boys coming down here and

1 causing all sorts of trouble. I'm just warning you now.
2 Dinnae start any of your carry on". I was like, "Nae
3 bother".

4 'During my two spells at Melville House, I was
5 assaulted on numerous occasions by [this staff member].
6 I was assaulted loads of times by him. I was punched,
7 kicked and battered by him. I got given black eyes. It
8 wasn't just a slap. He used to give you full-blown
9 punches. He would attack you like he was fighting
10 another grown man. I know he assaulted other boys too.
11 It was all physical stuff. He would cover it up.
12 I remember him saying that I had fallen down the stairs
13 one time after I got given a black eye by him.

14 'One time we were on a trip to Eyemouth. I went
15 there with him and another member of staff. I wandered
16 off from the campsite with a couple of other boys. We
17 hadn't gone far. We were sitting on a wall. [The
18 ex-marine staff member] came sneaking up on us from
19 behind. He dragged me from off the wall and kicked me
20 with his steel-capped boots. He kicked me about my
21 face. I got my hands up. He gave me bruises all over
22 my hands and arm. He gave me a black eye. One of the
23 other boys there got kicked in between the legs. The
24 other boy managed to get away.

25 'When we got back to the campsite, everybody knew

1 what had happened. I told the other boys. I said,
2 "I'm going to get the police on him and I'm going to get
3 him charged and make sure he gets it". Later on, [the
4 staff member] came up to me when I was in the toilets
5 and he said, "You say anything and I'll get you". He
6 then tried to be my pal.

7 '[He] would take you back to his house. He had
8 a wee cottage [with] a set of antlers on the wall. On
9 the antlers were hanging pairs of knickers. He used to
10 point to the knickers and say, "Those were that member
11 of staff's" and "I've been with this member of staff"
12 and things like that. We all thought it was funny at
13 the time. Looking back, it was a bit sinister. He used
14 to let boys watch porn in his cottage. He used to sit
15 and watch it with us. He never did anything. He never
16 took his tackle out or anything like that.

17 'There were a lot of young female members of staff.
18 I remember that when a new female member of staff would
19 join Melville House he would say, "I'm going to get
20 her", and, "What do you think my chances are with her?"
21 He would say these things to the boys. Looking back on
22 it now, it wasn't appropriate.

23 'It was all getting out of hand. I just didn't want
24 to be in his company. He had a thing about me. He
25 would target me and make sure I was around him. The

1 first time I ran away was after [he] tripped me up going
2 down the stairs one day. He took a couple of punches at
3 me. I ran away that morning. I got caught. I was
4 taken to SNR . I told him about what
5 happened and the reason I ran away. That was the first
6 time I told SNR about what had been
7 happening ... SNR said I was talking
8 "a load of crap" and said that he had never had any
9 complaints about him. He then slapped me. He told me
10 that if I ran away again I would be going back to
11 Rossie Farm. At that time, I actually wanted to go back
12 to Rossie Farm because I wasn't enjoying Melville House.

13 'I ran away again later on. I got taken up to SNR
14 SNR . There was a pile of 20 pences on his desk.
15 It was the money which had been taken off me. SNR
16 SNR said to me, "Do you want your money back?"
17 I then went to take it. As I went to grab the coins,
18 [he] grabbed me and flung me in the corner. The money
19 went everywhere. I got kicked and punched by [him].

20 'I ran away four or five times. I kept on running
21 away until they put me back into Rossie Farm. Each time
22 I ran away, I was away for between two days and a week.
23 The last time I ran away, a children's hearing was held
24 and I was put away into Rossie Farm.

25 'There was place called the "leavers unit" in

1 Melville House. I went there with three or four boys
2 before I left. It was like the halfway house at
3 Rossie Farm but you did more for yourselves. You
4 weren't supervised. You did your own cooking and things
5 like that.

6 'Before I left Melville House for good, a social
7 worker came up to ask me what I wanted to do when I left
8 Melville House. I always wanted to stay with my mum.
9 She didn't want to do that though. That was when the
10 social worker arranged supported lodgings in
11 Dunfermline.

12 'A children's hearing was held just before I was
13 released from Melville House. The Chairman of the Panel
14 said, "If you don't screw the nut now, we're going to
15 have to escalate this. We're going to have to ask the
16 PF to deal with you. At that point, we will wash our
17 hands of you".'

18 'Liam' then goes on to talk about reporting abuse
19 whilst in care. In relation to Ovenstone, he says:

20 'I remember telling my mum what was going on at
21 Ovenstone when I went home. I don't think she believed
22 me. I also told my dad about what was happening.
23 I remember telling him that I got the slipper and that
24 we only got two pence pocket money. I didn't tell him
25 about being force fed until I left Ovenstone. I told

1 him that not long after I told him what had happened.
2 I think he contacted the social work.'

3 Then over the page, on page 40, at paragraph 194 he
4 says:

5 'It didn't matter what you said about [the ex-marine
6 staff member]. I remember telling SNR .
7 Nothing was done about it.

8 'It wasn't until years later that I thought
9 I shouldn't be living with what had happened to me.
10 I had seen other people speaking about their experiences
11 in the media and I thought that I shouldn't be on my
12 own. I started thinking that I should be starting to
13 speak to people about what had been going on.

14 'I was getting a social enquiry report done in about
15 1995. I was about 25. I spoke to a social worker
16 during the enquiry. He asked me about Ovenstone. He
17 told me that he had met someone else who had been there.
18 That person had told him what had happened in there.
19 I then told the social worker what had happened to me.
20 He said, "Look, you need to go to the police with this".
21 I then got in contact with the police.

22 'Two policemen then came round to my flat. I was
23 all over the place when they came round. I wasn't in
24 the right place when I spoke to the police for the first
25 time. My life was chaotic. I was on drugs. When they

1 spoke to me they asked me whether I wanted to continue
2 with things. They said if I didn't want to continue,
3 I needed to sign a piece of paper they had. At the
4 time, I just wanted done with it. I just signed the
5 piece of paper. I seem to remember that another boy
6 came forward with allegations and that's why they wanted
7 me to sign this piece of paper. I just signed it
8 because I didn't want to face up to things.'

9 'Liam' then says that years later he started to open
10 up to his counsellor. He became aware of the Inquiry
11 and contacted the police again. The Inquiry has already
12 heard about 'Liam's' life after care, which was chaotic
13 until he met his wife at 23 years old.

14 He received no support after he left Melville House.
15 It had an impact on his mental health. He was angry and
16 violent.

17 Moving to page 43 and paragraph 211, he says:

18 'If I hadn't ended up in care, my life could have
19 turned out totally different. I'm the only one in my
20 family that's been in prison and been in trouble with
21 the police. My brothers and sister have gone on to
22 different things.'

23 Then moving on to page 44 and paragraph 215, he
24 says:

25 'I hope that something good comes out of the

1 Inquiry. I hope that any other kid in my predicament
2 wouldn't end up in care with rapists, murderers and
3 paedophiles. You should be kept in the category that
4 you are in. You shouldn't be mixed in with people who
5 have done much worse things. You shouldn't be mixed
6 with older boys who could put you in harm's way.

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

11 And 'Liam' signed his statement on 7 May 2018.

12 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

13 MS INNES: Now, Ms McMillan is going to do a read-in.

14 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

15 MS MCMILLAN: Good morning, my Lady.

16 This is going to be a read-in for 'Jill'.

17 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

18 'Jill' (read)

19 MS MCMILLAN: The reference for 'Jill's' statement is
20 WIT.001.002.9754.

21 'Jill' talks in her statement about her time in
22 Ovenstone. She says she was enrolled when she was 7
23 years old and that she was there for a year, but less
24 than two years.

25 From the records, 'Jill' was enrolled in

1 [REDACTED] 1978. She was aged 7, and left in

2 [REDACTED] 1979, aged 8, so just over a year.

3 Records do show that she visited the school on
4 several occasions before she was formally enrolled.

5 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

6 MS MCMILLAN: In her statement, 'Jill' tells us in
7 paragraphs 2 to 10 about life before she was enrolled at
8 Ovenstone. She says she was an only child and lived in
9 Crossgates, Fife with her family.

10 She says that she was always hyperactive as a child
11 and received a formal diagnosis of hyperactivity, which
12 she said was not a diagnosis at all.

13 She thought that she was prescribed Ritalin as
14 a result. She initially went to Crossgates Primary
15 before moving to another school for primary 3 because
16 the family moved house.

17 She was on a part-time timetable there. Plans were
18 then put in place for her to move to Ovenstone, which
19 she did not know about. She moved when she was around 7
20 years old.

21 'Jill' goes on to tell us about her time in
22 Ovenstone from paragraph 12. She says:

23 'I had been taken to Ovenstone for a visit by my mum
24 and grandad before I went there and I did not like the
25 place. I was still 7 years old and the moment I saw it,

1 I had a bad feeling about it.

2 'All the bikes were out when we went to visit.
3 Anybody seeing them would have thought it was great. It
4 wasn't like that at all, because we never got to play on
5 those bikes.

6 'Ovenstone was set in its own grounds with a grass
7 area in front of the main building. In the grounds were
8 the ruins of a massive castle and two huts, where the
9 school classes were held. We never got to go in the
10 ruins or play near them.

11 'The building itself had two wings on either side
12 with a porch at the front. The wing on the left was
13 a good wing and the wing on the right was horrible.
14 There were stairs going up either side of the porch to
15 each wing and steps up to a set of double doors in the
16 middle. On the other side of the double doors, was the
17 headmaster's office on the right and another set of
18 double doors straight ahead that led to the canteen
19 where we all ate. The headmaster's office had a door
20 and a window looking out on to the porch.

21 , SNR-GBB was SNR of the place along
22 with his wife. You always used to see him walking
23 around the school with a cigarette and driving his TR7
24 sports car if he wasn't away scuba diving.

25 'We had to refer to all of the staff as "auntie" and

1 "uncle" and among the rest of the staff there was
2 an Uncle Ken who was okay. I would say he was firm but
3 fair. There was also [one auntie] who was nasty and
4 an Uncle KUE. They were all houseparents and were on
5 shifts, changing about working day shift and working
6 later in the day. Their responsibilities as
7 houseparents were to take care of the children, make
8 sure that they ate their meals and basically do what
9 a normal parent did.

10 '[The uncle] had a house in the grounds where he
11 lived with his wife and his daughter and son. I'm not
12 sure how old he was, but he was slightly built with dark
13 hair, long sideburns and a thin face. At first
14 I thought [this uncle] was all right because he didn't
15 speak nasty to us, but I came to realise he was
16 horrible.

17 'As well as the houseparents, there was
18 a Miss Merrilees, who was lovely. She didn't live
19 there. She stayed somewhere near Anstruther. There
20 were also a few staff that used to do the laundry, cook
21 and clean. One that I remember was Diane who worked in
22 the kitchen. She was nice.

23 'There were only two girls at Ovenstone, me and
24 [another girl], who would have been about my age, 7 or
25 8, maybe a bit younger. I think another girl with red

1 hair came just as I left. Although there were only two
2 girls, I would have said that there would have been
3 about 40 boys, although I'm not sure exactly how many,
4 ranging in age from 5 up to about 11 years old.

5 'After the visit, we went home and it was a few
6 months before I actually went to Ovenstone to stay and
7 I think I would have just turned 8 years old. I take it
8 preparations had to be made.

9 'My first day there was absolutely horrendous. Mum
10 and my grandparents drove me there and we were met by
11 a woman. She told me she was my houseparent and I had
12 to call her Auntie ...

13 'As soon as my mum and my grandparents left, Auntie
14 ... was nasty to me. She ordered me to go and get a
15 shower even though I'd had a bath before I left home and
16 I was immaculate when I arrived. I had to wash my hair
17 with medicated shampoo.

18 'Once I'd had my shower, I was given different
19 clothes to wear. It felt strange. I couldn't
20 understand what was going on and it was quite scary.
21 I was introduced to [the other girl] and told that
22 I would be sharing a room with her in the wing on the
23 right.

24 'In the room I shared with [the other girl], there
25 were two single beds, a sink and a cupboard, which had

1 shelves in it. There were no hanging rails. The boys
2 had a dormitory, which was a big room about 18 of them
3 slept in. It was like a hospital ward, lined with beds
4 and wardrobes on either side. It was the same on the
5 other wing.

6 'Whichever staff member was on duty would come and
7 chap us up in the morning and then we would all go and
8 get washed and dressed. Once we were dressed, we would
9 go in an orderly fashion to the canteen for breakfast.

10 'Every morning after breakfast, we had to stand in
11 single file on the steps at the porch and each of us had
12 to get our hair combed by whichever houseparent was on
13 duty. They used the same comb for everyone. Afterwards
14 we all had to clean our shoes before we walked across to
15 the school huts.

16 'Bedtime was quite early. I would say about
17 8 o'clock in the evening. Everyone went to bed at the
18 same time, whatever age they were. We never got to
19 watch Top of the Pops, because it was on too late.
20 Everybody got told by whichever member of staff was on
21 that it was time to go to bed and we would get our
22 pyjamas on and got our supper.

23 'I shared a room with [this girl] for about
24 a year-and-a-half and then I was moved to another wing.
25 I felt a bit better when I was moved because the boys in

1 that wing were nicer. I was in a room on my own and
2 I felt safe.

3 'Uncle Ken was the housemaster in the other wing and
4 he was absolutely fine. He was a polite man and he was
5 firm, but he was fair.

6 'I don't know why I was moved to the good wing, but
7 before long I went back to the room I shared with [the
8 other girl]. The first night I spent there, [this girl]
9 came into my bed beside me. She was scared and she wet
10 my bed.

11 'We all used to eat all our meals together in the
12 canteen. Diane, who worked in the kitchens, used to go
13 round and wipe the tables down. She was nice.

14 'The food at Ovenstone was horrible, like school
15 dinners. Breakfast was toast, cereal and a hard-boiled
16 egg. I can't eat a boiled egg to this day. We went
17 back to the canteen for lunch, which was soup mostly.
18 For evening meal we got mashed potato a lot of the time
19 with braised meat or mince or fish. We didn't get chips
20 very often. We never got an evening meal on a Friday
21 because we went home for the weekend.

22 'We all ate out of different coloured melamine
23 bowls. Some were lemon and some were blue. I liked the
24 lemon one was because it was bright and cheery and it
25 made me feel good. I thought the blue one was awfully

1 clinical. It sounds silly, but these are the things
2 that matter when you're a child.

3 'The only meal that was good was supper because they
4 would make up big jugs of drinking chocolate and
5 Horlicks. We never got a biscuit though, just a drink.

6 'If anyone didn't eat what they were given it would
7 be taken off them and put down for them for the next
8 meal. That happened to me with the boiled egg, but it
9 was only put down once at lunchtime. I never got it for
10 the evening meal.

11 'We all had showers nearly every day. There was
12 only one shower for everybody on each wing to use and we
13 were all given separate times to go. The shower was
14 stinking, but then 20 kids were having to use it. It
15 wasn't supervised at all. We just washed ourselves.

16 'We never got to wear our own clothes. I had my
17 clothes for going home on a Friday and for the rest of
18 the time we were given secondhand clothes like nasty old
19 wellingtons, T-shirts and shorts and we had a uniform to
20 wear for school. I had a grey skirt and a grey nylon
21 shirt and we had to change as soon as we finished
22 school.

23 'We never had a massive set of clothes. It wasn't
24 right. They were given all this money for us and all we
25 got was nasty secondhand clothes.

1 'We never got to ride the bikes that were at
2 Ovenstone. Most of our leisure time was spent in the
3 living room reading books or playing games like jigsaws.
4 There were shelves in the living room that had toys and
5 books on them and there was a TV in there too.

6 'We could also play hide and seek in the grounds,
7 which was okay, but we weren't allowed to play on the
8 grass area outside. The only time we were allowed on
9 the grass was when we had sports day and all the parents
10 came. It was all for show though.

11 'I believe that my aunt and uncle donated a big box
12 of toys while I was there, but I don't think I saw what
13 they'd given. They later told me that they donated
14 tennis rackets and I never once got to play tennis.

15 'After tea time on a Tuesday, we went to the gym at
16 Cosmos Community Centre at St Andrew's. On Wednesday we
17 went swimming at the pool in Glenrothes. When we went
18 to the gym or swimming, we had to wear red knee socks
19 with garters and red shorts.

20 'In the summer, [one of the uncles] would take us
21 out of the school grounds and walk us up to the top of
22 the road where we would play "kick-the-can". He took us
23 all to his house one day as well, but I don't know why.

24 'During the time I had been moved to the other wing,
25 a few of us went on a camping trip in tents for a couple

1 of days with Uncle Ken and [one of the aunties]. There
2 was about 15 of us and we all went in the school
3 minibus. It was good and I enjoyed it, although I can't
4 remember where we went. I don't remember if there were
5 any other trips.

6 'We went to school in two classrooms that were in
7 huts outside. We all had to stand outside the huts in
8 single file before we went through the door one by one.
9 Whoever slept in one wing went to one of the classrooms
10 and the other wing went to the other classroom. There
11 were maybe about ten or 15 kids in each class and we
12 were taught the normal curriculum. Although all the
13 children were different ages.

14 '[A female teacher] was my teacher and the education
15 was not good. I was two years behind in my education
16 before I went to Ovenstone and I was four years behind
17 when I left. I didn't understand the schoolwork,
18 especially the maths, and I was scared. I used to have
19 nightmares about going to school. I used to lie in bed
20 thinking that if I got something wrong [the teacher] was
21 going to be angry and I was going to get smacked.

22 'There was a chart in the corridor that they put
23 a red star on for every day that you had a good day. If
24 you'd committed a misdemeanour one day and you'd been
25 put outside the classroom, they would put a brown or

1 a black circle on that day. If you got a silver star
2 that was good and they always said that if you got
3 a whole row of gold stars you got to leave the school.

4 'A dental bus came to the school and I got my teeth
5 taken out, but there was no nurse at Ovenstone. I never
6 needed any medical treatment when I was there and
7 I don't know what happened if anybody did need some.

8 'We were home at weekends, so we never went to
9 church. But we had to say the Lord's Prayer before
10 meals. I was made to write it out as punishment by [my
11 teacher] because I was finding school so difficult.

12 'The staff would celebrate our birthdays and I got
13 cake when it was my birthday, but I think it was just
14 them keeping up appearances.

15 'We were always at home for the holidays, including
16 Christmas, but they did take us to a pantomime in a town
17 near the home. I can't remember where. We were also
18 taken for a Christmas meal at a place called the
19 Craw's Nest somewhere.

20 'The only visitor I got was a speech therapist who
21 came once a week for pretty much all the time I was at
22 Ovenstone. I had trouble pronouncing some words and it
23 did help.

24 'There were no inspections of the place when I was
25 there and nobody official ever came to see me or speak

1 to me.

2 'I went home every weekend and at holidays. It used
3 to be horrible because all the children in my street
4 would see me getting off the yellow minibus and call me
5 names.

6 'My parents split up when I was in Ovenstone so
7 I would go and see my mum one weekend and my dad the
8 next. They weren't coping with me being in a home so
9 they decided to split up for a while and I got the blame
10 for that. Apparently my dad hadn't been giving my mum
11 any money and I remember listening to them arguing about
12 maintenance.

13 'One Sunday, I really didn't want to go back to the
14 school and wouldn't get in the van. Even though
15 I protested, I was shoved in and taken back.

16 'We had nothing that we could call our own. No
17 cuddly toys, nothing like that. We weren't allowed to
18 bring in anything with us either and we never got to
19 keep anything we might have been given.

20 'Every Tuesday a metallic green estate car used to
21 come to Ovenstone and the driver would open the boot
22 where there were trays of sweets inside. I'm not sure
23 who the man was. He maybe had a shop in town. When he
24 came, the houseparents would walk away with a Mars Bar
25 and we were given two pence by Uncle Ken to spend on the

1 sweets.

2 'I never ran away, but I did think about it one
3 time. I was standing talking to a few of the boys
4 outside his office, talking about getting smacked by
5 SNR-GBB and we all started talking about
6 taking the bikes and heading off, but we never did.

7 'Ms Merrilees was a nice lady. She put things on
8 the wall of my room from home to give me a bit of
9 comfort. That was the only comfort I got. There was
10 nothing from [the auntie] or [one of the uncles].

11 'For all the stuff we had, every Friday we had
12 a room inspection. Whoever was on duty would come and
13 inspect our cupboard and it had to be neat and tidy. We
14 also had to polish our shoes outside every evening after
15 school.

16 SNR-GBB had two Afghan hounds and they
17 would get boys out of their beds in the middle of the
18 night to walk them around the perimeter of the grounds.
19 I never had to do that but I know some of the boys did.

20 'If you were in trouble you were sent to SNR-GBB
21 SNR-GBB. You would have to stand outside his office
22 between the two sets of double doors that led from the
23 porch to the canteen. He would come out of his office
24 and look to see who was standing there and no matter
25 what it was for, he would take them into his office. It

1 happened to me a few times, although I'm not sure how
2 many.

3 'In his office, [he] would make us stand two square
4 tiles away from his desk and bend over. Then he would
5 smack us four or five times on the backside with his
6 slipper. He would always do it either by lifting my
7 skirt and hitting me on my pants, or if I had trousers
8 on, over my trousers. It could have been for something
9 as silly as picking your nose or if there was boot
10 polish on a door. The punishment didn't match the
11 crime.

12 'One time I was sent away from the canteen for
13 something stupid. I don't remember what it was. I had
14 to stand outside SNR-GBB office, but he never
15 gave me the slipper on that occasion. Instead, he made
16 me go round the whole building with cloths, cleaning
17 boot polish off the doors.

18 'I had to write the Lord's Prayer out every night
19 because I couldn't do the work. I didn't know how to do
20 the work or how to concentrate and I didn't understand
21 the work.

22 'If you were a bed wetter you got blankets and
23 sheets and if you weren't a bed wetter you got a quilt.
24 I don't think there was any punishment though.

25 'Some of the kids at Ovenstone got treated really

1 badly. It wasn't just me. [The girl that I shared
2 a room with] was picked on by [the auntie and one of the
3 uncles]. They used to humiliate her and she was
4 nervous.

5 '[The auntie] smacked children because they wouldn't
6 conform to her way or because of the way they spoke or
7 because they wouldn't give her her full title. She
8 smacked me with her hand on the back of my head after
9 I'd been there for just a few days because I hadn't
10 called her the right name.

11 'One time when we were away swimming I saw SNR-GBB
12 SNR-GBB smack a boy in front of everybody. I don't
13 know what the boy had done, if anything, but [he] yanked
14 him out of the pool and smacked him hard on the
15 backside. It was horrible.

