

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

LUW

Support person present: Yes

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

### Life before going into care

2. I was born in Kirkcaldy and have stayed there all my life. My dad was who was born in 1940 and my mum was who was born in 1943. My dad worked as a builder and my mum worked as a cook's assistant. I have two older brothers, who was born in 1957 and who was born in 1962.
3. My early memories are of having a great family, lots of good times and being very happy at home. I was a mummy's boy but got on fine with my dad. and I got on really well as he had time for me however and I just didn't click perhaps because I thought he was the golden child and in my eyes he was the favourite. would just annoy me and make me do stupid things and even to this day we just clash.
4. When I was born we were staying in Kirkcaldy in a small flat. We had to move after there was a fire in the flat which I barely remember and then we moved to Kirkcaldy which was a bigger house. My parents stayed there until after I left the house as an adult and they got a pensioners house.

5. I attended Dunearn Primary School however I was expelled from there and moved to Valley Primary School, both in Kirkcaldy. I misbehaved at school, nothing drastic, just carrying on, laughing, joking and would not pay attention. I never broke the law or did anything to hurt anyone. I saw a school psychologist when I was about six years old although I do not remember anything about my meeting with her. I know she then met with my parents and she put me forward to have the social work department involved. My understanding was that the psychologist and social worker heavily influenced the decisions about me going into care at Ovenstone. I cannot recall the name of my social worker however as I only saw him about three times between the ages of seven and sixteen. Once before going to Ovenstone, once to take me there on my first day and the last time when he took me to Linwood Hall School. The only thing I remember is that he had an unusual car which I think was an old Austin. I was aware my dad tried to fight the decision to put me in Ovenstone however he was told by social work that if he didn't willingly let me go they would come and take me. My dad told me shortly before he died that his biggest regret was letting me be put in care.
6. I was only six or seven years old when all of this was going on and didn't understand what it all meant. I was at the meetings my parents had with the psychologist at school and aware that my dad was strongly disagreeing with her but it didn't mean anything to me. I know my dad tried everything to prevent me going into care but it didn't make any difference as I think they had already made up their minds. I do not recall if my social worker was ever at these meetings which always took place at the school. There was never a time that the psychologist or social worker came to meet with us at our home to see me in that environment. I did not see my behaviour was a problem as all my friends behaved the same way and it was never explained to me that if I was able to change my behaviour I wouldn't need to go into care. I do not remember ever being told that I was moving out of my family home and going to live in a residential school. Neither of my brothers ever went into care. With the benefit of hindsight I think I had Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder as both my sons have this and their consultant told me it is highly likely I have this condition too as it is hereditary. I see a lot of similarities between their behaviour and mine when I was a child.

### **Ovenstone Residential School, Pittenweem**

7. Ovenstone school was a very large building which was light grey in colour and I am sure it was run by Fife Council. It was possibly an old farm as it was in the middle of nowhere surrounded by ploughed fields with one small row of houses opposite. It was glass fronted with three doors to enter the building. The grounds were fenced off from the surrounding farmland and we had a field that we could play in within the grounds. Just inside the main entrance to the right was the head teacher's office and straight ahead was the dining and kitchen areas.
8. From the main entrance there were also corridors to the left and right where there was a dormitory at each end referred to as the east and west wings. Each of these dormitories contained thirty to forty beds which the boys stayed in and each dormitory had a playroom nearby. There were only three or four girls staying at Ovenstone and their dormitory was also to the right but separate from the boys. Also off the entrance hall was stairs which led to separate bedrooms on the first floor and the house parents for these rooms had accommodation which was on the second floor. This area was known as the north wing. I believe the house parents for the girls' and the boys' dormitories had rooms next to the children they were responsible for. The north wing only had a few bedrooms and although the rooms had bunk beds there was only ever one boy to a room there.
9. My room was one of three separate bedrooms which were located in the north wing. I do not know why I was put in a room on my own and not a dormitory however two other boys about the same age as me, KPV [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], were also in separate rooms next to me. I cannot remember [REDACTED]'s surname but he was from Cardenden. Our rooms all had bunk beds so we would have been able to share if we had been allowed. I remember feeling isolated and lonely a lot of the time. These rooms had large windows and although there was a heating system it was very ineffective in windy or cold weather. I still find it easier to sleep to the sound of wind battering off the window as that was what I remember helped me to sleep in Ovenstone. We definitely felt segregated from the rest of the children staying there. We had our own house parents who slept in rooms on the level above ours and we were not allowed up there.

We were not allowed to enter the other dormitories or the adjoining playrooms so that meant we had no playrooms or televisions to use. Over the years KPV and I became great friends and I would describe us having a bond just like brothers.

10. House parents were responsible for looking after us when we were not at school. Although we had two house parents it would only be one of them on duty at a time so they worked on a rota. My house parents were KLG and another man whose name I don't recall. KLG was really good as he tried to help me in many ways and I felt he cared. He did try to keep me out of trouble and helped me with ways to manage my anger. He also taught me, KPV and to draw and spent lots of time with us. If he did punish me it was fair using a point system the school operated. He never shouted at or hurt me. We kept in touch after I left Ovenstone until he passed away. He would send a Christmas card every year with a letter in it asking after me and my family. It was just a job to the other guy and he wasn't really interested. They also looked after KPV and.
11. The staffing at Ovenstone consisted of about eight house parents, two or three teachers, two laundry staff, three or four kitchen staff, a receptionist and a handyman. Mr LUS was SNR and I do not remember him having. Mr LUS was five and a half foot in height, with white hair, probably in his fifties with a stocky build and he was always well dressed and smart in appearance.

### **Routine at Ovenstone Residential School**

#### *First day*

12. My social worker picked me and my mum up from our house and drove to Ovenstone where staff members were waiting for me. He dropped me off without him or my mum coming in and I was just left with the staff. This was my first time being away from my mum so it was a big shock to me. I remember I was very emotional and I felt terrified.

13. Mr LUS was SNR and it was him who showed me to my room which was on the first floor. It had a bunk bed within although I was not sharing the room with anyone else and there was a cupboard for me to put my clothes in. He was pleasant to me and explained the school rules which were no running, no spitting and to do as I was told.

#### *Mornings and bedtime*

14. Every morning we got up around 6.30 or 7am, had a bath and then we had breakfast before going to school