16 'I remember seeing SNR-GBB smack a kid
17 with a belt. I don't know what the boy had done but
18 I saw him hit the boy on the backside with a belt from
19 his diving gear. I don't know how many times he hit
20 him.

21 'Before I got moved to the good wing, [the girl that
22 I shared with] and I were in our room one day and she
23 was twirling her hair between her fingers. [The uncle]
24 saw her and made her come out of the room and stand in
25 the corridor and wear a green Tammy hat. There was no

1 need for that. It was humiliating in front of all the
2 other kids.

3 'I think I was still about 8 years old at this time.
4 After he sent [her] out of the room, [the uncle] came in
5 and made sure there was nobody else there. I was
6 standing between the two beds when he came through the
7 door and asked me to take my underpants off. I did and
8 he proceeded to touch my genitals. I asked him what he
9 was doing and he told me he was just making sure there
10 was nothing wrong with me. He never took his clothes
11 off at all.

12 'He never did that to me again and not long after
13 I was moved to the other wing. I think he must have
14 been doing stuff to [the other girl] while I was in the
15 other wing though. She never said, but the fact that
16 she came in to my bed and wet the bed on first night
17 back on the wing makes me think that. She was obviously
18 scared.

19 'My uncle was a policeman and he abused me as well
20 during the time I was staying at Ovenstone ... I was on
21 a home visit for the weekend and was in his front garden
22 in Dunfermline when he ordered me to take my white
23 cotton vest off. He never touched me, but it didn't
24 feel right.

25 [SNR-GBB] 's wife], who was a schoolteacher,

1 was evil. She would punish me for getting things wrong
2 by giving me lines. She made me feel inadequate and
3 would tell me I couldn't do things. I could never get
4 the confidence to do anything.

5 'She ordered a boy to put his hands on me. The boy
6 was 10 or 11 years old and bigger than me. He had
7 mongoloid features, dark skin and dark brown eyes and he
8 used to slaver all the time. I was doing my work in
9 class when he walked past and smacked me with a wooden
10 ruler.

11 'I put my hand up to tell [the teacher] and after
12 I told her she sent for her husband to come down to the
13 school. [He] came and took [the boy] away and I presume
14 he must have smacked him. When [the boy] came back,
15 [she] told him that he should give me a "good thumping".

16 'That was on a Friday and later on while I was
17 cleaning the shelves in my room, [the boy] came in. [My
18 roommate] wasn't there at the time, which was strange.
19 Boys were not allowed in our room but he came in and
20 started kicking me. I went home that night and my mum
21 couldn't get over the bruises that were on my body.

22 'I had a bad habit of telling fibs when I was
23 a child and I knew my mum wouldn't believe me if I told
24 her anything. How do you tell your parents something
25 like that? As a result I never spoke about what

1 happened to anybody while I was there, not even [my
2 roommate]. It just wasn't something I could talk about.

3 'My mum did ask about the bruises she saw on my body
4 when I went home at the weekend but I just told her that
5 I had fallen. I've no idea where all those bruises did
6 actually come from. I can't remember, but I wasn't one
7 for falling over all the time. I feel now that
8 something more must have happened to me at Ovenstone but
9 I can't remember.

10 'I'm not sure how long I was at Ovenstone, certainly
11 over a year, but less than two. I was lying in bed on
12 Sunday evening after the Friday [the boy] had come into
13 my room and battered me. I was unable to sleep because
14 I was worried about [him] and about getting punished at
15 school by [my teacher] because I couldn't do the maths.

16 'I was asked to get up and go to the office and as
17 I walked down the corridor I could see my mum and dad in
18 SNR-GBB office. They'd got back together by
19 that time and they gave me a choice of whether I wanted
20 to go home in the morning or there and then. I told
21 them I wanted to go home right away.

22 'My parents later told me that they had received
23 an anonymous phone call telling them that they had
24 better get down to the school. Whoever it was told my
25 parents that their daughter was getting ill-treated,

1 although they never said what was actually happening to
2 me.

3 'I think it must have been a member of staff that
4 phoned my mum and dad. Nobody else would have known
5 their number. We've never found out to this day who
6 made that call.

7 'My mum taught me from home for a while until
8 an opening came up at a unit within Lumphinnans School
9 in Cowdenbeath. The unit within the school was for
10 children that had social needs and learning difficulties
11 and the staff were lovely and built up the children's
12 trust. I did what was asked of me and I enjoyed it
13 there. I was able to catch up with my work. It was
14 a culture shock for me after the schooling at
15 Ovenstone.'

16 'Jill' then talks in her statement about life after
17 care. She then went on to high school and although she
18 tried to get qualifications, she left without any.

19 She became an apprentice hairdresser, but was sacked
20 when the owner found out that she had learning
21 disabilities.

22 She then held various jobs and at one point wished
23 to apply for the army but her mother would not consent
24 to her going.

25 At 17, she found out she was pregnant. She lived in

1 Manchester with her husband and they separated when she
2 was 21. She moved back to Scotland at that point. She
3 now has three other children. She has been given
4 a formal diagnosis of autism. She is at college and she
5 says that she is now doing well.

6 At paragraph 100, she talks about the impact of her
7 time in care at Ovenstone. She says:

8 'My experiences at Ovenstone have wrecked my life.
9 I never got a chance with jobs or with relationships.
10 It has affected me all this time and it's only now that
11 I'm beginning to realise I'm not a victim any more.
12 I'm a survivor.

13 'It makes me feel angry now that I've woken up to
14 what happened. It's like I've been sleeping through my
15 life. If I'd been given the opportunities I now have,
16 I would be in a good job, I would have a good life and
17 I would maybe be able to put Ovenstone behind me.
18 Instead, my life has been like a revolving door with
19 everything that's happened to me.

20 'When I went home at weekends from Ovenstone, the
21 local kids would see me getting off the yellow minibus.
22 They wouldn't want to hang out with me and they would
23 make faces as I was being driven away on a Sunday. It
24 made me feel lonely, isolated, not good enough. I felt
25 like a weirdo and a freak. I felt inferior to everyone

1 else and I could never do anything right.'

2 She talks about the memories that she has at
3 paragraph 107. She says that they come back to her in
4 waves:

5 'Sometimes when I'm in the house on my own, maybe
6 having a drink, I reflect back to it. It never goes
7 away.

8 'It's horrible because one minute I could be feeling
9 great and on top of the world and the next it comes
10 flooding back. I never take my guard down when I'm at
11 work or at college. When I walk through the college
12 doors in the morning, I shut off to everything. The
13 world that I have at home is a world away.

14 'My memories come back all the time though. I have
15 many flashbacks. I can still smell the medicated
16 shampoo, see the clothes that we wore, smell the boy
17 that beat me in my room and I can still see the
18 classroom. I can still feel what it was like staying
19 there, not knowing when you were next going to get
20 belted.

21 'My time at Ovenstone has contributed to all the
22 problems I have had throughout my life. I should never
23 have been in that school to begin with, but what was
24 going on in that school should never have been
25 happening.'

1 'Jill' says that she reported the abuse in 2005, but
2 the police were unable to take the case further. She
3 has however recently been in touch with other officers
4 to provide another statement.

5 'Jill' goes on to tell us the lessons to be learned
6 and her hopes for the Inquiry. She says at
7 paragraph 120:

8 'There needs to be better communication. It needs
9 to be mandatory for teachers to do courses in awareness
10 of autism and all of the Mental Health Act. Mental
11 health awareness needs to be highlighted a lot more
12 because everybody is different.'

13 At paragraph 125, she says:

14 'I understood that Ovenstone was a home for children
15 with naughty or challenging behaviour, although they
16 never told me that at the time. The way I saw it was
17 that the children weren't naughty. They were kids who
18 had probably seen a lot of bad things. They were kids
19 that needed some help and not labelled and put into some
20 school.

21 'Every child that has autism must be diagnosed at
22 the earliest possible age. It affects a child when
23 they're diagnosed too late.

24 'I want everyone to know what happened to children
25 in care and I want it to be made sure that it never

1 happens again. Every child must be listened to.

2 'People don't understand the pain. These people
3 have wrecked so many people's lives and many of them
4 will never face justice. What we can do is learn from
5 it and make sure it never happens again.

6 She says: 'I have no objection to my witness
7 statement being published as part of the evidence to the
8 Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness
9 statement are true.'

10 She has signed the statement and it's dated
11 18 October 2019.

12 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

13 MS MCMILLAN: I'm going to pass over to Ms Innes.

14 Thank you, my Lady.

15 'Oliver' (read)

16 MS INNES: My Lady, I'm going to read in the statement of
17 the witness who was scheduled to give oral evidence this
18 morning, so that's 'Oliver'.

19 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

20 MS INNES: His witness statement is at WIT-1-000000821.

21 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

22 MS INNES: This is a witness who remains anonymous and has
23 the pseudonym 'Oliver'.

24 Part of his statement was previously read in, in
25 relation to Geilsland on Day 439, 25 April 2024.

1 He was admitted to Ovenstone on [REDACTED] 1992. He
2 attended on a residential basis during the week,
3 returning home at weekends. He then moved to
4 Linwood Hall after the [REDACTED] in 1994 and
5 started there at the [REDACTED] 1994.

6 Again, he attended initially as a day pupil but in
7 about [REDACTED] 1994, he began attending on a residential
8 basis during the week. He remained there until
9 [REDACTED] 1997.

10 In his statement, he refers to the separation of his
11 parents. He moved between each of them. He wasn't
12 getting on well at school and he says his mum was
13 looking to have him placed in care as soon as possible.
14 His social worker, Helen Cameron, tried to help, but
15 ultimately she and his mum decided that he should be
16 placed in care.

17 So moving to page 2 of his statement at paragraph 5,
18 where he talks about his experiences at Ovenstone:

19 'I was about 8 years old when Helen Cameron moved me
20 from my mum's house to Ovenstone. I stayed there for
21 about three years until I was old enough to be going to
22 the high school.

23 'When I arrived, I saw that the main residential
24 building was very large. To the right of the main
25 building was a separate smaller building where the

1 school was. It was only boys that were in the home when
2 I stayed there. I am not certain about ages but they
3 were all of primary school age. I am also not sure how
4 many stayed in the home, but there was anywhere between
5 20 and 50.

6 'I can't remember who was in charge of the home, but
7 the staff were made up of both males and females. One
8 of the teachers at the school was Angela Munn, who was
9 from St Andrew's. Vivien Richardson was another member
10 of staff who looked after the residential side of the
11 home during the daytime.

12 'The routine during the day was that we were woken
13 by staff and after getting a wash we made our way to the
14 dining room for our breakfast. After finishing, we were
15 in the school until lunchtime where we were back to the
16 dining room for our meal. After school we had some free
17 time before our tea.

18 'I can't remember much about the food we had at the
19 home. The only thing I remember was that we all ate in
20 the dining room.

21 'I can remember one Saturday when I was on home
22 leave, Angela Munn, a teacher, picked me up at my house
23 along with her husband. They took me to watch
24 a football match at Ibrox. Despite being a Celtic
25 supporter, I still thought it was a nice thing for them

1 to do.

2 'There were between six and eight pupils in each
3 class, which were separated by age. I never really
4 enjoyed being in the classroom at the school.
5 I preferred to be outside in the park playing sports,
6 especially football. There were also bicycles
7 available, which I enjoyed. The school put us through
8 our cycling proficiency while we stayed there.

9 'I did not see any doctor or dentist when I was at
10 Ovenstone and cannot remember any reason for me to see
11 them.

12 'I think Helen Cameron, my social worker, visited me
13 at the school.

14 'When I stayed at Ovenstone I was allowed home at
15 the weekends. I would spend time with my mum, but she
16 was always glad when I was going back to the home on the
17 Sunday. I didn't see much of my dad as he was always
18 working. During home visits, I would also see my
19 brothers.

20 'There was a male member of staff who covered the
21 night shift at the home. I don't remember his name.
22 Quite regularly he would say that I was being disruptive
23 in the dormitory. I wasn't, but there were other boys
24 who were. He made me move to a separate room, where
25 I slept on my own.

1 'When I stayed at Ovenstone I was never physically
2 hit or abused by any of the staff.

3 'When I was at the age of 11, maybe 12, and due to
4 change to the high school, I was told that I would have
5 to leave Ovenstone. I was told the next place I would
6 be moved to was Linwood Hall in Leven. Linwood Hall is
7 near where I am staying now and on a daily basis it
8 brings back memories of all the bad days in there.
9 I have even tried walking around the building just to
10 see if that would help get rid of the memories, but it
11 never helped.

12 'I am sure it was during the summer holidays that
13 I was moved [between the schools].'

14 That's consistent with the records.

15 'I think I was taken there on the school bus.
16 I don't remember there being any induction when
17 I arrived.

18 '[I remember some of the staff, including
19 Charles Paterson]. Charles was one of the staff who was
20 good to me and did not seem to like how the others
21 treated the children. Sometimes if the staff had used
22 restraints on me or were angry with me, Charles would
23 take me outside for a cigarette or try and calm
24 everything down.

25 'I am not sure how many kids were in my dormitory

1 but the boys were kept separate from the girls.

2 'We would be woken by staff in the morning. As long
3 as I had not wet myself, I would get washed and into the
4 dining hall for breakfast. We were in the school for
5 around 9 o'clock and apart from lunch would be there
6 until finishing time, around 3.30. In the afternoon, we
7 would have some free time before tea. All were in bed
8 for around 9 o'clock.

9 'The food was not very good when I was at Linwood.
10 Some of the meals were served to us cold. It never
11 bothered the staff. There were times if the staff were
12 upset with me they would not allow me to have my meal
13 and would send me to my room.

14 'In the early days at the home the staff had access
15 to motorbikes and we would go riding them up in the old
16 Bings near Leven.

17 'Some of the leisure time the staff would take us
18 kids out for a while in the minibus. I could not go
19 because of my problem with wetting myself and was too
20 scared and embarrassed to sit with the other kids in the
21 minibus. I just had to stay back at the home.

22 'Even when I was playing football the older boys
23 would not mix with me. As we played, they were always
24 trying to trip me up.

25 'At Linwood, there were more classes than we had at

1 Ovenstone but the size of the class groups were the
2 same, between six and eight in each group. The classes
3 were a mix of boys and girls.

4 'There were no visits to the doctors or dentist.
5 I do not recall any treatment after the swimming pool
6 incident described later [on].

7 'We would be asked to clean up after ourselves but
8 there were no allocated chores.

9 'When I had weekend leave at Linwood, my mum did not
10 want me to come to the house and sometimes I would spend
11 time at my dad's. If I wasn't staying at Linwood,
12 I would be sent to a foster family for the weekend.
13 That would not be the same family but different people.
14 Later I would be sent to a place called Rimbleton.

15 'I did try to run away a lot, but I never went far
16 and would just hang around the local streets. Sometimes
17 I was so hungry I might have stolen some food from the
18 shops.

19 'At Linwood Hall, with all the abuse happening to
20 me, I suffered from bed wetting and sometimes I wet
21 myself during the day. I would change the sheets but
22 the staff would tell the other staff and the kids that
23 "Pishie" had wet the bed again. As if that wasn't
24 enough, they would throw the sheets down on the floor.

25 'On the many times this happened, the staff would

1 not allow me to go to the bathroom to get cleaned up and
2 insisted I go down to the dining hall for my breakfast.
3 I was obviously still smelling from having the wet bed
4 and nobody wanted to sit beside me.

5 'If I had wet myself during the day I would try to
6 get washed up. I never had many sets of clothes and
7 sometimes if the staff allowed me to get washed, I had
8 to put the same clothes back on. When I was being
9 restrained by the staff I could hear some of them
10 calling me "Pishie".

11 'I can remember sometimes that when I had wet myself
12 during the day, that the staff would make me stand
13 outside the building in my soiled clothes. I would have
14 to stand there while they dried. I was then made to
15 walk around the rest of the day in those clothes.

16 'There were times as I would be walking along the
17 corridor that some of the staff would stand to the side
18 right into the wall. They would be calling me "Stinkie"
19 as I walked past them.

20 'When I was about 13, maybe 14, Linwood Hall stopped
21 being a residential school and I would spend the nights
22 at Rimbleton House and back to Linwood in the morning.
23 At the weekends, I could not go home to my mum so again
24 spent my weekends at Rimbleton. The social work would
25 pay for a taxi to take me from Linwood to Rimbleton each

1 school day and pick me up the following morning.

2 'At Rimbleton House there was a member of staff
3 there, Dave Pipe. He used to work at Linwood but he had
4 left there as he was unhappy with the way some of the
5 staff treated the children. When he was at Rimbleton,
6 I always found that he was a good guy.

7 'After a couple of years, I had a change of heart
8 and found that I wanted to try and change a few things
9 and see if I could get through the weeks without getting
10 into trouble. That worked for me and when I was about
11 14, instead of going to Rimbleton House, I was able to
12 go and stay with my dad at weekends.

13 'We used to go to Leven swimming pool with [a staff
14 member from Linwood Hall]. [He would be] supervising
15 us. One of those days when we were in the changing
16 room, me and some of the other boys were playing about
17 and hitting each other with wet towels. [The staff
18 member] came over to us and started shouting and
19 swearing at us, telling us to get dressed. My pal who
20 I was mucking about with got dressed and left the
21 changing room. I was standing near to [the staff
22 member] and without any warning he stuck the head on me.
23 I was shaking as a result and not knowing what I had
24 done wrong for him to do that. He turned to me and said
25 "Never mind, son, just do as you're told the next time".

1 'Another of the sporting activities we did was
2 football and [he] was also the football coach. We were
3 playing against Melville House and I had taken a ball on
4 a run but lost it. The team were annoyed with me and
5 they started shouting at me. The next thing I was aware
6 of, [the staff member] had rugby tackled me and jumped
7 on my back. He was using some sort of restraint on me.
8 I know the difference between a legal restraint and what
9 he was doing. He was forcing my arms up my back. He
10 got me down on the ground and was pushing his knees into
11 my back. I was screaming in pain and throughout this he
12 seemed to be enjoying hurting me.

13 'When [he] jumped on me he was not aware that my
14 cousin was playing for Melville. He tried to help but
15 wasn't strong enough to take on [the staff member]. One
16 of the staff from Melville House grabbed [my cousin] and
17 took him away.'

18 He then refers to the SNR [REDACTED] of the home. He
19 says:

20 'I can't remember what he thought I had done wrong,
21 but one day he was trying to use a restraint on me. As
22 he did that he banged the back of my head off the floor.
23 I can recall other times again when he was trying to use
24 a restraint on me, he would have me on the floor lying
25 on my front and was pushing my head with his knee as

1 hard as he could into the floor. All these was not for
2 being violent or anything but for misbehaving, like most
3 children do as they grow up.

4 'Another time I was being restrained was by another
5 member of staff who told everyone I had tried to hit
6 him. I definitely had not tried to hit him or any other
7 staff.

8 '[There] was another member of staff who would
9 regularly use restraints on me.

10 'One of the days I was being restrained there were
11 three or four staff involved. I was being held face
12 down on the floor. Somebody was holding my head against
13 the floor, possibly with two others, one on each leg and
14 one was pushing a knee in my back.

15 'On an almost daily basis I was being restrained by
16 different members of staff but I was never aware of the
17 reason where they could justify restraining me and
18 pushing their knees into my back with their full weight.
19 A lot of them would say to me, "It's no wonder your mum
20 and dad don't want you".

21 'There was a female member of the staff at the home
22 who had long, brown hair. I don't remember her last
23 name, but she was only about 17 years of age and
24 a student. I found some of her behaviour to be
25 inappropriate in the way she would stroke my hair. One

1 of these times, when I was about 13, we were in one of
2 the upstairs rooms, away from the reception and staff
3 area, as she stroked my hair she leaned in and kissed
4 me. That was how she behaved with me but some of the
5 older boys would brag about having had sex with her. If
6 that was a guy doing those things everyone would be up
7 in arms about it. So how is it okay for a woman to do
8 it?

9 'I could not report any of the abuse as most, if not
10 all the staff, were involved in some way either
11 physically or mentally. I did try to tell
12 Helen Cameron, my social worker, but her attitude was
13 I was misbehaving and therefore deserved it.

14 'There was a police officer who stayed just over the
15 back of the home. I only remember his first name as
16 Mike. He is retired now but still stays there. He was
17 quite friendly with me and some of the other boys in the
18 home. Sometimes he would let me and some of the others
19 visit him in his house. One day when I went to see him,
20 I told him about how the staff were behaving against me.
21 He said there wasn't much he could do about it as it was
22 my word against theirs.

23 'I was 15 when I was told that I was to be moved
24 from Linwood. I am not sure if it was because I had
25 made the improvements or because there was not going to

1 be a place for me. I'm still not sure but not long
2 after I moved out, Linwood closed down. I was
3 transferred to Geilsland School in Beith.'

4 He then goes on to speak about his experiences at
5 Geilsland, which have already been read in in evidence.

6 So moving to page 14 and paragraph 69, he says
7 there:

8 'When Linwood Hall closed, they moved the unit and
9 some of the staff to a new place based in Rosyth. In
10 the last ten years I have seen [one of the staff
11 members] working there and can only presume that he is
12 still doing so, looking after other kids.'

13 Then moving on to page 15 and paragraph 77, where he
14 discusses impact. In this paragraph he says:

15 'My memory is really bad and has been for many
16 years. There are times I can't find my medication and
17 get into a bad sweat worrying about it. I blame this
18 for all the banging of my head by the staff at
19 Linwood Hall. All of that abuse had to have affected my
20 brain function.'

21 Moving on to page 16 and paragraph 83:

22 'Fife Council need to start some of the repair by
23 starting to apologise for the abusive staff they allowed
24 to be employed in the homes that they ran.

25 'I hope that by coming forward I can now move on

1 with my life and put a lot of the abuse behind me. It
2 has been good for me to come to the Inquiry and have
3 someone listen to me.

4 He says: 'I have no objection to my witness
5 statement being published as part of the evidence to the
6 Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness
7 statement are true.'

8 And 'Oliver' signed his statement on
9 28 September 2021.

10 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much, Ms Innes.

11 MS INNES: Now my Lady just in terms of what is anticipated,
12 my Lady.

13 We anticipate having an oral witness at 2 o'clock.

14 We have other read-ins available but, just for those who
15 are present, these will not relate to the Fife schools.

16 We'll be focusing on Monken Hadley and Woodlands.

17 LADY SMITH: Very well. Thank you.

18 I'll stop now for the break and sit again at about
19 11.45. Thank you.

20 (11.23 am)

21 (A short break)

22 (11.45 am)

23 LADY SMITH: Ms McMillan.

24 MS MCMILLAN: Yes, thank you, my Lady.

25 We're going to continue now with some further

1 read-ins.

2 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

3 'Peter' (read)

4 MS MCMILLAN: This read-in is in respect of 'Peter'.

5 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

6 MS MCMILLAN: The reference for 'Peter's' statement is

7 WIT.001.002.7258.

8 In 'Peter's' statement, he talks about the time that

9 he spent in Monken Hadley. He says that he attended

10 there around 1976 and the records that we have show that

11 he attended from [REDACTED] 1975 until [REDACTED] 1978.

12 LADY SMITH: So that's from about age 10 to 13?

13 MS MCMILLAN: Yes.

14 LADY SMITH: Yes.

15 MS MCMILLAN: 'Peter' was born in 1965.

16 At paragraphs 2 to 26 of his statement, he talks

17 about his life before he went into care. When he was

18 younger he had a poor standard of living in a tenement

19 with no hot water.

20 He lived with his parents and his older brother. He

21 fractured his skull at 18 months old, after which he

22 endured a lot of physical and emotional abuse by his

23 mother.

24 He started school in Mossvale in Paisley. He said

25 that, at that time, everything was new to him, including

1 fruit in other children's lunch boxes. He says he began
2 to steal things when he was young. He was taken to see
3 a child psychologist, when he was around 6 years old.

4 The family later moved to a house in Paisley where
5 the conditions were much better. However, 'Peter'
6 continued to steal.

7 He took an overdose of his mum's medication and
8 ended up in hospital. He spent around a week in
9 a psychiatric unit, before being moved to Cardross Park
10 Assessment Centre, where he then remained for about
11 a year.

12 'Peter' tells us that he moved from Cardross to
13 Bellfield for around one month. He then went to stay
14 with his uncle when he was around 10 or 11 until he was
15 placed in Monken Hadley.

16 He says at paragraph 80, on page 13:

17 'I don't recall how I left my uncle's home but
18 I went back to my mum's house in Paisley for a short
19 time before I was then placed in Monken Hadley, which
20 was in Newton Stewart. I was to be there for two years
21 from 1976 to 1977 or 1978.

22 'Monken Hadley was a boarding school and you went
23 home every 12 weeks. There was a junior, intermediate
24 and senior units. I started in the juniors and then
25 moved up to the intermediate. I never moved up to the

1 senior unit, though I did hang out with the senior boys
2 a lot. The school was all boys and we slept four to
3 a room.

4 'In general, it wasn't a bad place and I kept myself
5 busy playing a lot of football. [There was SNR
6 and I think SNR who] came from South Africa.
7 One of the other members of staff I recall was
8 [a houseparent] ...

9 , SNR stayed in a detached house which
10 was on the grounds, but separate from the school. [The
11 houseparent] stayed in the unit with the intermediate
12 group. SNR stayed in a flat with his wife, but
13 I don't recall if any of the other staff stayed on the
14 grounds.

15 'My first impressions when I arrived at
16 Monken Hadley were that I was terrified. When I went to
17 such places, my instinct was to ask myself, "How do I
18 protect myself here?" That particular place was run
19 like the army in the way that you were given various
20 clothes and allocated a locker.

21 'One of the things I recall about the place is it
22 had a full-size snooker table that had stags' heads
23 around it, which was terrifying when you saw it at
24 night.

25 'I don't remember how or when we got up, but we

1 would then get washed and dressed, put our stuff in the
2 laundry and then go for breakfast. We would go to
3 school until lunchtime then we'd go back to school for
4 the afternoon. After tea and at weekends we had a lot
5 of free time. I had a fairly free rein and could do
6 a lot of things unsupervised like play football.

7 'One routine we did have every week was that we had
8 to write a letter home saying what we had done that week
9 and what we had learned. I hated doing it, but it was
10 something we were forced to do whether we wanted to or
11 not. I can't remember if the letters were censored or
12 not.

13 'The food was stinking. I was always hungry and had
14 a tendency to get into trouble when I was in the dining
15 room because I would get into a fight if anybody tried
16 to steal my food. When that happened, I would get
17 hauled out and get six of the belt and would go hungry
18 that day.

19 'There were no chores other than some of the senior
20 boys had to do the dishes and help prepare the dining
21 room.

22 'We wore a school uniform with brown Doc Marten
23 shoes. These were given new to us, as well as grey
24 shirts and grey trousers. We were also given other
25 clothing for doing things like playing football.

1 'We did get educated in Monken Hadley and went to
2 school every day. The education was quite good and
3 I felt I actually learned things there. We all stayed
4 in the one class but we would get different teachers for
5 different subjects.

6 'There was a matron. I remember that I once
7 punctured my groin while climbing a tree and had to go
8 and see her. She had her own wee office with a bed.
9 I don't recall if she recorded any treatment she handed
10 out. I don't recall seeing any doctors or dentists.

11 'There were outings to nearby woods where we would
12 sometimes run to and play at the weekends but there were
13 no trips via public transport or anything like that.
14 The only time I would be on public transport was when
15 I was going home. I would get the bus to
16 Glasgow Airport, where my mum would pick me up.

17 'The only thing I recall having was a wee pocket
18 radio which I used to listen to Radio Luxembourg via
19 a wee earphone. I don't even recall having my own
20 toothbrush, toothpaste or soap. There was no real point
21 in having personal possessions as they would just be
22 stolen.

23 'I don't recall any of our birthdays being
24 celebrated and I would have been home for Christmas but
25 I don't recall that being celebrated. We also went home

1 at Easter and for the summer.

2 'I only ever received two visits from my parents.
3 I was ill in bed one time with earache when I saw this
4 man approaching me who I assumed was my dad. I said
5 I knew why he was there and it was to tell me that my
6 uncle had killed my aunt. I didn't know how I knew, but
7 I was right.

8 'The only other occasion I received a visit was when
9 my mum came with my aunt. However, this was not a visit
10 with a point to seeing me. My aunt's partner had a car
11 and they only came to see me as a way of getting out on
12 a trip in the car.

13 'Margaret Weir was a social worker based in Paisley
14 in Maxwelltown Street. She was a lovely person and
15 visited me from time to time but I wouldn't have
16 discussed any problems with her. You just didn't do
17 that.

18 'To me, any visits from Margaret was just a day out
19 for her. I don't mean that to sound disrespectful, but
20 that's just how it felt to me. As I say, she was a nice
21 lady and used to bring me sweets. She used to also see
22 other boys while she was visiting me. If there were
23 official visitors, like inspectors, I wouldn't have been
24 aware of it.

25 'I ran away a couple of times. One of those times

1 I ran away with [two other boys] and we broke into
2 a hotel, found a load of wine and had a party. We got
3 caught, were taken back to the school and were given six
4 of the belt by SNR .

5 , SNR room had three concrete stairs up to
6 his flat. After dinner, the three of us who had run
7 away had to kneel on these steps from after dinner until
8 bedtime every night from Monday to Friday. It was
9 agony. Although we could talk, we were all terrified
10 that SNR would come out of his room and catch
11 us.

12 'If that particular punishment happened to others,
13 then I wouldn't have known about it. The reason for
14 that was that that particular area was out of bounds to
15 us so none of the boys would have reason to be there.

16 'I was 12 when I was in Monken Hadley and still
17 wetting the bed. If you wet the bed, you had to take
18 your soiled sheets, put them in your pillowcase and take
19 them down to the laundry after you woke up. The laundry
20 was near the dining room so everybody could see that you
21 had wet the bed, which was embarrassing, but there was
22 no punishment for having done so.

23 '[The houseparent] stayed in the unit for the
24 intermediates. He was a houseparent not a teacher. He
25 was about 55 years old, wore a hat and always dressed as

1 a gentleman. One day I was playing football and there
2 weren't many boys about, so I tried to round some up.
3 I went to the unit for the intermediates.

4 '[The housemaster's] room was just as you entered
5 the unit. You then had to go down a few steps to get to
6 the shower unit. I went down there and when I did,
7 I saw him in the shower with a few of the boys. He
8 wasn't naked. He had his clothes on but the boys were
9 in the shower. The situation just didn't seem right.
10 I can't say what it was he was doing in there, but it
11 just didn't seem right.

12 'I left and went back to playing football but the
13 following day I went to see SNR. I told
14 him that I had seen [the houseparent] in the shower with
15 a few of the boys. He give me six of the belt and I was
16 moved out of the school three days later. This was
17 simply because I had told SNR what I had
18 seen.

19 'I was sent to Gryffe Children's Home and while
20 there, my social worker came to see me

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1 'There was another member of staff ... and there was
2 always talk amongst the boys that he was sexually
3 abusing some of the boys, though no names were ever
4 mentioned.

5 'At the time, wrestling was big on the TV and [this
6 member of staff] and [that houseparent] used to get us
7 boys to wrestle in our shorts. At the time, we thought
8 it was funny, but looking back, I realise it was wrong.

9 'As well as being given six of the belt for running
10 away and telling SNR [REDACTED] about [the
11 houseparent], I was also given six of the belt on
12 numerous other occasions. One occasion was for breaking
13 into the kitchen, which I only did because I was always
14 hungry. Another occasion was when I had a fight with
15 two brothers in the dining room. That started a riot
16 and I got six of the belt for that as well.

17 'While it was normally SNR [REDACTED] who would
18 give you the belt, in class SNR [REDACTED] would sometimes
19 belt you or you could get lines. He also had a habit of
20 kicking any boys in the backside as he passed them for
21 no reason at all.

22 'There was an occasion when me and a few others were
23 mucking about in the laundry. I fell in one of the big
24 laundry baskets and one of the boys tied the leather
25 straps locking me in. That traumatises me to this day.

1 'We used to go swimming in the River Cree, which had
2 a deep pool in it. During winter one time there was
3 a thin layer of ice over it and one of the other boys
4 offered me a tenner to swim across it. I stripped down
5 to my underwear and did it. It was freezing and,
6 looking back, I realise I could have died. I don't
7 recall if any members of staff were there.

8 'As I said earlier, it was three days after
9 I reported [the houseparent] that I was moved out of
10 Monken Hadley. My social worker came to collect me and
11 took me to Gryffe Children's Home, which was in
12 Bridge of Weir. It was 1977 or 1978.'

13 'Peter' then talks about his experience at
14 Gryffe Children's Home. He then ended up in an approved
15 school in Beith in 1979. 'Peter' then goes on to talk
16 about his life after care.

17 He moved in with his brother and began working in
18 a hotel. He had various other jobs before he ran away
19 to Bournemouth with his girlfriend, to whom he had
20 a baby with.

21 After a period of time, he ended up in Carlisle. He
22 met his wife and then moved back to Scotland. 'Peter'
23 went on to have more children and tells us that it was
24 important for him to break the child in care cycle and
25 not allow his own children to go into care.

1 'Peter' worked as a social worker with juvenile
2 offenders. He thereafter worked in a distillery and as
3 a bus driver. More recently, he has been diagnosed with
4 ME and chronic fatigue and has been unable to work
5 since.

6 'Peter' talks about the impact of his time in care
7 and the lessons learned.

8 On page 37, starting at paragraph 231, he says:

9 'Being in the care system and what happened there
10 have led me to now having mental health problems and
11 getting panic attacks. I have claustrophobia and
12 depression and have really bad nightmares and anxiety.
13 I can't fly and can't get on a plane because of my
14 claustrophobia. I've been abroad but only in a boat.
15 I would love to go to Canada but I just can't go on
16 a plane.'

17 Moving on to paragraph 235, he says:

18 'One of the frequent things I think this Inquiry
19 should be looking at is that no person in care should
20 share a room with another person. When I worked in
21 Geilsland, it was designed that people had a lot of
22 privacy, which was good.

23 'People who were abused as children should be
24 listened to and believed. People working with children
25 should be vetted and those who went through the system

1 should be asked for their opinion and for their input as
2 they understand the issues.'

3 'Peter' goes on in paragraph 238:

4 'I know a lot of things have changed and children
5 now have more rights and that the people who I've worked
6 with in Geilsland when I was there worked under
7 different criteria. I believe the Inquiry may lead to
8 people being compensated but many victims have died. If
9 I'm due anything and I die before anything happens, then
10 I have a will and I would like my children to get it.

11 He says: 'I have no objection to my witness
12 statement being published as part of the evidence to the
13 Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness
14 statement are true.'

15 And he has signed his statement and it is dated
16 22 July 2019.

17 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

18 MS MCMILLAN: My Lady, there is a further read-in. This is
19 the read-in for 'Stuart'.

20 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

21 'Stuart' (read)

22 MS MCMILLAN: The reference for 'Stuart's' statement is
23 WIT.001.001.4952.

24 Parts of 'Stuart's' evidence were previously read
25 in. It was on Day 489, which was 31 October 2024.

1 Today, we'll focus on the elements of 'Stuart's'
2 statement where he discusses Monken Hadley.

3 'Stuart' says in his statement that he was placed
4 there just before his 12th birthday and left about
5 a year-and-a-half later. Records show that he was
6 placed in Monken Hadley from [REDACTED] 1977 until
7 [REDACTED] 1978. So he was there for just about
8 a year-and-a-half.

9 'Stuart' was born in 1965. At paragraphs 2 to 7, he
10 talks about his life before care. He stayed with his
11 mum, dad and two younger sisters. He first went into
12 care when he was two years old for one day at
13 Aberdeen Children's Shelter. He witnessed domestic
14 abuse in the family home committed by his father.

15 He goes on to say that his dad was at sea as
16 a fisherman and he hardly saw his mum. As a result, he
17 cooked and looked after his sisters.

18 At the age of 8, he and his sisters were placed in
19 care.

20 'Stuart' goes on in his statement to talk about the
21 experience he had at Aberdeen Children's Shelter Secondary Insti
22 Secondary Institutions - to be published later
23 [REDACTED]

24 His mum then got a house and his sisters got out of
25 care. He, however, did not and, at the age of 9, he was

1 moved to Brimmond Assessment Centre. He was then
2 transferred to Monken Hadley before his 12th birthday.

3 At page 20, he goes on to tell us what his life was
4 like when he was within Monken Hadley. He says:

5 'I was taken to Monken Hadley a month before my 12th
6 birthday. It was an old Victorian mansion in
7 Newton Stewart. There were well over 100 boys in there
8 from age 6 upward. There were three different
9 groups: juniors, intermediates and seniors. I was
10 initially in the intermediates but I got put into the
11 senior group after a day.

12 'Each group had a different floor of the mansion.
13 It was dark, dingy and smelly. There were stuffed
14 animals all over the walls, stags' heads and eels.
15 I don't think there were that many staff but I was
16 terrified of them.

17 'A social worker and [a member of staff from
18 Brimmond] drove me down. [The staff member] told me on
19 the journey I had better not step out of line and there
20 were boys waiting for me. He told me I was in for
21 a shock. I was met by [REDACTED]. He was
22 wearing a mortar board and cloak and was holding a cane.

23 'The senior floor was run by a boy from Edinburgh.
24 He was 15 years old, going on 16. They put me in with
25 him because they thought I was a handful. Me and him

1 hit it off straightaway because of boxing. I was the
2 only one who would go into a ring with him and give him
3 as good as he gave me. I was in a dorm with [him] and
4 another couple of boys. There were between four and six
5 of us to a room.

6 'You were woken up by an alarm bell. There was no
7 rush to get to breakfast because you hardly got fed.
8 Bedtime was fairly relaxed because we were seniors. We
9 would go to bed around ten.

10 'The food was terrible. You hardly got anything.
11 [A member of staff in charge of the intermediates] used
12 to flick his cigar ash into the soup and stir it.
13 I kicked off once with him. I shouldn't have done it
14 because I paid for it again. He flicked ash in the
15 porridge and I said, "What are you doing?" He said,
16 "Move on boy, move on". It was porridge every day. You
17 never got milk with it, just lumpy, salty porridge. You
18 got one slice of bread with margarine on it.

19 'On a Sunday, you'd get a slice of toast with
20 margarine and a cup of tea. At dinner time you'd get
21 soup and a slice of bread. At night time you'd get
22 mince and tatties but you'd be finished it in two
23 seconds. There was very little. You had to sit with
24 your arms folded and look straight ahead. When the
25 governor said, "Eat", you could eat, but you weren't

1 allowed to talk.

2 'I didn't get any schooling there at all. After
3 breakfast, I would go to work. We did pottery. I quite
4 liked it. I learned how to work a kiln. I would make
5 bowls and vases and they used to sell them. I ended up
6 being in charge of the pottery. I didn't kick off that
7 much there because I knew the reprisal would be severe.

8 'Once a year you'd get to go home. I didn't want to
9 go home to my mum so I'd stay in the children's home in
10 Aberdeen. I'd stay there for the full six weeks of
11 summer holidays. I would go to Broomhill Children's
12 Home.

13 'I was in an approved school. The only way to get
14 by was to do the sports that the housemaster approved of
15 and that was boxing. I took to boxing like a duck to
16 water. All my uncles were army and SAS personnel and
17 I wanted to go into the army. Because of this, they
18 liked me and also because I was one of the best boxers.
19 We used to fight other approved schools and guys from
20 jail. I had 54 fights and I wasn't beaten once. I was
21 good. But I trained really hard. The way I looked at
22 it was that got the staff off my back.

23 'One of the members of staff was ex-SAS. He was all
24 right. He took a liking to me and [my roommate] because
25 we wanted to join the army. He said, "I'm going to make

1 you the best soldiers". Some of the things that he did
2 wouldn't be acceptable in this day and age. He used to
3 have me out at six in the morning doing 50 press-ups.
4 We'd do sit-ups and running. I'd go for 20-mile runs
5 every weekend up the hills. It was brilliant. Me and
6 [my roommate] used to go to his apartment. He would
7 speak to us about his army days. We'd look at all his
8 trophies.

9 'There was a lot of leisure time. I'd do archery,
10 shooting, canoeing, rambling in the hills, running and
11 the gym. I liked the leisure time.

12 'Christmas was just a normal day.

13 'I had one visit whilst I was there. Dad was trying
14 to reconcile with mum and they came down. Me and mum
15 didn't speak because I blamed her for splitting up the
16 family. I wasn't worried about myself because I could
17 handle it. But I blamed her for her part.

18 'I never saw a doctor at Monken Hadley.

19 'The second day I was there, I was in the showers.
20 [There was a staff member] who was in charge of the
21 intermediates. He was like a gangster with big
22 eyebrows. He was wearing a tweed suit, waistcoat and
23 one of those old-fashioned watches on a gold chain. He
24 tried to feel some of the boys' privates. I kicked off.
25 My two best mates were in the shower. It felt

1 uncomfortable because he was watching us. I told him to
2 fuck off. The two ... brothers got stuck into him.
3 They were the same age as me. There was a carry-on with
4 members of staff and next thing I knew I was put
5 upstairs with the seniors.

6 'The only time I was apprehensive was in the shower.
7 I only had a shower once a month. I tried to wash in
8 the bedroom sink. So much happened in the showers you
9 didn't want to go there. The showers for everybody was
10 at the intermediate level. I would go with [my
11 roommate] and the ... brothers. Two of us would shower
12 and two of us would keep watch ready to fight. We would
13 try and have a shower when [that staff member] was out.

14 'On day four, I got taken to SNR [REDACTED] room
15 for an introduction. I didn't get it on my first day
16 because I was late coming down from Aberdeen. I was
17 standing there with my hands in my pockets. I got told
18 to stand up straight. I didn't. I said something rude.
19 I shouldn't have done it. There were two members of
20 staff behind me and SNR [REDACTED] was standing there
21 with his cloak, his hat and his cane. He said, "We
22 don't take no shit here. If you step out of line we'll
23 fucking kill you". I thought it was funny and I started
24 laughing. The next thing I knew somebody dug into my
25 spine and then somebody hit me on the other side. They

1 all had canes and they all battered me with the canes.

2 'I got dragged out by the hair and left in the
3 corridor with all the stuffed animals. If you look at
4 something long enough, you think it's moving. I'd never
5 seen stuffed animals before and I thought the stag's
6 head was moving. I was left there the whole night. My
7 body was so broken. I couldn't move so I had to lie
8 there the whole night. It was dark. That was the only
9 thing that got to me. There was no light at all.
10 I couldn't move for days after that. I never stepped
11 out of line again.

12 'The guys that ran it were ex-special forces. It
13 wasn't so bad there, it was just the brutality. You
14 knew what to do. If you stepped out of line, you'd be
15 hospitalised. For example, at breakfast you sat and you
16 looked straight. You never spoke during meals. If you
17 stepped out of line, the staff would take you into the
18 middle of the floor and leave you in a pool of blood
19 just for unfolding your arms.

20 'I was there about a year-and-a-half. It was simple
21 enough. It was good for me there. It was quite relaxed
22 for me, providing I stuck by the rules. I was getting
23 closer to being 16. I wanted to realise my dream and
24 join the army. My dad kept on complaining that I was
25 put in Monken Hadley as a punishment. They finally

1 relented because he said my behaviour was much better.'

2 After his time in Monken Hadley, 'Stuart' then tells
3 us he was moved to Craigielea Children's Home and
4 thereafter spent time in Oakbank Residential School.

5 He goes on to talk about his life after care. He
6 says that his head was really messed up and he didn't
7 want to stay with his parents. He did try to join the
8 army, but he failed the written assessment.

9 'Stuart' ended up in trouble and ultimately spent
10 time in prison. He was eventually employed as
11 a fisherman and after a period of around 12 years, he
12 bought his own boat and employed his father on the boat.

13 He gave this up when the government quotas were
14 introduced and he's now started his own business.

15 At paragraph 136, he tells us that he has been
16 diagnosed with ADHD and obsessive compulsive disorder.
17 The Inquiry has previously heard the impact that his
18 time in care had and the lessons that can be learned:

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 He has signed his statement and it is dated
24 6 October 2017.

25 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

1 MS MCMILLAN: Thank you, my Lady. I'll now hand over to
2 Ms Innes.
3 LADY SMITH: Thank you.
4 'Josh' (read)
5 MS INNES: Thanks, my Lady.
6 The next read-in will be for the applicant with the
7 pseudonym 'Josh'.
8 LADY SMITH: Thank you.
9 MS INNES: Whose statement is at WIT.001.002.8617.
10 'Josh' was born in 1969. In his statement he says
11 that he went to Monken Hadley when he was around 7 years
12 old and was there for about two years. We have been
13 unable to obtain any records in respect of 'Josh'.
14 He says that in his life before care, he was born in
15 Sunderland. His parents moved back to Kilmarnock and he
16 stayed there. As a child, he was in and out of hospital
17 because he had a disease that affected bone growth.
18 He initially went to the local primary school in
19 Kilmarnock but says that he was expelled after taking
20 some revenge on bullies there. It was then decided that
21 he would go to Monken Hadley.
22 He talks about his experience there from paragraph 5
23 of his statement on page 2:
24 'The day I was to be moved, my mum told me that
25 I was to go with a lady who arrived at the house. I did

1 not want to go, but my mum gave me a pound and she told
2 me I would be taken to the shops. When I got into the
3 car, there were two social workers and they transported
4 me to Monken Hadley. I don't know their names and had
5 no more involvement with them. When I looked back,
6 I could see mum was crying at the door. My dad was in
7 Iraq, driving the long distance lorry. He was away for
8 months at a time.

9 'On the way to the school, we picked up another boy.
10 I can't remember his name. He was going to the same
11 home. We stopped off at a garage before the school so
12 we could get some sweets.

13 'When I first arrived at the home, I saw it was like
14 a mansion at the front with a large tower to the rear.
15 As you entered the building through the main entrance,
16 there was a snooker table at the front. There was
17 a large hall to the side of the entrance and in the
18 centre was a staircase leading upstairs. My bedroom was
19 up the stairs to the left. In my room there was a set
20 of stairs at the far end leading down to another room.
21 That other room was later used as our classroom. The
22 classroom led through another door to yet another room.
23 This seemed to be the design of the whole building,
24 where one room was always leading off to another. My
25 room had six sets of bunk beds, maybe as many as eight.

1 It was all boys there. Again, I'm not sure of the names
2 of the other people there.

3 'We were separated into age groups. I think there
4 were about ten of us in the junior section of the house,
5 a bit more in the intermediate age group and some more
6 in the seniors group. I'm not sure of the exact number.
7 I was the youngest at the school, being about 7, and the
8 oldest would have been about 15 or 16. I can't remember
9 what the ages were for each of the groups, but if
10 I guessed I would say that the juniors were all
11 primary school age, intermediate 12 to 13 and the
12 seniors were 14 upwards.

13 'When I arrived at the school, one of the female
14 members of staff stripped off all my clothes. I did not
15 want to take my clothes off in the front of strangers
16 but after she gave me a thump in the head with her
17 knuckles, that made me strip. I remember being naked
18 and I was trying to hide myself under the couch in the
19 living room. She told me she was leaving me for a short
20 time and that I was to put the clothes on that she had
21 left.

22 '[This member of staff] was in charge of our rooms.
23 She was in her 40s and had grey hair and wore glasses.
24 She had a junior member of staff that helped her and
25 stayed at the home as well. Her name was Miss Shark but

1 she changed it when she married. I don't remember her
2 married name. She was a lot younger than [the other
3 woman].

4 'It seemed that it was always dark when we got up in
5 the morning so I presume it was really early. We would
6 make our beds, get washed, dressed and then go down the
7 stairs for breakfast. I think there were two bathrooms
8 for our rooms, one we were allowed to use and the other
9 was for staff. In our bathroom there was a toilet,
10 a bath and one sink. In the mornings it was just a case
11 of dampening your hair and washing your hands, just
12 enough to show that you had washed.

13 'For our breakfast there was bread and a pot of jam.
14 The only problem was that I was the youngest and at the
15 far end of the table. Nearly every day, by the time the
16 jar of jam reached me, it was empty. It was much the
17 same with the bread. By the time it got to me, I was
18 left with crumbs. The only thing I was left to eat was
19 a small bowl of porridge. This happened quite often.
20 I used to tell this story to mum when I got home and she
21 would laugh at it. I was always starving when I stayed
22 at the school.

23 'If I wanted any sauce with evening meals, I was
24 told I would have to buy my own. I don't know how they
25 expected a 7 year-old to be able to do that. There was

1 never any issue if you did not eat food, because you
2 were always so hungry you ate everything. Anybody that
3 was slow at eating would find that the older boys would
4 help clear their plate.

5 'There was a system of sorts in place for any
6 leftovers in the pots. Every second day the juniors
7 would be allowed to empty the pots and the days in
8 between the seniors and the intermediates would do it.
9 There was a dinner lady who cooked and served you the
10 meals. You went up to the counter with your plate or
11 bowl. That was how I was guaranteed some porridge in
12 the mornings.

13 'Bath night was once a week on Sunday. There was
14 always two of us at a time having one bath. We were
15 usually supervised by one of the female members of
16 staff. I am not sure if the bathwater was changed when
17 the next set of boys were due in the bath.

18 'I was given different sets of clothes to wear. We
19 were issued two sets of clothes for during the day, one
20 was a good set of clothes, like a uniform, and this was
21 what we had to wear for school and if going to church on
22 Sundays. The other set was an old set of clothes and
23 this was to be worn when we came home from school or if
24 we were in the home during the day at the weekends and
25 night time. We were also given a set of pyjamas. The

1 juniors wore shorts and the intermediates and seniors
2 were issued with long trousers. All our clothes had
3 tags with our names on them. It was the same for our
4 shoes.

5 'There was a pocket money system in place. You
6 started at 50 pence, then 35 and lower amounts. You
7 were graded on your behaviour each week and if you were
8 good, you got the full 50 pence. If you misbehaved
9 during the week, you got less. If you were persistently
10 getting into bother, it was even less. This impacted on
11 swimming time at the weekend or the cinema. If you
12 misbehaved during the week, you did not have enough
13 pocket money to go to those activities. I think the
14 only time I was given full pocket money was the week
15 I was lying ill in bed.

16 'When you got to the stage when there was no pocket
17 money left, the only punishment in [the female member of
18 staff's] eyes was a slap on the back of the head or she
19 would use her knuckles on the top of your head.

20 'There was no actual play area within the grounds
21 for us to play any football or the like. One time one
22 of the boys got a rope from the builders next door. We
23 put that over a branch on one of the trees and made
24 a rope swing out of it. There was nothing else in the
25 grounds for us to play on.

1 'Just before I left there, was a new male member of
2 staff. I can't remember his name. I'm not sure if he
3 was in charge of the seniors or not. He built a small
4 fort for us out of the breeze block and wood. Some of
5 the older boys did not like his fort and used the wood
6 to make a treehouse. I remember one time climbing up
7 inside, but when I got to the top, I was really scared.
8 This new teacher helped me to climb down. He squeezed
9 my shoulders to get me to loosen my grip before he could
10 get me down again. The other boys were standing below
11 and trying to pull me down by my feet. I was more
12 scared of the fall than what he was doing to me to get
13 me to release my grip.

14 'Miss Shark was the person who took us for lessons
15 when I was at Monken Hadley. She only taught the pupils
16 that were in my room. The standard of education was
17 terrible. I was always treated as being stupid. It was
18 not until after I left there and someone took time to
19 help me that I was diagnosed with dyslexia. The first
20 place that we used as a classroom was a hut in the
21 grounds. Later, the room which was down the stairs from
22 my bedroom was changed to our classroom. I only
23 remember the TV being a big part of my lessons in
24 school. There were some papers we used to draw on.
25 I think that was all we did when we were in class.

1 'If we misbehaved, some of our pocket money was
2 docked. If that did not work, we were made to stay
3 behind or sent to bed early. In those days, we did not
4 have television in the room or anything else to
5 entertain us. If you were sent to bed early, it was
6 a really bad punishment. I don't remember Miss Shark
7 physically hitting us if we misbehaved.

8 'I did have to go to the dentist when I was at
9 Monken Hadley. It was near the school and only five
10 minutes' walk away. I was having a lot of my teeth
11 taken out and was given gas to knock me out. I was
12 never told the reason for having so many teeth taken out
13 and I found it very traumatising. The new male teacher
14 had to carry me home because I had been knocked out.
15 When I woke up I was covered in bruises on my arms and
16 torso. I think it must have been from him having to
17 carry me home. He told me afterwards that every so
18 often he would be putting me on the ground for respite
19 and then lifting me up again.

20 'There was one time I saw the doctor. I had a lot
21 of spots on my body and to begin with they thought it
22 might have been meningitis or scarlet fever. There were
23 a couple of other boys who had spots as well. The
24 doctor came to see us at home. After an examination, he
25 left us in the room but said he would be back that

1 night. When he returned he had some toys for us. It
2 was also strange because the staff brought us food to
3 the room. The doctor must have said something about us
4 being kept in the room all day without any stimulation
5 and that we would be hungry. I haven't been able to get
6 my records so I don't know his name.

7 'The religious instruction was that we would pray at
8 the side of our bed before going to sleep. [The female
9 member of staff] would check we said the words
10 correctly. We would all have to attend Sunday school.
11 There were lots of times that we were at church and the
12 other mothers would be saying to their kids that they
13 had to behave or this or that could happen to them,
14 pointing at us.

15 'We did have some chores to do. It would involve
16 cleaning our room, the bathroom and sometimes we would
17 polish the shoes. They split those chores among each of
18 the boys in our room. One week I did the shoes, another
19 week the toilet, and another the bedroom. The female
20 staff member would check the chores were done properly.
21 If we did not do it right, we would be given a clout
22 over the head from her.

23 'I'm not certain but I think I was sent home at
24 Christmas so there was no real celebration at the
25 school. If we were at the Christmas service at the

1 church, there were some presents for us that were
2 donated. I know I did have birthdays when I stayed
3 there, but I cannot remember any celebration.

4 'I must have been in the home during Easter as we
5 were all asked to make Easter cards to be sent to our
6 parents.

7 'We were always having to write letters home. This
8 was about once a week and we were helped by staff to
9 write these letters. We never included in the letters
10 any information about the staff hitting us. We just saw
11 that as normal at the time. I did get postcards from my
12 dad. He would send me a card from almost every country
13 he was in. A lot of them were pictures of the hotel he
14 was in and he would circle the room he had stayed in.

15 'My dad came home from one of his trips abroad and
16 visited me at the school. During this visit he gave me
17 a watch he had brought from Turkey or somewhere like
18 that. It was a blue-faced watch. It was one of the
19 smartest things I ever saw. As soon as I was back in
20 the home, the male teacher whose name I don't remember
21 took it off me. He told me it was for safekeeping.
22 A couple of weeks later in the school I heard some
23 jingling on the floor. When I looked down I saw it was
24 pieces of a watch. That teacher picked them up and put
25 them all back together. I recognised it as my watch and

1 asked him if I could have it back. He told me I would
2 get it back when I left but that never happened and
3 I never saw it again. Everybody in the school knew it
4 was my watch as I was telling them how I got it. I told
5 my mum and dad when I went home but it was not taken any
6 further. It was difficult to prove anyone had stolen it
7 and that I never lost it.

8 'I remember another visit from dad and he was
9 waiting in my room for me. As we were talking, I told
10 him one of the things I was getting into trouble for was
11 not folding my clothes properly. He showed me how to
12 stretch the clothes out using the seams and fold them.
13 I don't remember my mum ever coming to visit me.

14 'I know one of the times dad wanted to come and
15 visit, the staff told him he couldn't see me. I don't
16 know if it was because of something I was doing wrong
17 that week. Whatever the reason, dad did not accept it
18 and demanded to see me when he arrived.

19 'I did get home for the summer holidays. I remember
20 when I was home that I never wanted to go back to
21 Monken Hadley but I was told that I did not have any
22 choice.

23 'The only personal item I ever had was a fire truck.
24 I was allowed a small drawer in a unit in the hallway to
25 store it. Others who had more items with them were

1 given more space to store their things.

2 'If we ran away from the home I would be sent to the
3 rector's office. I don't know his name. If we were
4 sent there, we knew it was to get the belt. Everybody
5 who was to receive the belt would queue outside his door
6 until it was their turn. It was not just for running
7 away we got belt. It could be for fighting or if
8 someone stole anything. I would usually get less
9 strokes as I was younger. It would usually amount to
10 a couple on each hand. The belt was the usual school
11 belt, not his trouser belt.

12 'I'm not sure how many times I tried to run away but
13 one time there were four of us and we went to the swing
14 park. There was always a motorbike parked there
15 whenever we had gone previously and we all wanted a shot
16 on that. The plan was that one of the other three would
17 take it and I was to sit on the handlebars. We never
18 got the bike.

19 'Any time I tried to get away it was always with
20 other boys, never on my own. It was always during the
21 day, never at night. I can't remember if the dorm was
22 locked at night, which may have stopped us running away.
23 I never got far away from the home and never tried to
24 get home. It was too far away.

25 'I did not see the rector using anything else to

1 punish us with. I'm not sure if he kept some sort of
2 record of punishments but there must have been
3 something, because he was able to read out at assembly
4 who was having some of their pocket money docked.
5 Assembly was held once a week but I can't remember which
6 day it was.

7 'When I stayed at Monken Hadley, I sometimes wet the
8 bed. If [the female staff member] saw that we had wet
9 the bed she would get really angry. It wasn't just me
10 she would shout at. She would shout at everybody in the
11 room. She would take her mood out on everyone in the
12 room. She would do this by making extra checks to see
13 whether the beds had been made properly, stopping anyone
14 playing outside or stopping anyone playing with any
15 toys. Just generally being in a bad mood with
16 everybody.

17 'Sometimes the other boys would waken early and
18 check if I had wet the bed. When they discovered the
19 wet bed, they would help me take the sheet off the bed
20 and put it over the radiator to try and dry it before
21 she came in. They would help me get the sheet back on
22 the bed and hope that when she checked it, it was dry
23 enough for her to miss it. This only lasted for a few
24 days when I first arrived. She stopped me having
25 anything to drink before I went to bed to stop it.

1 'There was a new boy who came to stay in our room.
2 I think he may have been deaf from the way he spoke. He
3 was about 11 years old but he never really fitted in
4 with us. He was scared when the lights went out at
5 night and he would make some strange noises. [The
6 female staff member] would come into the room and she
7 would shout at us all, unaware who was making the noise.
8 Because she was shouting at all, we would pick on him.
9 We would go over to him and nip him. We knew that if we
10 kept doing this, he would keep screaming. We continued
11 with the nipping of his skin and [the staff member] kept
12 coming through to see what was causing the commotion.
13 '[She] and some other male members of staff, I don't
14 know their names, opened the room, which could be
15 accessed from the set of stairs to our room and was
16 later used as our classroom, and moved a bed in there
17 and transferred the boy there. They locked the door to
18 the room and left it in the dark. The screaming then
19 went on and on throughout the night. It was getting
20 later into the morning and other staff went to the room.
21 We could hear from the noises that he was being hit by
22 the staff. We could only hear, so I am not sure if they
23 were using their hands to hit him or if anything else
24 was used. He was fighting with everyone to try to get
25 out of the room. Because of his speech problem, we

1 could not make out what was being said by him.

2 'The staff did not come back through to our room.
3 They must have left by the other door in the room. I am
4 not sure what happened to the boy because when we went
5 to the school there was no sign of him and we never saw
6 him again in the home. I still regret what we did as
7 boys and if I ever saw this boy again, I would like to
8 make my apologies to him. Maybe by me coming forward to
9 the Inquiry this may corroborate some of his evidence.
10 We were never spoken to by any of the staff about what
11 happened that night. I felt guilty about what we did
12 and I hope that if a deaf boy comes forward, what I have
13 said will help.

14 'I remember one time I was on the swings in the park
15 and some of the other boys were pushing me higher and
16 higher. I was getting more scared as I went higher and
17 when I was coming down near the ground, I put my feet
18 down to drag the speed down. That was how I scraped the
19 shoes I was wearing. [The female staff member] saw the
20 state of my shoes and hit me by punching me on the head
21 with her knuckles.

22 'Later in my time at the home there were times when
23 the senior boys would be in the toilets areas and would
24 masturbate there. On some occasions the younger boys
25 were made to watch and on some occasions some were made

1 to touch the older boys' penis. I don't know any of the
2 names of those involved. I was told that if anyone
3 complained, the senior boy would give you a battering
4 about the head and body, all to make sure you kept
5 quiet. It didn't happen to me.

6 'Some of the other boys warned us not to use that
7 toilet because of what was happening. There was one
8 time I wanted some toilet paper. It was because the
9 toilet paper at the time was the old style which was
10 very hard and similar to tracing paper. When I went to
11 the toilet, there was one boy who would stand guard at
12 the door to make sure no one was disturbed. I was made
13 to join in and touch an older boy's penis. I knew it
14 was bad but I was too scared to say anything. I don't
15 know the names of any of the boys involved.

16 'I can't remember what the reasons were, but there
17 was a time when I was hit by one of the older boys.
18 I don't remember his name. He pushed me really hard and
19 I hit the side of my face on one of the metal vents
20 attached to the outside of the building. I got a really
21 big cut which needed stitches and left me with a scar.
22 I can't remember if I was treated at home or at the
23 hospital. The staff just thought I fell but no one
24 asked any more about it. Some of the older boys took
25 revenge on him for hitting a young boy.

1 'There was no notice about me leaving, but someone,
2 and it may have been my dad, told me that I was getting
3 out of Monken Hadley. But after nearly two years there,
4 it was because of good behaviour. I remember the
5 journey home was with the same taxi driver who dropped
6 me off there. There was no teacher or social worker,
7 just the taxi driver. He gave me some pens and
8 a colouring book for the journey.'

9 'Josh' then tells us that he attended
10 Onthank Primary School before the family moved to
11 Bellahouston. He has worked for a transport company and
12 a seafood company before training as a chef. He tells
13 us that he is married and has six children.

14 Moving to page 13 and paragraph 53:

15 'I always felt that my education and my dyslexia
16 held me back from getting any better jobs. I never got
17 the start that I believe would have helped me progress
18 to a better or different life. I never reported any of
19 the abuse to any authority as I never thought anyone
20 would believe what happened to me.'

21 Over the page on page 14 at paragraph 56:

22 'I think that there have already been changes made
23 since I was in care. There has been the introduction of
24 Childline by Esther Rantzen. There is also the modern
25 use of CCTV cameras, which must be helping to stop some

1 of the abuse.

2 'One of the main reasons I came forward to the
3 Inquiry was to get off my chest what happened to the
4 deaf boy who stayed with us.

5 'I think the rector who was in charge of
6 Monken Hadley was also in charge of another home in
7 England. I believe he went on to be part of
8 a Commons Select Committee.

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 'Josh' signed his statement on 19 September 2019.

14 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

15 'John' (read)

16 MS INNES: Now I'm going to read another statement in of
17 an applicant with the pseudonym 'John'.

18 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

19 MS INNES: This statement is at WIT-1-000000833.

20 'John' was born in 1969. He tells us in his
21 statement that he went to Monken Hadley when he was
22 13 years old and remained there until he was 14. So
23 around 1982 to 1983.

24 'John' talks in his statement about his life before
25 going to Monken Hadley. His birth mother fell pregnant

1 when she was young and 'John' was put up for adoption.
2 He was adopted when he was 18 months old and his
3 adoptive parents lived in Clydebank in Glasgow. They
4 had a son who was five years older than 'John' and had
5 adopted another boy who was two years older than him.

6 He was close to his adoptive father but his adoptive
7 mother, he says, was a controlling woman. At the age of
8 3, 'John' tells us that he was sexually assaulted by
9 a family member.

10 He was initially educated at a primary school in
11 Clydebank and then at St Columbus School. He says he
12 was the victim of bullying until he began to stand up
13 for himself. His relationship with his adoptive mother
14 broke down and she told him that he had been expelled
15 from the school. He says that the decision was then
16 made to send him to Monken Hadley when he was 13.

17 Reading from page 3 of his statement and
18 paragraph 8:

19 'I travelled with Mark Holmes and [my adoptive
20 mother] for an initial visit to Monken Hadley. My
21 initial feelings were that the place was grey and
22 horrible. It used to be a hunting lodge and I was
23 greeted by a half Rottweiler dog that bounded up to me.
24 I met [a housemother] and SNR. [The
25 housemother] had steel grey curly hair and cold black

1 eyes and she would later become the matron. I spent
2 a couple of hours at the property and the house was
3 musty with old furniture and it felt like an old museum.
4 The atmosphere was evil and I could sense the fear from
5 the kids. The adults were putting on a persona for the
6 adults. In reality they were horrible.

7 'During the journey home, I informed [my adoptive
8 mother] and Mark Holmes that I did not like the school
9 and I thought that [the housemother] was an evil woman.
10 [My adoptive mother] was desperately trying to persuade
11 me to attend the school and I was having none of it. My
12 protestations were ignored and two weeks later I again
13 travelled back with [my adoptive mother] and Mark Holmes
14 to commence my stay at Monken Hadley. I felt incredibly
15 frightened and prior to our arrival at the school, [my
16 adoptive mother] walked around the ornamental gardens
17 with me in an effort to calm me down. I felt like I was
18 being abandoned and dumped in the town.

19 'On arriving at the school, we were met by [the
20 housemother]. As [my adoptive mother] and Mark Holmes
21 were leaving, I tried to wave goodbye to [my adoptive
22 mother] but I was grabbed and slapped by [the
23 housemother]. Once they were out of sight she
24 immediately ordered me to strip off and put on a blue
25 towelling dressing gown and we walked down a corridor to

1 the showers. She made me stand in the shower whilst she
2 very roughly with her nails scrubbed Zulu shampoo
3 through my hair giving the explanation that she was
4 using the shampoo to remove nits. I was so ashamed that
5 I was standing naked in the front of her and I was
6 crying. I was 13 and very self-conscious. [She] was
7 sadistic. She would take pleasure in causing pain.
8 I recall that [she] had said something rude about [my
9 adoptive mother] and that other kids were around. These
10 kids were tough-looking kids and they mocked me and
11 generally made me feel very uncomfortable.

12 'I recall meeting ... a housefather. He was
13 a corporal in the army and had come straight out of the
14 army to work at Monken Hadley. He had orange ginger
15 hair with long sideburns, blue beady eyes and a very red
16 face when he was angry. He must have been aged 35 or
17 36. He had a yellow Cortina with a black roof and I can
18 remember looking out for his car every morning to see if
19 he was at work. If I saw his car, I felt very
20 frightened and if it wasn't there, I felt a lot more
21 relaxed. He was a very real and constant threat to us
22 all.

23 '[He] resided with his wife and I was very aware
24 later in life that he had physically abused [his wife]
25 while he was at the school and that she was also fully

1 aware of the physical abuse that the children suffered
2 at his hands. She and I became secret allies.

3 'Monken Hadley was an old hunting lodge and as you
4 entered through the front doors, there was a dining room
5 on the right-hand side with mahogany panelling and
6 benches contained within it. The room smelt very musty
7 and the setting was similar to something out of
8 Oliver Twist. On the left-hand side there were
9 approximately five to six rooms, which contained [the
10 headmaster's] office, and a number of classrooms. There
11 was a corridor you would go down where there were
12 storerooms and a kitchen.

13 'The back stairs led up to the first floor, which
14 they called the lowers. There was a massive room
15 measuring about 30 by 25 feet. There was also
16 an additional five rooms and a corridor with a bathroom
17 and shower. There was a middle floor with 15 rooms and
18 a floor above that where [a girl] slept. [She] was the
19 only girl at Monken Hadley when I first arrived.
20 I started the lowers with about eight other children and
21 there were about 15 older children and four children who
22 were called "special" who behaved so well that they had
23 their own little flat. The age range of the children
24 when I started was about 11 years to 16. The age range
25 did fluctuate as time went on and towards the end there

1 were children as young as 9 and there were about six or
2 seven girls. There were children from Edinburgh,
3 Livingstone, Midlothian and a few from Glasgow.'

4 Moving on, he then refers to some of the girls, and
5 at the top of page five he says:

6 'I would later learn that ... the housefather had
7 sexually abused the girls and his young daughters. He
8 was later convicted for this.'

9 I think he was convicted of some offences but
10 perhaps not all matters.

11 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

12 MS INNES: 'SNR [REDACTED] resided in a bungalow [REDACTED]
13 [REDACTED] house. At some point an ex-pupil arrived
14 from Germany who was employed as a housefather and he
15 lived in a night staffroom just down the corridor from
16 mine. He shared this with another member of staff
17 called David Low. [The housemother] tried to convince
18 us that she stayed overnight by wearing a dressing gown
19 during the evening but we knew that the dressing gown
20 hid her day clothing and that she left the building at
21 night.

22 'I recall being shown to a big massive room with
23 metal bunk beds. I was told that I would be sleeping in
24 the bottom bunk of one of the sets of bunks. I shared
25 the room with five other boys.

1 'In the morning, [the housemother] would wake us up
2 by screaming and shouting and we would all have to line
3 up outside the room with our tops off. We would then
4 have a quick wash in the sink and get dressed before
5 breakfast. We would have tasks to do like sweeping and
6 polishing shoes. We would then line up again before
7 going downstairs for breakfast. A woman called
8 Rhona McBriarty was a member of staff who took care of
9 [the only girl]. We would all have to line up again by
10 our chairs before being told to sit down by [the
11 housefather]. [He] would come into the dining room like
12 a major general from the army with his shoes clicking on
13 the floor. And he would call each table to go up and
14 receive breakfast. He was a sadistic and brutal man and
15 he would dish out physical punishment if you didn't eat
16 your breakfast.

17 'When I first started at Monken Hadley, it was [the
18 housemother] who would tell us to go to bed. We would
19 shower first and be given cocoa out of a plastic jug
20 which was disgusting. We would be in bed by 9.30 pm.

21 'We would have salt porridge or cereal on alternate
22 days and it was cooked by Big Nan and Fat Nan. The food
23 was generally disgusting and there was nothing
24 appetising about it. I can particularly recall the stew
25 which smelt disgusting and it was all served on metal

1 trays. At lunchtimes you would be made to go outside
2 for 45 minutes in all weathers. I would ensure I was
3 sweeping the dining room to avoid going out.

4 'We would be allowed to shower in the evening after
5 we had dinner, this wouldn't be every day. There were
6 three shower cubicles and the showering wasn't
7 supervised.

8 '[My adoptive mother] was insistent that she bought
9 my school uniforms from Marks & Spencer which consisted
10 of black trousers, a grey or blue jumper and a white or
11 blue shirt. We were provided with jeans and a T-shirt
12 by Monken Hadley.

13 'On a Saturday we would be allowed to go to the
14 cinema or walk around the town. When Barra Lunny took
15 over as the new housemaster, he was very decent and
16 I was assigned to take over the care of the Rottweiler
17 dog. I used to walk the dog around the town for about
18 an hour at a time and I would also visit Kathy the
19 cleaner at her house in Newton Stewart.

20 'I can recall going to the school's log cabin in the
21 forest, which was called the Jubilee Hut, which SNR
22 SNR had purchased. The log cabin was used to
23 promote Monken Hadley as a lovely place to send kids.
24 Most of the school holidays were spent at home with [my
25 adoptive parents].

1 'I did attend classes at Monken Hadley but I didn't
2 learn anything and the teaching was diabolical. The
3 teachers lived locally. [There was one teacher] who
4 taught the middle age group and if you couldn't do
5 something she asked you to do, she would just shout at
6 you making it impossible for you to learn anything.
7 I remember this happening to me in maths. I was
8 paralysed with her shouting and I couldn't function.
9 She would constantly use sarcasm while mocking kids.
10 '[Another teacher] taught the younger children and
11 Flora Hume taught the 15 and 16-year-olds.
12 '[The housemother] when she was matron would be
13 responsible for taking you to the doctor in the event
14 that you fell ill. When you had injuries from being
15 beaten she would just say to the doctor that you had
16 fallen down the stairs and the doctor would accept it.
17 'When [a pupil] was thrown down the stairs by [the
18 housefather] the medical authorities were just told that
19 he had fallen. Nothing was questioned despite him
20 having a broken leg. I was good friends with [the boy]
21 and he told me at the time that it had been dismissed by
22 SNR [REDACTED]. [His] mother had approached him and
23 he had told her that he had fallen.
24 'I went to attend the Catholic church whilst the
25 other kids would go to the Protestant church and I used

1 it as an excuse to walk around the town to see Kathy the
2 cleaner.

3 'We all had jobs to do in the morning before
4 breakfast. The jobs were things like watching the
5 dishes, cleaning the floors and polishing shoes. [The
6 housemother] allocated the work tasks for the week. The
7 regime was harsh like in the film Scum.

8 'I can remember watching the dishes on one occasion
9 for a week and it was then that I started getting on
10 really with Kathy McGuinness and Nan. They started
11 asking me if everything was all right and I started to
12 confide in them. Kathy from then used to invite me to
13 hers when I was walking the dog and she even offered to
14 come with me to the police if things got too bad.

15 '[The housefather's] favourite work task to
16 brutalise the kids on a Saturday morning in autumn was
17 to get the children to sweep the 60-foot by 30-foot
18 courtyard. There would be thousands of golden leaves.
19 We would be given massive industrial brushes and we
20 would line up across the yard and together we would
21 sweep as we crossed the yard and the brushes would cause
22 blistering to our hands. If you didn't do it properly,
23 [he] would physically punish us brutally. He would grab
24 you by the hair and run with you and throw you to the
25 ground. When you got up, he would do it again and then

1 kick you when you were down. He also slapped you
2 several times very hard across the face.

3 'I would spend Christmas at home with [my adoptive
4 parents].

5 'I recall a school open day being arranged for
6 parents. [My adoptive parents] attended. I was
7 disappointed that [my brother] had accompanied them as
8 I wanted time to talk to [them] alone.

9 'There was music in the courtyard and I was told to
10 sell tickets which my brother eventually took over as
11 I wanted to spend time with [my adoptive parents]. The
12 residents of Newton Stewart had been invited and on
13 later reflection I believe that this event was a means
14 for the school to re-brand itself. [The housefather] at
15 one point had all the kids lined up and he was shouting
16 at us. [My adoptive parents] appeared from around the
17 corner and enquired if everything was all right. [The
18 housefather] appeared to be intimidated by their
19 presence.

20 'He used to make my parents feel guilty by saying
21 that he had saved my life after I took an overdose. The
22 reason for [him] saying such a thing was that the
23 Rottweiler dog that I had looked after and regularly
24 taken for walks had been taken from me by [him]. SNR

25 SNR at the time promised to get me another dog

1 but I didn't believe him. Eventually [a girl] and
2 I found a springer spaniel called Shandy which SNR
3 SNR allowed me to keep. On one occasion when
4 [the housefather] was having a go at me, the dog bit him
5 and he kicked the dog down the stairs. I went home for
6 the weekend and when I returned, I found he had got rid
7 of the dog. I loved the dog and I was devastated.
8 'Every month I would be allowed to go home for the
9 weekend and also in the holidays.
10 'If [my adoptive father] ever had any interaction
11 with [the housemaster] I could see that he was
12 frightened of [my adoptive father]. [He] was very
13 different when dealing with adults.
14 '[My adoptive mother] did visit on one occasion,
15 which was a progress meeting.
16 'I ran away on at least seven occasions and
17 travelled hundreds of miles to places like Blackpool and
18 the Dumfries and Galloway Hills. I caught hypothermia.
19 The mountain rescue team found us.
20 'I recall that on one occasion having secreted
21 outdoor clothes in a cupboard I ran away to Blackpool, a
22 place that I was familiar with having spent family
23 holidays there. I broke into a self-contained holiday
24 flat we had used before and as it was winter, I felt
25 confident that the flat wouldn't be used until the

1 summer. I was however seen and caught and taken to the
2 local police station. I refused my details but
3 eventually they found out who I was. The police had
4 every chance to ask me why I had run away but they
5 didn't. [The housefather] was sent to pick me up and
6 every 20 minutes he would stop on our journey back to
7 the school and hit me across the face, blood was
8 streaming down my face. I remember stopping in
9 a country lane and he got out and battered me. One of
10 the older kids ... was sat in the front seat and saw
11 everything. [The housefather] used to get the older
12 kids to control us. They didn't want to do it but they
13 had to.

14 'I was friends with [another boy]. On one occasion
15 [my friend] had been battered by [the housefather] and
16 we decided to run away. We ran into the hills and the
17 forest and we were away for two days. We were exhausted
18 from running and we were wet and frozen cold having
19 tried and failed to cross a river because [my friend]
20 couldn't swim. We later discovered that we had been
21 suffering from hypothermia having tried to shelter in a
22 tractor and we ended up in a log cabin that we had
23 found. I decided to climb a tree to see where we were
24 and as I went out, a dog appeared and we were discovered
25 by the mountain rescue team. I told them all about [my

1 housefather] and his brutal physical abuse. We were put
2 into a jeep and eventually we were reunited with the
3 school staff and one of the army rescuers told one of
4 the staff members called Rhona McBriarty to put her arms
5 around us. We were taken to the Dumfries and Galloway
6 Hospital.

7 'If you absconded from the school, you would be made
8 to wear your pyjamas and slippers all week and you
9 weren't allowed out at the weekends and you would be
10 made to do more work.

11 '[The housefather] would thump you if you didn't eat
12 your porridge at breakfast time. I can recall seeing
13 children being grabbed by their hair on to the floor and
14 being dragged away from the dining room. The thumping
15 and beating would last about 15 minutes and when the
16 children returned, they had black eyes and they were
17 shaking with fear. He would slap you on the face, punch
18 you and kick you and grab you by the hair and run with
19 you. This didn't happen to me because I always ate my
20 food and [he] knew [about my adoptive father].

21 '[The housefather] at times during the night would
22 come into the rooms shouting for us all to get up. We
23 would then go outside into the yard in all weathers and
24 do military exercises. I can particularly remember
25 a time when it was snowing and he made us lie down and

1 raise our legs off the ground. I could hear kids
2 screaming because he was kicking them. A girl ...
3 couldn't do it and he made her run around the yard
4 whilst he kicked her and dragged her by the hair, she
5 was only wearing pyjamas.

6 'I had [another friend who really hated the
7 housefather] to the point that he openly talked about
8 killing him. I remember on one occasion [the
9 housefather] kicked the living daylights out of [my
10 friend], blood was streaming down his face.

11 'I later learned that [the housefather] had raped
12 a girl ... [She] had learning difficulties. I also
13 learnt [he] had raped [another girl]. Apparently as
14 a result the girl took an overdose and nearly died. I
15 later read the court papers as he appeared in court for
16 this. Due to the time elapsing he only received
17 two years in prison.'

18 'I think that's referring to the fact that certain
19 charges were dropped because of delay.

20 LADY SMITH: Delay, yes. That would be in the era when
21 Article 6 of the Convention was being interpreted so as
22 to prevent prosecution rather than be taken account of
23 when it came to any sentence.

24 MS INNES: That's correct.

25 He goes on:

1 'On one occasion [another girl] was lining up for
2 breakfast and I saw [the housefather] grab her by the
3 hair and he proceeded to punch and kick her until she
4 was bruised all over. The other staff knew what was
5 going on and not one of them did anything. When you saw
6 [him] with [her], I remember thinking he was acting as
7 if she was his girlfriend.

8 'If [he] had beaten and bruised a child, very often
9 an excuse would be made to keep the child at school to
10 prevent the parents from seeing the injuries. I recall
11 that on one occasion I was due to go home but I had
12 received a severe battering from him and my left eye was
13 closed. The member of staff Liz Taylor was present when
14 it happened. Knowing that [my adoptive mum] would
15 insist that I went home, SNR [REDACTED] had phoned
16 [her] saying that I had provoked [the housefather] and
17 that his sovereign ring had accidentally clipped my face
18 causing an injury to my eye.

19 'On returning home with SNR [REDACTED], my
20 brother asked me what had happened to my face and I lied
21 by saying I had fallen out of bed. SNR [REDACTED]
22 was in the kitchen trying to placate [my adoptive
23 mother] for my injuries. [She] came in to where I was
24 and saw my face and she went back into the kitchen and
25 told SNR [REDACTED] how horrified she was about my

1 injuries and that she was taking me to a doctor and then
2 the police.

3 'I was taken to our local doctor and he advised [my
4 adoptive mother] to report the assault to the Head of
5 Social Services, a man named John Knox. I eventually
6 told [my adoptive parents] the true story about how
7 I had received the injuries. [My adoptive father] was
8 enraged and threatened to go to the school and sort [the
9 housefather] out. [My adoptive mother] also promised
10 that I wouldn't have to go back to Monken Hadley. After
11 they had alerted the Head of Strathclyde Social Services
12 to my eye injury, a large meeting was held and a deal
13 was struck so that [my adoptive parents] wouldn't go to
14 the police. The outcome of the meeting was that [the
15 housefather] had to apologise to me and he had to move
16 out of the school accommodation and promise not to
17 assault me again. I was led to believe that I wouldn't
18 have to go back to the school but I was told that
19 I would have to. I felt betrayed.

20 'If we couldn't sweep the leaves in the yard in the
21 autumn properly, [the housefather] would punch you and
22 drag you to the ground as a punishment. It didn't
23 happen to me, but I witnessed other children being
24 beaten.

25 'If we were ever out on the school bus with [the

1 housefather] driving he would make us all chant a song.
2 The song would start with [him] singing "Who is our
3 leader?" and we would all have to respond by saying
4 "Ginger is our leader". If you didn't join in, [he]
5 would stop the bus and pull you out, he would slap your
6 face and bang your head against the side of the bus.
7 [He] was forcing kids to worship him.
8 'As part of the school's PE lesson, [the
9 housefather] would make you run around the woods and run
10 up and down the football pitch. If you couldn't do it,
11 [he] would hit the kids around the heads. On one
12 occasion a boy ... who was 14 was running up and down
13 the hill and he collapsed. [A girl] was watching from
14 the window and she witnessed [the housefather] kicking
15 [the boy] and he later died ... I told the police that
16 when they came to see me.'
17 Your Ladyship may recall there was reference to the
18 death of a child at Monken Hadley and this is this
19 particular incident.
20 He then goes on to say:
21 'I recall that [the housefather] threw [another
22 pupil] down the stairs and she broke her leg.
23 'A boy ... was dangled by [the housefather] over
24 a balcony. All the other kids told me this when I
25 returned, having run away to Blackpool. [This pupil]

1 also confirmed this to me [REDACTED] about four or five
2 years ago.

3 '[Another housefather] once turned an industrial
4 fire hose on me in a shower cubicle.

5 '[The housefather] that I've been speaking about
6 regularly verbally abused female members of staff, he
7 was a tyrant.'

8 'John' then goes on to explain his attempts to
9 report abuse.

10 At page 14, he talks about leaving Monken Hadley
11 school and trying to return to his adoptive parents.
12 However, a decision was then reached that he would go to
13 Falkland House in Fife and he then goes on to talk about
14 his experiences there.

15 After care, he continued to struggle with various
16 issues. He talks about his later life involving further
17 abuse and issues with social work involvement.

18 He says that at the age of 19, he moved permanently
19 to England and he got a job with Citizens Advice and
20 worked ultimately in a managerial role.

21 He talks about the impact of his life in care, which
22 include rewinding the abuse in his head, having dreams
23 and waking up as if he is suffering the abuse over
24 again.

25 He says that he has had anxiety over the abuse he

1 has suffered and at times questioned why any of it
2 happened to him.

3 On page 21 of his statement at paragraph 103, he
4 says:

5 'There should be a committee or statutory
6 organisation set up to have a vision to change things
7 within the care system.

8 'There should be a fresh approach to children in
9 care and a need to reduce the opportunities for people
10 to abuse children.

11 'People who have been subjected to abuse should be
12 brought into work with powerful people like the Scottish
13 Child Abuse Inquiry to improve things.

14 'A person should be embedded into every institution
15 to oversee children in care.'

16 He says:

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

21 And he signed his statement on 20 October 2021.

22 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

23 It's now just after 1 o'clock so I'll rise for the
24 lunch break and sit again at 2 o'clock and hopefully
25 we'll be ready then to go with an oral witness. Thank

1 you.

2 (1.03 pm)

3 (The luncheon adjournment)

4 (2.00 pm)

5 LADY SMITH: Good afternoon.

6 Now, we turn to a witness?

7 MS INNES: We do, my Lady, but before I do that, I've caused

8 some confusion by reading out the wrong pseudonym in the

9 last statement that I read out before lunch.

10 He ought to have the pseudonym 'Charlie' rather than

11 'John', which is the pseudonym that I attributed to him.

12 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

13 Yes, I think at one point maybe it was going to be

14 the pseudonym 'John', looking at my records, but that's

15 fine.

16 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady.

17 The next witness is here to give evidence. He has

18 the pseudonym 'Gabriel'. We understand from his

19 statement that he attended Ovenstone from about 1984 to

20 1988.

21 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

22 'Gabriel' (affirmed)

23 LADY SMITH: 'Gabriel', thank you for coming along this

24 afternoon to help us with your evidence in person.

25 I, of course, already have your written evidence in your

1 statement and it's really helpful that I've been able to
2 see that in advance.

3 The statement is in that red folder there in the
4 front of you, so you'll have it available as we're
5 taking evidence from you, if you want to use it. It
6 will also come up on screen. You don't have to use
7 either but they'll be there for you if you need them.

8 Other than that, 'Gabriel', a couple of things
9 I want to say. One, if you want a break at any time,
10 that's not a problem. I know that it's really quite
11 difficult coming into a public place and talking about
12 yourself and your own life and going back to when you
13 were a child, and some people can be caught quite
14 unawares at how emotional it can make them at times.

15 So it's not a problem, if you need a break or
16 a pause or whatever would help, you just let me know.
17 I take a break at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon
18 anyway so everyone can get a breather, so you can plan
19 on that happening, if you are still giving evidence by
20 then. We may finish your evidence by that time.
21 I'm not sure.

22 But that's going to happen around that time. If
23 you've got any questions at any point, do speak up.
24 It's not a problem. Sometimes people get confused by
25 what we're asking and if that happens, that's our fault,

1 not yours, so if you're not following what we're asking
2 or why we're asking it, you must say.

3 If you're ready, I'll hand over to Ms Innes and
4 she'll take it from there. Is that all right?

5 A. Yes, thank you.

6 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

7 Questions by Ms Innes

8 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady.

9 Could we look first of all at your statement, which
10 is at WIT-1-000001123 and if we go to the final page of
11 this statement at paragraph 100 you say:

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

16 I think we can see that you signed your statement on
17 14 November 2022, is that right?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. If we can go back to the beginning of your statement,
20 you tell us that you were born in 1977?

21 A. That's right.

22 Q. And you lived in Kirkcaldy or you were born in
23 Kirkcaldy?

24 A. Yeah, aye.

25 Q. You tell us about some issues, I think, that you faced

1 when you started school. You talk at paragraph 5, on
2 page 2, about being in St Ninian's Primary in Kirkcaldy?
3 A. In Cardenden.
4 Q. In Cardenden, was it? Okay. And you say, I think, that
5 you were expelled from that school?
6 A. Aye.
7 Q. And at paragraph 6, you say that you were seeing a child
8 psychiatrist at the time, a Dr Steer?
9 A. Aye, that's right.
10 Q. And this doctor diagnosed you with having ADHD?
11 A. It was called hyperactivity, hyperactive back then.
12 I didnae realise hyperactive now meant ADHD. Yeah,
13 I was diagnosed with that back then.
14 Q. You say that you were put on some medication. Do you
15 know what medication it was?
16 A. I wasn't on any medication for my ADHD back then. They
17 were trying to control my epilepsy, which was very, very
18 bad. Epilim, Tegretol Retard and something else.
19 I cannae remember the last one, it was a really long
20 word.
21 LADY SMITH: Was it something like Phenobarbitone? I'm just
22 thinking of the 1970s, that was quite often used for
23 epilepsy.
24 A. Possibly, I couldnae say for sure.
25 LADY SMITH: It doesn't matter.

1 A. I just know the Epilim and the Tegretol Retard was the
2 biggest ones. I didnae get that extra medication until
3 further years down the line.

4 MS INNES: So initially, as you say there, the doctors were
5 trying to deal with the epilepsy, but they weren't
6 really focused on the ADHD?

7 A. They thought controlling the epilepsy first would --
8 once they got that under control, they'd focus on the
9 ADHD. Unfortunately, we know now that the ADHD was what
10 was causing my seizures. If they'd focused on that,
11 I probably imagine I should have been fixed pretty much.

12 Q. And you say that at paragraph 7 -- where you say that
13 your psychiatrist now says that if they had controlled
14 your ADHD then that would have controlled your epilepsy,
15 so as you've just said. Okay.

16 And at paragraph 9 you say that you were sent to
17 Stratheden Hospital in Cupar?

18 A. Yeah. Yeah.

19 Q. Okay. And if we just go on over the page, at page 3,
20 you say, I think, that you were taken to
21 Playfield House, which is at Stratheden Hospital, just
22 before your birthday in 1984?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Is that right? Okay.

25 And do you know how long you stayed at

1 Playfield House?

2 A. Three months.

3 Q. And do you know what the purpose of you staying at

4 Playfield House was?

5 A. I think they were processing, before I was moved to

6 Ovenstone. I think they had to evaluate me before

7 moving me off to that residential place, I think.

8 I cannae say for sure. I would imagine that was the

9 reason.

10 Q. Okay. And at paragraph 13 you say that you think you

11 were still under the care of Dr Steer at the time but

12 you don't remember seeing him or any other psychiatrist

13 when you were at Stratheden?

14 A. No -- no, I didnae see anyone. I was locked up.

15 Q. And you talk about that; at paragraph 14, for example,

16 you say that you were 'doped up so much'. So you were

17 given drugs to sedate you at Playfield House, is that

18 right?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. At paragraph 16, you say that you think it was your nan

21 that got you out of Stratheden and transferred you to

22 Ovenstone. Why do you think that?

23 A. I seen her there. I seen the conversation between my

24 nana, my mum, my dad and the doctors.

25 Q. So was there a joint decision that you were going to

1 move from the hospital to the school?

2 A. I think so, yeah: it was my nana and mum and dad that

3 put me in there to start with.

4 Q. When you heard this conversation about moving you from

5 hospital to the school, can you remember how you felt

6 about that?

7 A. Relieved. I've been in a padded cell for about

8 two-and-a-half months so I was quite happy to be out.

9 Q. At page 4, paragraph 18, you tell us that you remember

10 your first day at Ovenstone?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Can you tell us what you remember about that first day?

13 A. A car ride in. I remember going into the place. There

14 was only two roads out. Either coming from north or

15 south depending on what route we took I'd imagine.

16 A big place, it looked like a school or a very big home.

17 Building in the front. Big plate glasses. You could

18 see the hallway. You could see adjoining buildings and

19 doors next to it. There was a building next to that and

20 there was a big road in there. A big garden. A shed

21 just off the front of that there and a big field but it

22 wasnae closed, you know, there wasnae big fences or

23 anything like that. You know, it was in the middle of

24 nowhere. I imagine that's why there wasnae big fences

25 there.

1 Q. You say that when you were taken in, you went along
2 a big long corridor and you were told that at the end
3 was the girls' dorm, although you didn't see any girls?
4 A. Yeah.
5 Q. Were there ever girls there when you were there?
6 A. We never seen each other. We had certain times that we
7 were out, ken, for breaks, so if we were at lunch or we
8 were in school or playtime or that, so it was the same
9 time but we never -- we only seen, ken, boys and that.
10 We were never allowed to mingle away with the girls and
11 that. We were always watched, there was always somebody
12 there, ken, to keep an eye on us.
13 Q. Then you say that you were taken to see SNR
14 in his room and he had a big desk and two massive dogs?
15 A. Yeah, Dobermans -- Dobermans or Rottweilers.
16 Q. You then go on to say that he explained to you why you
17 were there?
18 A. Yeah.
19 Q. What did he tell you about the reason for you being
20 there?
21 A. That I'd been referred to the place to a residential
22 school. Obviously referred to by the -- I would say
23 state, ken, like, social work or something, mum and dad:
24 That's good that you're here. You need so many points.
25 You need to attain so many points before you can leave,

1 2,000. Once you reach 2,000 points, you'll be able to
2 be discharged and sent home. Until then, you need to
3 follow the rules, behave yourself, go to school and
4 things like that, dinnae get into any trouble. If you
5 cause trouble for yourself, you come and see me.
6 Everybody gets three. You come and see me three times.
7 Well, he had a belt on the table. Self-explanatory.
8 Q. So you mentioned there about that you had to get these
9 2,000 points, and did you have any idea about how you
10 were going to get these points?
11 A. I'm sure he explained how you got it. I couldnae tell
12 you the points system. I would imagine if, ken, you
13 misbehaved you'd get deduction of points. If you
14 behaved yourself, ken, you done your homework, you went
15 to school, ken. Basically if you were good, every day
16 you would get a certain amount of points which would add
17 up to 2,000 eventually.
18 Q. Okay.
19 A. They couldnae say how long it would take for you to
20 attain that. Ken, that depends on your behaviour.
21 LADY SMITH: Did these points get marked up on a chart?
22 A. I really --
23 LADY SMITH: I just wondered how you knew how you were doing
24 in terms of accumulating points.
25 A. I really couldnae say. It's not something I thought

1 about.

2 LADY SMITH: Did you maybe just trust them to be keeping

3 a tally?

4 A. Yeah.

5 LADY SMITH: Which may or may not have been right.

6 A. It may not have been right, yeah, I mean -- there could

7 have been charts. I really couldn't tell you.

8 LADY SMITH: Okay. It doesn't matter. Don't worry. Thank

9 you.

10 MS INNES: And you mentioned there about the belt being on

11 the table. Was that like a school belt, a belt that

12 would have been used by SNR to punish

13 children?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. You say in your statement, at paragraph 20, that he said

16 to you that everybody got one chance and that you still

17 think about him saying that?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. Was it just the one chance you were going to get? If

20 you came to see him, was that the one chance?

21 A. I think the one chance was actually when I first met

22 him, you know: 'I've told you about this, this is what

23 happens if you come to see me'. I reckon that was my

24 one chance.

25 Q. Now, you go on to tell us a little bit about the staff.

1 You say that there was always staff on duty, day and
2 night. The headmaster was there during the week but not
3 at the weekend. So were there staff working in the
4 school who were teachers?
5 A. There was, yeah.
6 Q. Were they different to the staff who looked after you in
7 the residential part?
8 A. Yeah.
9 Q. Do you have any good memories of any of the staff?
10 A. Yeah. One of the female teachers there, she was really
11 nice. She always -- she was always, kind of, happy and
12 that and always had a smile on her face. She was
13 generally a nice person. The only time she wasnae
14 hersel' was, ken, if she was just having a bad day.
15 Q. You say, at paragraph 22, that you were taken to a dorm.
16 Can you remember how many boys were in the dorm with
17 you?
18 A. Between five and ten.
19 Q. Were they about the same age as you?
20 A. A mixture. Ken, some were the same age. Some were
21 maybe a bit older. I don't know what the age
22 restriction was for being in the residential home.
23 I don't know if, ken, that was 16 or 18. I really
24 couldnae say. But I know that there was a mixture of
25 ages in there.

1 Q. And you say at paragraph 22 that at the time you found
2 the place scary, but there was also a lot of open space
3 there, which you liked?

4 A. Yeah. There was a lot of open space there: you didn't
5 need to be in the same space as everybody else. There
6 was plenty of space for moving about.

7 Q. At paragraph 23, you talk about why some of the other
8 children were at Ovenstone. You say that some of them
9 'had mental disorders, some were there because they were
10 nasty wee buggers but nobody was there for no reason.'

11 It sounds like there were a variety of different
12 reasons why people were there?

13 A. Yeah, I mean, we were in a bairns' prison. You didn't
14 go in there, ken, just 'cause you were a good guy.

15 Q. You think that there were probably about between 20 and
16 30 boys in total?

17 A. I think so. A fair bit of us.

18 Q. Over the page, at page 6, you talk about the routine,
19 getting up every morning, going for breakfast and then
20 going to school.

21 Was it a full school day that you had, like a school
22 day that you would have had in your previous primary
23 school?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. And did you stay there at the weekends or did you go

1 back home to your family?

2 A. I didnae get to go back hame.

3 Q. And did all of the other boys that were in your dorm

4 stay over the weekend or did --

5 A. Some of them did. Some didnae.

6 Q. Who looked after you at the weekend?

7 A. The staff that was on at the time. It's like, erm, if

8 you stay in a homeless accommodation unit, you've always

9 got somebody on that stays there 24/7. So you've got

10 staff on during the day and you've got members of staff

11 who will stay on at night and, ken, watch over you.

12 Similar to that.

13 Q. At paragraph 28, you say that the food there was great?

14 A. Yeah. The food there was pretty good.

15 Q. At paragraph 29 you say:

16 'If you didn't like something, it wouldn't have been

17 a good idea to speak up because staff would slap you on

18 the back of the head.'

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. Did you see that happening?

21 A. Oh, yeah.

22 Q. Did that happen to you?

23 A. No. Luckily enough, some guy said it before me, so he

24 got it. I didnae. After seeing what happened to that

25 boy, I never said anything or would never say anything

1 like that. I'd keep it to myself.

2 Q. Then, at paragraph 30, you talk about the showers and

3 you talk about it being an open shower that you were in

4 with all of the other boys, is that right?

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. Was a staff member in when you were having showers?

7 A. They were floating about, but they werenae in there with

8 ya.

9 Q. If we go on to page 8 of your statement, at

10 paragraph 36, you talk about the fact that you had

11 a diagnosis of ADHD and epilepsy, but did anybody give

12 you any help with those things while you were at

13 Ovenstone?

14 A. If anybody gave me any help with these things,

15 I wouldnae have been in Ovenstone.

16 Q. Can you remember seeing a psychiatrist when you were

17 there?

18 A. No.

19 Q. At the bottom of page 8, at paragraph 40, you talk about

20 some boys who wet the bed. Was this some boys in your

21 dorm?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. And what would happen if they wet the bed?

24 A. Didnae end too well for them.

25 Q. In what way?

1 A. They'd cry a bit. Whoever was on that night would come
2 in and they'd get a leathering for it. Had to, ken, get
3 them up and change it. We helped 'em 'cause everybody
4 was up anyway. So -- and even then if they didnae say
5 anything, the fun would be the next day, because we had
6 to get up in the morning and change their bed and all
7 that and put clean stuff and all that on. So couldn't
8 hide it.

9 Q. So sometimes other boys in the dorm would help, and here
10 you say that they would also get points deducted?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. And how did you know that they were getting points
13 deducted? Was this said publicly?

14 A. Everything that happened went back to SNR and
15 that when he come back on Monday. Everything that
16 happened at the weekend or happened on a night went back
17 to him. He'd get pulled up. So if we were in school or
18 we were at breakfast, whatever happened that night, the
19 said person, he would then get asked to come through,
20 somebody would pick him up, take him through and see SNR
21 SNR, or if we were in school, somebody would take
22 him out, so I reckon about, ken -- in another class, I
23 only ken what happened to people in my class.

24 Q. You know what happened in your class, that some boys
25 were being taken out, spoken to SNR and you

1 would know that that was the reason why?

2 A. Yeah.

3 LADY SMITH: 'Gabriel', I'm sorry to be a nuisance, can I

4 ask you to get that microphone just a little bit nearer

5 you, not too close. Sometimes we're losing a bit of

6 what you are saying. We can try it at that. Maybe even

7 a little bit nearer than that.

8 A. Is that better?

9 LADY SMITH: Oh, that's much better, yes, thank you.

10 A. No worries. There's a lot of acoustics in here.

11 LADY SMITH: Yes, they are a bit odd. Sometimes you think

12 that if I'm speaking, the sound is actually coming from

13 the other end of the room.

14 A. Yeah, it's almost 360 now.

15 MS INNES: If we can go on over the page in your statement,

16 please, to page 9, at paragraph 42 you say that there

17 were monthly reports on how you were doing by way of

18 one-to-one meetings with a teacher. So did you have

19 a one-to-one meeting with a teacher?

20 A. Sometimes.

21 Q. Were any of your family at those meetings?

22 A. No.

23 Q. It was just you and the teacher?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. And what sort of things would be discussed at the

1 meeting with the teacher?

2 A. Erm, it was mostly, ken, stuff about your homework and
3 all that. How you were doing in class. It's like when
4 you were at primary school or high school where your
5 parents day, similar thing, they'd tell you how you were
6 doing in class through that day, week, what you were
7 doing right, what you were doing wrong, erm, things like
8 that.

9 LADY SMITH: How did you feel about those meetings,
10 'Gabriel'?

11 A. I had the attention span of a gnat when I was in school.
12 None of that changed when I was there. Before I went
13 away, even when I was in primary, I would get told that
14 my attention was always going somewhere else: I was
15 looking at the open door, if a janitor passed, I was
16 looking at the door, I wasnae paying attention, I had no
17 focus, none of that changed back then and they always
18 bring it up about.

19 LADY SMITH: Do I take it from that that you don't remember
20 finding the meetings particularly helpful to you?

21 A. Not really. I've been told I don't take criticism very
22 well. Personally I'm not too sure if that's a thing or
23 not. But if anything like that was to go by what
24 happened at school, then I'd imagine that sounds about
25 right.

1 LADY SMITH: Well, there are plenty of people who don't take
2 criticism well and often it's to do with how it's
3 delivered and whether it's constructive or not,
4 'Gabriel'.
5 A. Yeah.
6 LADY SMITH: Thank you. Ms Innes.
7 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady.
8 At these meetings did you feel that you could raise
9 any problems with the teacher?
10 A. Raise any problems?
11 Q. Well, say, you know, if things weren't going well, could
12 you say to the teacher, 'I don't think this is right',
13 or, 'I've got this problem'?
14 A. No. Not a good idea.
15 Q. So it was for the teacher to tell you rather than for
16 you to say anything much?
17 A. Yeah. Ken, it's still at the end of the day about,
18 'Yes, sir, no, sir', 'Yes, ma'am, no, ma'am', wouldnae
19 kinda challenge them. Not deliberately anyway.
20 Q. Now, at paragraph 44, as you've already said, SNR
21 SNR had threatened you with the belt that was on
22 his desk and you say that you never got the belt while
23 you were there?
24 A. No.
25 Q. But you were aware that other people did get the belt?

1 A. Oh, yeah.

2 Q. Did you see that happening?

3 A. No, we heard it.

4 Q. Sorry?

5 A. We heard it.

6 Q. You heard it. Okay.

7 I'll come back to that.

8 At paragraph 45, you talk about running away. Did

9 this happen once or more often while you were there?

10 A. Just the once.

11 Q. Why did you run away?

12 A. Because I knew I could.

13 Q. Did you go with other boys?

14 A. Yeah. I left with the resident bully.

15 Q. And then you say that after what felt like hours, you

16 found that there were cars waiting for you, including

17 SNR ?

18 A. Yeah. They were all there. I didnae even ken how. We

19 ran across a field. We didnae stick to the roads. Nae

20 idea how they found us, how they came to know we were

21 gone.

22 Q. And what was SNR 's reaction to you having run

23 away?

24 A. Confusion. He was understanding about it. Me and him

25 walked back ourselves. He sent everybody else away in

1 front. He told me he understood why I did it. Don't do
2 it again. I was very, very confused about that.
3 I thought he would've went off on one, but he didnae.
4 He wasnae so lenient on the other boy. But, yeah.
5 Q. You say, over the page, that you were, kind of, taken
6 aback by how nice he was about things?
7 A. Yeah.
8 Q. If we look at paragraph 49 of your statement, you say
9 the reason that you had run away was that you were
10 miserable and terrified:
11 'The staff could do what they wanted to us and
12 nobody could stop them.'
13 A. Yeah.
14 Q. Why did you think that they could do whatever they
15 wanted to?
16 A. Because they told us that.
17 Q. If we look down the page, on page 10, beginning at
18 paragraph 50, you talk about something that happened
19 when a new boy came into the school. You were all lined
20 up for registration and this new boy came in, you say,
21 and he thought he was the man. What happened?
22 A. We were in school, it was first thing in the morning.
23 We all were going to be assigned to our classes. New
24 guy comes in with a bit of an attitude problem, I'd
25 imagine, you know, he was quite, erm, adamant that he

1 could say and do and talk to anybody he wanted,
2 including the teachers. Didnae like what the teacher
3 was saying to him. Started swearing at them. Giving
4 them grief. We were then told to go to classes.
5 Teacher spoke to him on his ain. Time he was done,
6 class was finished and we were having our lunch at the
7 time. It's when he came in with the new guy.
8 Q. You say that, at this time, when you were in the hall
9 eating, you heard a commotion and screaming and
10 shouting?
11 A. Yeah.
12 Q. Then you say the boy came flying through the air through
13 the swing doors?
14 A. Yep, literally drop kicked the boy fae one end to the
15 other. His feet didn't even touch the ground fae start
16 to finish.
17 Q. And you describe the boy as being bruised and battered?
18 A. Yeah. Aye, proper leathered him one, like.
19 Q. And then, after this, after you saw him in the dining
20 hall, did he go to SNR [REDACTED]'s office after that?
21 A. No. Teacher dealt with it himself. I'd imagine he sent
22 a report to SNR [REDACTED].
23 Q. You say that the boy's face was all red?
24 A. Aye.
25 Q. You felt as though he'd been slapped in the face?

1 A. Oh, aye.

2 Q. And at paragraph 53, you talk about the teacher who did
3 this and you say that he would tell you that you were in
4 a jail for bairns and the staff could do what they
5 liked, which is what you just mentioned.

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. So you would also say that you were in a jail for
8 bairns?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. At paragraph 54, you talk about a night when you were
11 carrying on, having a pillow fight and you say things
12 got out of hand?

13 A. Aye.

14 Q. What happened?

15 A. Well, we were mucking about, carrying on with the
16 pillows and that, I come to the realisation that one of
17 the pillows I had was a feather pillow. If you twist
18 a feather pillow tight enough, squash that together,
19 that pillow will go fae soft to hard. I knew this. I
20 wound it up and I hit the boy. His head just banged off
21 the wall or the flair, one of the two, and he was out
22 cold. I got into a lot of bother because of that.

23 Q. You say that you were called in to SNR [REDACTED] ?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. What did he say?

1 A. He wasnae happy. I think he actually got called in from
2 home, I think. It was late at night. It didnae gone
3 into the next day. The guy actually looked like he was
4 in his jammies or something. You know, he come in and
5 he wasnae a happy man.

6 Q. You say that you had been warned that you would get the
7 belt, and did you get the belt from SNR that
8 time or not?

9 A. I don't think so.

10 LADY SMITH: 'Gabriel', you refer to his two dogs, this is
11 paragraph 54. You say 'between seeing the belt and the
12 fact he still had the two dogs beside him', you were
13 terrified.

14 A. Yeah.

15 LADY SMITH: Did he always have the two dogs with him?

16 A. The only time he didnae have the dogs with him was
17 actually when they were at the vets or they were getting
18 groomed. He always had the animals there for effect.
19 Why would you have two big massive Dobermans sitting
20 next to you? I mean, it was like a scene fae the
21 Simpsons with Mr Burns. SNR, wooden desk, two
22 big huge dogs, an evil guy with a grin sitting behind
23 it. That worked.

24 LADY SMITH: As you recall it, these were either Dobermans
25 or Rottweilers?

1 A. Dobermans or Rottweilers. They were really skinny.
2 I think Dobermans are relatively -- Rottweilers are
3 muscly. So I would say they were Dobermans: skinny,
4 long, sleek and black, ears topped up. Pretty big.
5 LADY SMITH: And a bit taller than Rottweilers.
6 A. Aye, Rottweilers, I think they're wee and muscly. These
7 things were that (indicating), were big dogs, tall.
8 LADY SMITH: You paint an image of somebody with an enforcer
9 on either side of them. Is that what it was like?
10 A. Aye. He could talk to them and they'd do exactly what
11 he says. He proved that. He'd tell it to sit, tell it
12 to lie down, tell it to sit up. They done everything he
13 said. They were trained.
14 LADY SMITH: Thank you. Ms Innes.
15 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady.
16 And you then go on to talk about another thing that
17 happened when you and another boy and a female teacher
18 went to the female teacher's house?
19 A. Yeah.
20 Q. And why was it that she invited you or took you to her
21 house?
22 A. I don't know. She kept on saying in the car, 'This is
23 so wrong, I shouldnae be doing this'. She kept on
24 repeating that over and over.
25 Q. Did you have any idea what she was meaning?

1 A. No. When she took me and the wee man, I thought -- I
2 thought she was taking us away fae the place, saving us
3 fae them.

4 Q. And she took you to her house, you say, and did you stay
5 downstairs in the house?

6 A. Yeah, yeah. I was -- we had conkers and we used to be
7 able to make conkers hard by soaking them in vinegar.
8 We did that when we were younger. You put the thread
9 through it and harden up and then hae conkers, ken,
10 competitions. The harder it is, you would win. But if
11 you soak it for too long, it can go really, really soft.
12 It's the only reason why I knew how long I'd been
13 downstairs that day.

14 Q. So, yes, you say that you were watching the conker which
15 you had put in a cup?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. And then you say the other boy came downstairs and was
18 quiet and clearly upset about something?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. And then you say the teacher must have come downstairs
21 as well, did she?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. And her hair was all wet?

24 A. Mm-hmm.

25 Q. Then, at paragraph 58, you say that she said:

1 'Come on "Gabriel".'

2 You say:

3 'I remember a strong smell of soap up close to her

4 and that's the last thing I remember.'

5 The next thing you remember is that you were walking

6 out the door and there were police cars all over the

7 place.

8 A. Mm-hmm.

9 Q. Did the police explain to you why they had arrived at

10 the house?

11 A. No. They were just there.

12 Q. And what was the female teacher saying?

13 A. 'I didn't do anything. Tell them I didnae do anything'.

14 Q. And was she taken away by the police, do you know?

15 A. Yeah. They took her and put her in the car or a van,

16 and SNR and some of the other teachers were

17 at the other side. So, like, they were over there. The

18 police were on the other side, yeah.

19 Q. Did you have to then go and speak to the police?

20 A. They wouldnae let us.

21 Q. Sorry?

22 A. They wouldnae let us. The police wanted to take us in

23 the car and then question us but we had to go with SNR

24 SNR and that first. They werenae allowed to take

25 us.

1 Q. And did SNR ask you what had been going on?

2 A. The police were adamant they wanted to take us. They

3 said it was procedure, that what had happened -- SNR

4 SNR insisted that they spoke to us first before

5 we went away with the cops. Told us not to say

6 anything. 'What they ask you, dinnae say anything about

7 what's been happening back at the school, nothing at

8 all. There's nothing they can do. They can't even get

9 you to their way. You're signed over to us. Don't say

10 a thing. You'll be fine. Answer the questions as best

11 as possible, but nothing about the school. Keep that to

12 yourself'.

13 Q. Then after this conversation with SNR, did

14 you speak to the police?

15 A. We then went in the car and went back to the police

16 station and they asked us about what happened with the

17 teacher at the house.

18 Q. And what did you say to the police?

19 A. Pretty much the same thing I've just said here, except

20 I left out everything about the school. The policeman

21 knew I was lying to him and said it was fine to tell

22 him, but I didnae.

23 Q. How do you know that the policeman thought you were

24 lying to him?

25 A. He told me.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. He says, 'You're lying to me. You can tell me what's

3 wrong. You can tell me what's been happening there. We

4 can help'.

5 Q. Did the female teacher ever come back to the school?

6 A. I can't remember seeing her again.

7 Q. After you spoke to the police on that occasion, was

8 there ever any mention of this incident again?

9 A. Follow-up?

10 Q. Mm-hmm, was there ever any follow-up?

11 A. Not with me.

12 Q. At paragraph 66, you say:

13 'Kids getting battered was a regular thing.'

14 Although you don't recall that happening to

15 yourself, what sort of things did you see?

16 A. I seen them getting taken away. We heard them getting

17 assaulted and obviously, ken, after it, they'd tell us

18 about it, what they'd done to them.

19 Q. At paragraph 67 you talk about staff, if they saw marks

20 on a boy's face, what was their reaction?

21 A. If staff saw marks?

22 Q. If staff saw marks on a boy's face, would they give any

23 explanation?

24 A. You mean if we were in school when staff come in that

25 morning and seen the boy had bruises on his face?

1 Q. Yes.

2 A. No.

3 Q. You say, at paragraph 67, that sometimes you would say,
4 the boys would say, that you had walked into a door. So
5 did you hear some of the other boys giving that
6 explanation if they'd bruising on their face?

7 A. Yeah, but we knew, ken, that wasn't the case. Some of
8 them didnae want to say, if they -- ken. They would
9 just ken what happened to you. 'I walked into a door'.
10 That's what they told us. Just depended on the boy.

11 Q. You say that when you were at school you were bullied
12 regularly, was that by the other boys?

13 A. Mm-hmm, yes.

14 Q. Did you tell the staff about that?

15 A. No. Wouldn't have mattered if we did anyway.

16 Q. If we go down to paragraph 68 --

17 LADY SMITH: Sorry, 'Gabriel' if you had said anything, what
18 do you think their reaction would have been?

19 A. Unsympathetic, dismissive.

20 LADY SMITH: Why? Why do you think that?

21 A. It's not their problem. It was ours.

22 LADY SMITH: Okay. Thank you.

23 MS INNES: If we can look at paragraph 68, you say that you
24 never reported anything to anybody and your parents
25 didn't visit when you were there.

1 A. No.

2 Q. You've told us that you didn't go home at the weekends.

3 So from what you're saying, it sounds like they weren't

4 around for you to tell them what was happening?

5 A. My mum and dad came the first year. Every year, your

6 mum and dad was allowed to come up for the weekend, like

7 Christmas or something, they would come up and gi' you

8 your presents and gi' you a visit, stay for a time and

9 then they'd go home. Sometimes kids were allowed to go

10 home on the weekend. My mum and dad came up once in the

11 four or five years I was there -- five years, I'm not

12 sure. That was the last I saw them.

13 Q. At page 14, you tell us that you left Ovenstone. Who

14 told you that you were leaving?

15 A. Erm, I got called up to SNR [REDACTED]'s office to see

16 him. He told me about it. I don't know if I had to

17 sign something. I've no idea. Maybe I did. Maybe

18 I didnae. I don't know. I just got told that

19 I'd reached my 2,000 points and I'd be leaving at

20 a certain day and time.

21 Q. You say that your parents came to collect you?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. Did you go back home to live with them?

24 A. Yeah, yeah, I went back home.

25 Q. How did that feel after you hadn't seen them for so

1 long?

2 A. Brothers were distant. I think [REDACTED] was scared, my wee
3 brother, my weest one. Was -- I think I understood.
4 Mum and dad were sketchy at best about it. I reckon
5 they couldnae take it. I don't know.

6 Q. Then did you start seeing Dr Steer again?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. And did you go to a local school?

9 A. I was in primary school for maybe less than six months,
10 maybe. I wasnae there long before I went to high
11 school.

12 Q. Did you go back to the school in Cardenden?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. And then to high school?

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. If we move on to page 15 of your statement, and you've
17 told us already in your evidence that, right from the
18 very start, the professionals, the psychiatrist, hadn't
19 been focusing on your ADHD, they'd been focusing on your
20 epilepsy and that was the wrong thing and I think you
21 say, at paragraph 78, that the problem was the ADHD and
22 that wasn't being properly addressed, is that right?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. You think at the end of paragraph 79, you say in the
25 final sentence:

1 'I feel that they dropped the ball and Dr Steer
2 should have picked up on that.'

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. Then, at paragraph 80, you say:

5 'I feel that by the time I was in those
6 institutions, it was too late for me and that the damage
7 had been done and that was why I was in those places.'

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Sorry?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. You say:

12 'They weren't bothered about why I was in there.
13 Their attitude was just: "Right, you're in here now".'

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. So once you went to Stratheden and then to Ovenstone,
16 you didn't feel that anybody was trying to help you?

17 A. No.

18 Q. And you say that you feel that when you came out of
19 those places, you were worse?

20 A. Aye, definitely.

21 Q. In what way?

22 A. I hadnae been helped. I was in there. There was nae
23 attempt to understand why I was there, ken. When most
24 people go away to any institution, say, when you go to
25 an institution, you're there to be helped, you're there

1 to be rehabilitated. If that's the way you put it.
2 There was nae rehabilitation in there. Just swapped one
3 prison for another. Stuck in my head. Still stuck in
4 my head. Nothing's changed. There was nae help. It
5 was basic, ken, like, my psychiatrist knew I had ADHD,
6 hyperactivity, ADHD, that's what causes seizures. They
7 can go find it on Google if they look at that for five
8 minutes. That guy had, say, ten years and he missed
9 that. I was seeing that man long before I was
10 institutionalised. He should have picked up on that, he
11 didnae. But I was already done. It was finished.
12 There was nae help.

13 Q. Then if we go on to page 19 of your statement, and some
14 of the lessons that we should learn from your
15 experience, you say, at paragraph 95, that a lot of the
16 children that were at Stratheden and Ovenstone were
17 'unstable wee so and sos'.
18 And so in your eyes, you deserved to be there?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. Is that how you felt at the time?

21 A. Yeah, I put a firework through an old-age pensioner's
22 door. I could've killed her, yeah.

23 Q. Did people tell you that you deserved to be there?

24 A. I told myself I deserved to be there. I always listen
25 to what I'm told. I always listen to what I say

1 I'm told. That's what I was getting told back then but
2 I heard that fae other people as well, so we agreed.

3 Q. At paragraph 97, you talk about essentially why you came
4 forward to the Inquiry to give your statement and you
5 say:

6 'I want for this to never happen again.'

7 I think that's the main reason that you have come to
8 the Inquiry to give your evidence, is that right?

9 A. Yes. I never ken it was this bad. I'm being told that
10 there's a lot of this is going on even today. Yeah, I
11 ken, I know now kids should be helped, not put in these
12 places. Naebody's monitoring them. Free rein; yeah,
13 this should be stopped, it's no fair on the kids. They
14 should have been helped. They should have, ken, had
15 assessments, everything, long before you're sent to
16 a place like that. I was detained for three months.
17 What I know that was where my assessments all took
18 place, but because I was very, very unruly, I was locked
19 up because of the way I was acting, wouldnae let them
20 assess me. I attacked the orderlies and the doctors
21 when they come to see me. That's why I was locked up in
22 a padded room for months on end.

23 Nobody told my mum or my nana why I was in there.
24 They just kept on fobbing them off. Nae reason. They
25 couldn't control me because I wouldnae let them, so

1 I got sent to that place. That was a place fae doctors,
2 it was a hospital. They should have been able to tell
3 why I was like that and should have been able to fix it.
4 You cannae fix something, you just throw it away. If
5 it's broken, it goes in a bucket. That's where I got
6 sent. In my mind, nae doctors, nae parents, nae help.
7 I was just locked up there and that's where I was
8 staying.

9 Yeah, I thought I deserved to be there. Parents
10 shouldnae feel like that. Grow up in a household right
11 now where we talk about everything with our kids: how
12 they're feeling, what's wrong with them. Our kids have
13 got autism and ADHD and that and we talk about
14 everything, because if you dinnae talk about it, nothing
15 gets fixed. My wife actually said that: 'If you don't
16 talk about things, we cannae fix anything, you need to
17 tell me what's wrong, you need to tell me what's
18 happening so I can help you'. I never had that.

19 It's not fair. It's not fair at all.

20 MS INNES: Thank you very much for your evidence, 'Gabriel'.

21 I've got no more questions for you.

22 A. Thank you.

23 LADY SMITH: 'Gabriel', I don't have any more questions

24 either. I just want to thank you again for coming here

25 this afternoon. It's been so helpful to hear from you

1 yourself. And we've finished by 3 o'clock as I said we
2 might. So do feel free to go now but, as I say, know
3 that you go with my grateful thanks to you for being
4 here.
5 A. Thank you.
6 (The witness withdrew)
7 LADY SMITH: I'll take the afternoon break now and we can
8 manage some more read-ins afterwards.
9 MS INNES: We have more read-ins available.
10 LADY SMITH: Very well.
11 (3.00 pm)
12 (A short break)
13 (3.10 pm)
14 LADY SMITH: Ms McMillan, when you're ready.
15 'Nicholas' (read)
16 MS MCMILLAN: Thank you, my Lady.
17 We are going to have two further read-ins this
18 afternoon.
19 The first of those read-ins is for 'Nicholas'.
20 LADY SMITH: Thank you.
21 MS MCMILLAN: The reference is WIT-1-000000901.
22 LADY SMITH: Thank you.
23 MS MCMILLAN: 'Nicholas' will be speaking about his time at
24 Woodlands.
25 He says in his statement that he would have been

1 about 10 years old when he went to Woodlands. He was
2 born in 1984. He says he spent about 18 months to
3 two years there. The records that we have reflect this
4 and show that he spent two periods at Woodlands between
5 ████████ 1995 and ██████ 1997.

6 'Nicholas' was born in Paisley. He was the oldest
7 of seven children. And social work was involved with
8 his family due to violence and drug taking in the house.

9 'Nicholas' and his siblings were initially placed
10 into foster care. He talks about his experience in
11 foster care and in children's homes before he went to
12 Woodlands.

13 It's at page 8, from paragraph 36 of his statement,
14 that he talks about his experience there.

15 He says:

16 'Before I was sent to Woodlands on a permanent
17 basis, they sent me for a couple of days for three to
18 four hours in the morning. This was to introduce me to
19 the place and perhaps help me settle more there.

20 'When I was at Woodlands, it was for slightly older
21 children. I was about 10 when I went there and the
22 other residents were similar to me and up to about 16.
23 I think there were maybe 25 children there. Woodlands
24 was all boys. The atmosphere with the boys was just
25 like any normal school: sometimes we fell out and then

1 afterwards we would be okay.

2 'I think the place was run by a male but I only
3 remember him being known as "KP". His deputy was
4 Peggy Smith. I can remember some of the other staff
5 there ... and they were care staff and worked during the
6 day. We lived upstairs in the units at night.

7 'The home was for children with behavioural
8 problems. The main building at Woodlands had lots of
9 rooms in there and there was a flat on the top floor.
10 The flat was used by the older children who were
11 preparing for life after care. Sometimes at the
12 weekend, families were allowed to use it if they were
13 visiting. If there were quite a few people coming, and
14 the flat was occupied, then the bungalow in the grounds
15 could be used as a weekend overspill.

16 'The other two floors were known as the uppers and
17 lowers. I was in the uppers. We all had our own rooms
18 and in mine I had my own television.

19 'The day-to-day routine at Woodlands was the same as
20 the other places I stayed in. We were up in the
21 morning, had breakfast and went into the classroom.

22 'The education units were in separate buildings
23 beside the main one. At the school, if we behaved, then
24 for the last half hour we were allowed to do woodwork.
25 I was allowed to build a pigeon hut and started to keep

1 pigeons. During this time, I also bred hamsters. When
2 I left Woodlands I let the pigeons go.

3 'The staff did try to provide some sort of
4 education, but they were limited to boys not playing up
5 much. This was much the same for most of the different
6 places I was in. I really never considered this until
7 I was an adult.

8 'There were activities that we were allowed to take
9 part in. They included canoeing, woodwork, mechanics,
10 climbing, walks in the woods and there were even
11 a couple of motorbikes we were allowed to be on while
12 supervised. George Epsworth, who was in charge of
13 education, took us out in a van along with the bikes.
14 We then got to ride a couple of laps in the open ground.
15 Once a month, we were taken to the racing tracks. There
16 were two tracks. One was a pro circuit and the other
17 amateurs were allowed on. They would even show this to
18 mum and dad where we were going on the motorbikes.

19 'When I stayed at Woodlands we were taken away for
20 a short holiday during the summer holidays. One of
21 those trips I was taken to was Butlins in Skegness.

22 'The social work only came to see me when it was
23 time for any reviews or panels. I saw them a lot less
24 at Woodlands but then there was less need as I was going
25 to be there for a while and there was no changes taking

1 place. I don't remember there being any inspections
2 carried out while I stayed there.

3 'If I behaved when I was in Woodlands I did get out
4 for visits. The van would be used to go to Edinburgh or
5 Glasgow. I would be taken out with some of the others
6 in the minibus and dropped off.

7 'When I was at Woodlands for about a month and I had
8 settled I was allowed to go back to Carsewood for
9 a night or even a weekend. This would allow me to see
10 my mother as Woodlands was too far away for her to
11 visit. I would go back to Woodlands the next day.
12 Eventually that changed where I was allowed home to stay
13 with mum. The reason was it was costing money to keep
14 a place for me at Carsewood when I was not actually
15 staying there.

16 'There were facilities available at Woodlands for
17 family to visit there. They had a bungalow in the
18 grounds that was used for some of those visits and if
19 someone stayed some distance away, they could stay in
20 the bungalow overnight. The staff would also help by
21 picking some families up in the minibus and bringing
22 them to the bungalow. They would drop the family off
23 after their stay.

24 'When it came time to leave Woodlands, the staff
25 helped me build up a relationship with my mum and when

1 she came to the bungalow. I was allowed to stay there
2 for the few days with her. The staff might have helped
3 with trying to give us advice about how we could get on
4 better with each other.

5 'One day, I was in the kitchen at the home for some
6 reason. The kitchen was in a U-shaped design. While
7 I was there, [a staff member] came in and told me to get
8 out of the kitchen. I wasn't finished what I was doing
9 and told him so. [He] tried to manhandle me by grabbing
10 me and trying to force me out. I struggled out of his
11 arms. He then punched me right in the face. As
12 a result, he broke my nose and it was bleeding heavily.
13 I was never given any treatment by him. [He] told the
14 other staff in the home that I tried to run out of the
15 kitchen and I had run into him.

16 'I told my mum and dad when I was next home. I was
17 constantly picking at scabs on my nose and my mum was
18 asking why I was always at my nose. I told her what
19 happened. They immediately took me to the local
20 hospital in Paisley, but because of the time delay there
21 was nothing they could do. They also took me to the
22 police station and reported the matter to them. I never
23 got told what the result of that enquiry was.

24 'My dad wanted to punch [this staff member's] lights
25 out. He didn't follow through with that, but before he

1 was allowed back to see me, the staff made him sign
2 a contract that he was allowed to visit me but only on
3 the understanding he did not take any revenge on [the
4 staff member].

5 '[This staff member] was in his 30s. I never saw
6 him do it to anyone else. The home did not take any
7 action against [him] and neither did the Social Work
8 Department. After the incident, he continued to watch
9 over me, but I was never hit by him again.

10 'This was an opportunity to move me but they never
11 did. The home was one of two different care homes. It
12 also covered Merton Residential School, which was
13 a smaller unit. The manager could have taken a decision
14 to transfer me there.

15 'If [another staff member] had to restrain any of
16 the children, he was much quicker at jumping on you than
17 most of the staff would. The other staff were much more
18 relaxed. His demeanour was more aggressive. He was the
19 same with the other residents as he was with me.

20 'There was a class in the main building. The
21 teacher there was really aggressive in his manner and
22 the way he treated us. It was a much smaller class and
23 if we did anything wrong, he would sometimes ragdoll us
24 about in the classroom. It wasn't just me because I saw
25 him do it to others. I can't recall his name. He was

1 about 30 to 40 years old, slim to medium build with
2 short hair.

3 'While I was at Woodlands, one of the differences
4 I found were they catered for adolescents and everything
5 was aimed at doing activities suited to children my
6 age.'

7 'Nicholas' then goes to talk about life after
8 Woodlands.

9 He spent further time in other care establishments,
10 including secure care.

11 'Nicholas' has then gone on to spend quite
12 a significant period of time in prison.

13 He talks about the impact his time in care had on
14 him.

15 He says at paragraph 145, on page 29:

16 'If you are punished in the home environment, you
17 accept that more because that relationship is built on
18 respect and trust. In the care system there is not the
19 same mutual respect, because you don't have the
20 long-term relationship.'

21 He tells us that because of his time in care, he
22 never passed any exams. He's never been abroad. He
23 doesn't have his own house or a driving licence. He
24 says he gets on well with some of his family but not
25 others.

1 'Nicholas' tells us about the lessons that can be
2 learned from his time in care and his hopes for the
3 Inquiry.

4 He says, at paragraph 164 on page 32, that:

5 'One of the things I found out about relationships
6 with staff while I was in care was if you had a dominant
7 manager then that type of behaviour and atmosphere would
8 be passed down to the other staff. If there was anyone
9 with a decent outlook, they ended up just following the
10 dominant nature of the one in charge. These places need
11 to have good managers willing to put better practices in
12 place.

13 'There needs to be more encouragement from care
14 staff to help kids where the children have perhaps
15 fallen behind with schoolwork. People should recognise
16 that and other issues and provide the encouragement to
17 help them. There were some during my time in care who
18 went out of their way for me and it made me appreciate
19 what they were doing for me. On the other hand, there
20 were many who used their position to hurt kids.

21 'You can't regulate what staff see as bullying as
22 you don't see the whole picture. It comes down to staff
23 having the right heart to look at all the information
24 and taking it all under consideration before coming to
25 the right conclusion. They should not be prejudiced

1 from the outset. Staff are also prejudiced when
2 something is said to them or something happens to them.'

3 At paragraph 168, he says:

4 'The education system in the homes is too relaxed
5 where kids get to do a lot of what they want. Instead
6 of being taught, they're sitting playing games or
7 watching television. If there was more respect, maybe
8 they could provide better education where you might
9 learn some life skills. Perhaps there should be
10 a reward scheme where you would be encouraged to work
11 harder in the classroom. The one downside is where
12 a child is constantly being moved from one place to
13 another and no time to build up any relationship.'

14 At paragraph 173, he says:

15 'The reason for me coming forward to the Inquiry is
16 to try and help kids in the future and to make sure
17 these things don't happen again. I want to see
18 improvements in the care system to help protect the
19 children.

20 'Kids in the homes all have camera phones nowadays.
21 The kids do wind staff up but they only start recording
22 when the staff are carrying out punishments. They only
23 show half a story.

24 'One of the improvements that could be made is the
25 use of cameras worn by staff at children's homes.

1 I understand there are sensitivity issues but the
2 overall sake of the children would benefit them as it
3 may cut down the mistreatment of them. If used
4 properly, they would cut down the abuse of children. It
5 would also cut down the number of malicious complaints
6 made about staff.'

7 'Nicholas' says:

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

12 And 'Nicholas' has signed his statement and it is
13 dated 3 February 2022.

14 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

15 MS MCMILLAN: The next statement my Lady is for 'Alec'.

16 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

17 'Alec' (read)

18 MS MCMILLAN: The reference for 'Alec's' statement is
19 WIT.001.002.3489.

20 My Lady, 'Alec' has previously given oral evidence
21 to the Inquiry. He did so on Day 132. That was 11 June
22 2019.

23 That was in respect of the Christian Brothers.

24 LADY SMITH: Yes.

25 MS MCMILLAN: 'Alec's' statement has already been read out

1 on three further occasions. The first of those was
2 Day 411, 23 January 2024. The second was Day 428, 25
3 March 2024. And finally, Day 440, which was 26 April
4 2024.

5 So today's read-in will focus on 'Alec's' time in
6 Ladymary.

7 'Alec' was born in 1966. Records show he went to
8 Ladymary from [REDACTED] 1973, when he was aged 6, until
9 [REDACTED] 1977, when he was aged 11, and this reflects
10 'Alec's' account.

11 'Alec' tells us that before his time in Ladymary, he
12 went to an assessment centre for children with special
13 needs in Glasgow. Ladymary was the first establishment
14 that 'Alec' was placed in.

15 At paragraph 9, on page 2, he begins to talk about
16 his experience there and he says:

17 'Margaret Mitchell worked for the nuns at Ladymary
18 as a social worker. I think Margaret Mitchell came to
19 Glasgow and took me to Edinburgh, along with
20 Jean McDonald. I was about 4 years old. I stayed at
21 Ladymary for seven years, until I was 11 years old.

22 'The Good Shepherd Convent and Ladymary School were
23 in a leafy, middle-class suburban area of Edinburgh.
24 I drove many times up the driveway with the nuns but
25 I remember one particular day when I thought I had never

1 seen anything like this. You came along the drive.
2 There were loads of trees and then you saw this huge
3 house. I had come from the slums to this beautiful
4 gated building. It was white with turrets on it.
5 Attached to that was a convent. It was weird and
6 beautiful at the same time. It was like Disneyland.
7 I was in total awe. There was a convent and a main
8 house. The main house was run by the nuns. The convent
9 was used for young girls who were having problems. The
10 school was run by the nuns, civilian staff and teachers
11 from the outside.

12 'There was one entrance to the house. As soon as
13 you came in the entrance there was a small hallway. The
14 first room was Margaret Mitchell's office. The second
15 room was a quiet room with a blackboard. It was for the
16 disruptive kids. The hallway went on for 15 feet, then
17 there was an office. All of the nuns used this office.
18 There were tables and shelves in it. As you came into
19 the building, if you went first left, there was a little
20 corridor. You went through the doors and the corridor
21 took you to an inside hallway with a stair running off
22 it. In this hallway, was a [particular Sister's]
23 office. The education block was in another hallway with
24 classrooms off of the hallway.

25 'In the main hallway, there was a huge cupboard

1 which was used to store tins of food. You went up three
2 stairs and came to the dining room. That was where the
3 children and staff would have their three meals a day.
4 When you came out of the dining room, there were stairs
5 right ahead. The stairs took you to the bottom unit.
6 There was a corridor, you went up the stairs and the
7 stairs took you to the middle unit and the top unit.
8 'When I was young I was in the bottom unit. In the
9 bottom unit there were dormitories to sleep in. The
10 dormitories were in a corridor with three rooms off it.
11 There was a lounge, and another corridor with
12 a dormitory. The dormitory had five beds and four cots
13 in it. In the bottom unit, boys were on one side and
14 girls on the other side.
15 'In the middle unit, there were single rooms. I was
16 never in the middle unit. It was for the kids who were
17 doing well and I was quite disruptive. I could only go
18 to the top unit when I was seven years old. In the top
19 unit, there were four dormitories facing each other.
20 There would be boys in one dormitory and girls in
21 another dormitory. There were five beds in the boys'
22 dormitory and four in the girls' dormitory. There was
23 one single room in the top unit. There were two
24 bedrooms for staff sleeping quarters.
25 'In the top unit, there were about 14 children. In

1 the bottom unit, there were about eight or nine
2 children. In the middle unit, there were about five or
3 six children. I think there were about 30 children
4 altogether at any one time. There were more boys than
5 girls. The children were aged from about 3 years old to
6 12 years old. There were about four nuns on shift at
7 any time in the school. You could get into the convent
8 through doors on the top level of the building. You
9 went downstairs and the stairs took you straight into
10 the nuns' kitchen. The convent was treated as being
11 completely separate from the school. The nuns in the
12 convent were younger than the nuns in the school and
13 were just becoming nuns.

14 'What the nuns in the school wore varied. Sometimes
15 they wore their veils and grey skirts. Sometimes they
16 wore blue. Other times they wore their full nun outfit.
17 When the nuns were outside, you wouldn't see them wear
18 their veil. The nuns took the veil off and went to
19 Marks & Spencer with you, just with a grey skirt,
20 tights, sandals and a jacket.

21 'In the morning, we'd be woken up by the nuns or
22 members of staff. We'd get washed and go downstairs in
23 our pyjamas. We'd brush our teeth. The nuns would
24 supervise us to make sure the children were clean. We'd
25 then sit at the table for breakfast.

1 'Every night, before bed, you had to wash, brush
2 your teeth and put your pyjamas on. At bedtime, lights
3 out was about 8 pm. The nuns disappeared to their rooms
4 and I'd put the light back on. The dormitories had huge
5 glass windows, so the nuns used to check to make sure
6 that the lights were out. The door was always unlocked
7 to let you go to the toilet. The issue with that was
8 that you had to go through the kitchen and downstairs to
9 the toilets.

10 'Each unit had a dining room and kitchen for
11 breakfast. The table would be set out for breakfast.
12 One of the nuns would be making loads of toast. There
13 were three huge tables and probably about 13 children.
14 Dinner and tea were downstairs in the big dining room.

15 'After breakfast, we would do chores, like doing the
16 dishes, cleaning the sinks and the shower rooms. We
17 would clean the unit and make our beds. It wasn't
18 full-scale scrubbing of baths or showers. The chores
19 were pretty minor ones. The nuns and civilian staff
20 would supervise. There were a lot of civilian staff who
21 came and went. They would be at Ladymary for six weeks
22 training and then leave.

23 'All the children would have lunch together. Then
24 there would be some relaxing time. At dinner time and
25 tea time outside caterers came in to do the food. The

1 dinner ladies would make food for the evening so that
2 the nuns could just heat it up. Dinner was served by
3 the dinner ladies and the nuns. At tea time we went up
4 to help ourselves. Whether the food was served to us or
5 not really depended on what there was on the menu. The
6 nuns would cook at the weekend.

7 'The food was really nice. There were stews,
8 shepherds pie, mince and potatoes, stovies and fish and
9 chips. If your food was put in front of you and you
10 weren't eating it, you'd be encouraged to eat it.
11 I didn't feel I was ever punished for not eating. I was
12 never forced to eat.

13 'When we played football or played in the forest and
14 came in dirty, we were automatically sent to the shower.
15 We couldn't walk about muddy. The nuns would make sure
16 of it. Everything was that clean way. I would only go
17 into the shower if the nuns were there.

18 'There was a routine about brushing your teeth and
19 washing in the sinks. The nuns would supervise you and
20 make sure that you were washed properly. Sometimes
21 they'd wash you with flannels, around the back of your
22 neck. The nuns would encourage you to wash. Sometimes
23 I was so dirty I wanted to wash anyway. You would have
24 your sports shorts on and the nuns would tell you to
25 strip off. You would get your housecoat, a towel or

1 just wear your pants to get washed. The nuns would wash
2 our hair. I remember Sister MHV using pink paraffin on
3 my hair because I had nits.

4 'I was always taken to three shops in Edinburgh:
5 Marks & Spencer, Clarks and Peter Lord. I would be
6 taken by my social worker, Margaret Mitchell,
7 Sister MHV, Sister Christine or [another Sister].
8 Every year, I would get a new outfit unless during the
9 year something snapped or broke and I needed something
10 new. The nuns were good in that sense. It was good
11 clobber. We had dressing gowns and pyjamas, slippers,
12 socks and pants. We had shirts, T-shirts and shorts.

13 'The nuns looked after you throughout the year by
14 getting you really good new clothes and feeding you.
15 I went home with really nice clothes and sandals. My
16 brothers and sisters looked down and about me as if
17 saying, "Wow, you're doing much better than us." They
18 asked where did I get the clothes.

19 'After we had finished our chores, we would go to
20 the education block. The classes were mixed with
21 children from all the units. You could play in the
22 sandpit, in the water tray, make papier mache, do arts
23 and crafts. Education took us up to lunchtime at about
24 12 pm.

25 'Mrs Low was a teacher along with some of the nuns.

1 Mrs Low did dictation, reading, mathematics and English.
2 I wasn't the best attender at school. I would be out in
3 the woodlands or outside with the bikes. I was a bit
4 unruly. I'd be told many times to get back into the
5 class. I wasn't interested in being educated. That
6 became a problem for me, for the civilian staff and for
7 the nuns.

8 'It wasn't the National Curriculum, but the nuns
9 taught me loads of things. The nuns taught me to cook
10 and bake. I learned how to make jam and bread and
11 pancakes. They taught me about the woods, the trees,
12 mushrooms, flowers, and bees. They taught me how to fix
13 bikes. I was driving when I was 8 years old. The nuns
14 had a Morris Minor. I sat on Sister Josephine's knee
15 driving about the car park. The car park was huge.
16 Sister Josephine controlled the foot pedals. One
17 Saturday afternoon, when it was quiet, I drove the car
18 around the car park. I had studied Sister Josephine so
19 I was reversing, putting the indicators on and all of
20 that. Later, when I sat my driving test, I only had two
21 lessons on the road before I passed.

22 'In the light nights in the summer time we could go
23 outside and run about in the fields with a football. We
24 could go into the woodlands in the grounds. The grounds
25 were confined, so we were supervised.

1 'There wasn't a box of toys for the kids in the
2 house. There was a compendium of games. I was more
3 interested in going outside and cycling around. I had
4 a huge teddy bear. I think the teddy bear came from the
5 assessment centre in Glasgow. I arrived at Ladymary
6 with the bear.

7 'I had the bear throughout my stay at Ladymary. The
8 ear was hanging off. There was a bit at the back that
9 the nuns would sew up. He got a new eye. Then one day
10 I lost the bear or it was stolen. I don't know what
11 happened to the bear.

12 'There would be music from a radio. There was
13 a television downstairs in the classroom block for
14 educational purposes. We didn't watch television in the
15 evening. There were educational books in the classroom.
16 There were story books but they belonged to the nuns.
17 I wasn't into reading.

18 'At the weekend, all the kids in Ladymary would be
19 fostered out with people looking to adopt or with their
20 parents. I would be left in Ladymary on my own. The
21 nuns would say, "We'll make your weekend special".
22 I would be in the nuns' kitchen all the time. I would
23 lick the spoon and the bowl when we were baking.

24 'There were a lot of activities with the nuns going
25 on as well as the educational side of things. There

1 would be swimming at the Commonwealth Pool and at the
2 Good Shepherd in the nuns' swimming pool. There were
3 fairs organised by a member of staff. There were drives
4 into the Pentland Hills and Dalkeith with the nuns.

5 'In the summer holidays, it would just be me and
6 maybe another kid at Ladymary. I wouldn't see the other
7 kid. Throughout the summer holidays it was great. The
8 nuns would take me to Gullane and North Berwick in the
9 car.

10 'You attended all religious events and took part in
11 Lent, Shrove Tuesday and Easter. There was a beautiful
12 chapel in the grounds that we would go to. During the
13 week the choice was to go to chapel every day. At one
14 point I did go every day. There wasn't a choice at the
15 weekend. You had to go then.

16 'The weekend chapel was for civilians in Colinton.
17 Father Joseph McMahon would take that service. He was
18 a priest at Ladymary. There came a time where I built
19 a relationship with Father McMahon and I wanted to see
20 him all the time and hang out with him. I used to see
21 him every opportunity I could get. I would sneak away
22 into the chapel looking for him. He had an office at
23 Ladymary with books and photos. It was really nice. He
24 died two years ago.

25 'When I made my first Holy Communion, I received

1 a religious medal. The religious medals were silver
2 with a blue resin back. I was given a Jerusalem Bible,
3 rosary beads and religious cards. Now and again I would
4 get a medal from a priest or teacher. I don't remember
5 whether I received religious medals at any other
6 institution I was sent to.

7 'Birthdays and Christmas were celebrated. In the
8 12 days before Christmas there would be Mass on every
9 night. We'd go in a procession lighting a candle for
10 each of the days of Christmas. We'd sing Christmas
11 carols. In the main hall, there was a huge Christmas
12 tree and a chandelier with holly and candles that you
13 lit every night before Christmas. In the units there
14 were decorations. Outsiders would come in for Christmas
15 Mass. There was a Christmassy spirit that you were
16 involved in.

17 'Christmas Day for me was spent with the nuns.
18 There might be one or two children who would come in for
19 a week or two. There were about four kids at any one
20 time. I would eat Christmas dinner with the nuns. You
21 got gifts but not children's gifts. You would get
22 rosary beads, a New Jerusalem Bible, a medal and
23 something like sticky felts.

24 'My mum visited me on my 7th birthday with my sister
25 and one of my aunties. My mum didn't visit me at any

1 other time.

2 'Margaret Mitchell would sometimes drive me to
3 a supervised home visit. We would be sitting on the
4 sofa with my mum and my mum's husband. I'd be there for
5 about an hour. As soon as I went into the house, I'd be
6 looking for my brother. Sometimes my brothers and
7 sisters were nowhere to be seen. They would be out
8 playing. I would ask to go out and play with my brother
9 but Margaret would say I had to stay in the house with
10 them. My mum and Margaret would speak. I would loiter
11 around in the back garden. Then I would ask to leave.
12 I would only stay for about an hour. I didn't want to
13 see my mum's husband.

14 'I didn't get many home visits because of my
15 behaviour. One of the Sisters would tell me that
16 I wasn't getting home leave because of my behaviour.
17 I also figured out later on that my mum didn't want me
18 home. I went on a home visit a handful of times whilst
19 I was at Ladymary.

20 'Margaret Mitchell was amazing. She used to look
21 after me. Margaret Mitchell had two boys. They lived
22 up at The Meadows in Edinburgh. Later on, after a few
23 things happened, at weekends Margaret would take me home
24 on a Friday. I would go back to Margaret's house, hang
25 out with her sons and her family and be cared for. On

1 a Sunday night, Margaret would drop me off at Ladymary.
2 I probably stayed with Margaret six or seven times.
3 'There were so many opportunities from
4 Margaret Mitchell. Margaret Mitchell would tell me that
5 my mum couldn't take me back. Fettes College in
6 Edinburgh had funding for disruptive kids who weren't
7 doing well to take them in and help them make something
8 of themselves. It was residential. Margaret would say
9 to me if I did well I would go to Fettes College when
10 I was 9 years old.
11 'I had prospective foster parents come to see me.
12 A particular couple who lived in Edinburgh. The couple
13 came to visit me and took me to Edinburgh Zoo and out on
14 day trips. When I was about 7 years old, I went to stay
15 with them once. My bedroom was stuck in a basement.
16 There was no window, just a strip light. The bedroom
17 was really nicely decorated. It was a lovely apartment.
18 I stole a Bank of Scotland piggy bank. I opened it up
19 and there was money in it. I confessed the following
20 day. I was driven back to Ladymary.
21 'Margaret Mitchell would say to me that there were
22 foster parents who could have me. I was too loyal to my
23 mum and brother. I missed the family. Sometimes
24 I would be thinking things were great but then I would
25 think about my family. I would think my brothers and

1 sisters are not living like this. My brothers and
2 sisters aren't getting these really nice meals, they're
3 not getting dressed like this, they're not going out to
4 events, parties or having Christmas. They didn't have
5 that richness and organisation. My brothers and sisters
6 got Christmas presents from my mum and her husband but
7 they didn't have the Christmas spirit that we had with
8 the nuns.

9 'I went to see a child psychiatrist at the Sick
10 Children's Hospital with Margaret Mitchell and one of
11 the Sisters. The first time I went there I was 6 years
12 old and I went again when I was 7 years old. There was
13 a lot of adult talk going on. I was just looking
14 around.

15 'If you were unwell the nuns or a member of staff
16 would look after you. The nuns took me to the dentist.
17 I fell out of a tree and broke my arm and the nuns took
18 me to the hospital. There wasn't a doctor or nurse at
19 Ladymary. I always went outside for any treatment.

20 'I started running away from Ladymary when I was 7
21 or 8 years old. I was running away from Brian Dailey.
22 Brian Dailey was employed by the Good Shepherd Convent
23 as a housemaster. One time I was found by the police in
24 Princes Street Gardens. Other times, I would hide in
25 the woods in the grounds for hours, miss lunch and turn

1 up at the unit at 6 pm. There would be search parties
2 out looking for you.

3 'If you were being loud or disruptive you would be
4 told you had to quieten down in the quiet room. [One of
5 the Sisters] would scream at me sometimes. I can see in
6 hindsight that I deserved that.

7 'There was a care worker at Ladymary called
8 Brian Dailey. He had a social work background but he
9 wasn't a social worker. I was in the top unit before he
10 came into Ladymary. Brian Dailey came in to run the top
11 unit. Brian Dailey was at Ladymary for 18 months to
12 two years. He left when I was 8 years old. In the top
13 unit there was a cupboard before you came to the
14 bathroom. Beside that was another door to a bedroom.
15 When Brian Dailey was on shift that was his bedroom.

16 'At one point I would see Brian Dailey four or five
17 times a week for weeks on end, then I wouldn't see him
18 for three or four days. Brian Dailey took me into his
19 bedroom and sexually abused me. Brian Dailey got
20 undressed in front of me, grabbed my wrist and forced me
21 to masturbate him. The abuse happened constantly over
22 a year or so when I was 7 to 8 years old. Brian Dailey
23 abused me in my room, in the bathroom and also in the
24 woods. Once, Brian Dailey came into my bedroom at
25 night, when I was on my own and molested me under the

1 covers. Another time, Brian Dailey ran a bath. I came
2 in dirty, got in the bath and he abused me.

3 'One time, I fell out with Brian Dailey. I was in
4 the lounge and I said something cheeky to him. He moved
5 the table to block me from leaving. Brian Dailey chased
6 me around the chairs and tables. Eventually, he caught
7 me. Brian Dailey just grabbed me and took me to his
8 room. Brian Dailey made me masturbate him.

9 'At the Commonwealth Pool, Brian Dailey would be
10 there. That was difficult. I would say I didn't want
11 to go swimming because Brian was there. I was always
12 avoiding days out and school trips when Brian Dailey was
13 involved. There was grooming going on outside of the
14 establishment. I could see it. There were nuns there
15 to oversee, especially when it came to the shower room.
16 I had told the nuns that Brian Dailey had abused me.
17 The nuns would say, "Come on now". The nuns could have
18 stopped Brian Dailey taking kids out swimming.

19 'Brian Dailey was physical with me and with other
20 children. He slapped you, pulled your ears and grabbed
21 you. Brian Dailey put me against the wall. Sometimes
22 it was because I was threatening to tell on him.

23 'One of Brian Dailey's abuses took place in front of
24 my eyes. It was with ... a boy from Aberdeen. [He] had
25 been at Ladymary School before me. When I went into the

1 dormitory in the top unit, [he] was already there. We
2 were both about 7 years old. [The boy] and I were in
3 a bedroom together in the top unit. There was just me
4 and him. I saw Brian Dailey come into the room and sit
5 on [the boy's] bed. I could see the full length of
6 [his] bed from where my bed was. The beds were not far
7 apart. Brian Dailey put his hand under [his] quilt. He
8 molested [him]. I knew what was going on with
9 Brian Dailey's hands under the covers. I could see in
10 the light. I could see the movement. I could hear [the
11 boy] whimpering. I pretended to wake up by moving my
12 quilt. Brian Dailey got up and left the room.

13 'The following morning, [the boy] and I were in the
14 bedroom. I was drinking lemon barley water by the
15 window, looking out into the woodlands and the beautiful
16 view. I said to [the boy] that I saw what Brian Dailey
17 had done to him last night. [He] remained quiet. There
18 was a build-up and [he] started crying. A couple of
19 weeks later, [he] was gone and I never saw him again.
20 I don't know where [he] went. It wasn't long after
21 Brian Dailey abused [this boy] that he abused me.

22 '[One particular Sister] wasn't physical with me,
23 just verbal. I had been in quite a bit of bother for
24 not doing what I was told. [This Sister] and
25 Brian Dailey were always the first to put me in the

1 quiet room. I'd spend days in and out of the quiet
2 room. I used to cause problems in the top unit or
3 abscond, to get away from the unit and from
4 Brian Dailey, into the quiet room.

5 'I was the only person in the quiet room. The door
6 would be locked. Sometimes Brian would throw me in the
7 quiet room. Other times it would be cleared with the
8 other staff ... I would spend a night in the quiet
9 room. The longest I stayed in there was three days
10 because I absconded. It was like being in a prison.
11 The nuns or Brian Dailey would come in, give me food and
12 take me to the toilet.

13 'The nuns did a lot for me. They were nice folk and
14 they taught me loads. They looked after me. They had
15 a lot of care and sympathy for me but they should have
16 done something about Brian Dailey. I don't know what
17 the nuns did, or if they ever did anything about him.
18 What I do know is that the nuns didn't listen to me.

19 'I told the nuns what he had done to me and to [the
20 boy from Aberdeen]. I always told Brian Dailey that
21 I was going to tell the nuns what he did to me. Every
22 time he abused me, I always told the nuns. I told [two
23 of the Sisters]. I told the nuns that Brian Dailey had
24 taken me into the bedroom, got undressed in front of me,
25 grabbed my wrist and forced me to masturbate him. The

1 nuns wrote things down. I could see from their
2 expressions that I wasn't being taken seriously. The
3 nuns didn't do anything about the abuse. They never
4 listened to me. It was brushed away. There was
5 a deadpan look from [one of the Sisters].

6 'The nuns would be telling you off for something,
7 like running too fast in the house, and Brian Dailey
8 would be behind them doing hand signals to me telling me
9 to keep quiet about the abuse.

10 'I felt the nuns weren't listening to me. I spoke
11 to Margaret Mitchell, my social worker, about
12 Brian Dailey. I told Margaret what Brian had done to me
13 and [the boy from Aberdeen]. I would shout at Margaret,
14 saying that she had to do something about this, so that
15 Brian Dailey would hear. I told Margaret Mitchell many
16 times. Margaret did listen to me. I think Margaret
17 took it upon herself to take me home to her house and
18 get me away from Ladymary at the weekends when
19 Brian Dailey was on shift. Margaret knew on a Thursday
20 which kids were going out at the weekend and that
21 I wouldn't be eligible for a home visit.

22 'Margaret Mitchell asked me to come down to speak to
23 [two of the Sisters]. All three of them were in the
24 room. I told them what Brian Dailey was doing to me.
25 Nobody was listening to me. I thought: I need to get

1 moved somewhere else.

2 'The first time I spoke to Jean McDonald about abuse
3 was about Brian Dailey. Jean McDonald said to me I was
4 a troubled wee boy, was I sure I was okay? That was why
5 I had to go away for evaluations at the psychiatric
6 department in the Sick Children's Hospital in Edinburgh
7 when I was 7. All Mrs McDonald did was look after my
8 mum and [my mum's husband]. I'm not saying that she
9 didn't do anything for me. She did. She got me into
10 other homes. Mrs McDonald could have done a lot more.

11 'For a few months I knew that the Vietnamese boat
12 people were coming to stay at Ladymary and the place was
13 closing down. I was the last kid to leave Ladymary.
14 When I was about 11 years old I was taken back to
15 Glasgow. I stayed at home for five or six months. My
16 mum moved into a new place. [Her husband] was being
17 drunk, disorderly and violent towards me, my mum and my
18 brothers and sisters.'

19 'Alec' then goes on to talk about the other
20 establishments, which is evidence that the Inquiry has
21 already heard. He talks about what happened to him
22 after care, but notes at paragraph 270, at page 58,
23 that:

24 'In 2024, I went back to Ladymary for cathartic
25 reasons just to get over the fact of what happened

1 there. Ladymary was knocked down and changed into
2 a gated housing estate.'

3 'Alec' was involved in three High Court trials, one
4 of which involved Brian Dailey in June 2017, and he
5 talks about his experience of that at paragraph 286, on
6 page 61.

7 He says:

8 'Brian Dailey's trial was the last trial. It was at
9 Edinburgh High Court. I was giving evidence again for
10 two-and-a-half days. There were five complainers.
11 Charges for four complainers were found unanimously
12 guilty, including mine. The other one were found not
13 proven. Brian Dailey was given ten years'
14 imprisonment.'

15 He goes on to say, at paragraph 287, that despite
16 the fact that Brian Dailey was given a prison sentence,
17 he felt let down by the judge's sentencing guidelines
18 because they were sentenced for crimes back then on the
19 punishment based on the law back then and that wasn't
20 good enough for him.

21 'Alec's' reflections and the lessons that he hopes
22 can be learned from his experience I think have already
23 been covered on previous occasions.

24 At paragraph 296 he says that he has no objection to
25 his witness statement being published as part of the

1 evidence to the Inquiry, he does not wish his name to be
2 published in any document and he believes the facts
3 stated in his witness statement to be true.

4 He has signed his statement and it is dated
5 18 January 2018.

6 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

7 That's it until tomorrow morning, I think. What is
8 the plan for tomorrow?

9 MS MCMILLAN: My Lady, there is an intention to have more
10 applicant evidence in the form of oral evidence
11 tomorrow.

12 LADY SMITH: Starting at 10.00 as usual, I think.

13 MS MCMILLAN: Yes, my Lady.

14 LADY SMITH: Very well. I'll rise now until 10 o'clock
15 tomorrow morning.

16 (3.55 pm)

17 (The Inquiry adjourned until 10.00 am
18 on Thursday, 5 June 2025)

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I N D E X

1	'Liam' (read)	1
2	'Jill' (read)	27
3	'Oliver' (read)	49
4	'Peter' (read)	63
5	'Stuart' (read)	74
6	'Josh' (read)	83
7	'John' (read)	100
8	'Gabriel' (affirmed)	120
9	Questions by Ms Innes	122
10	'Nicholas' (read)	155
11	'Alec' (read)	165
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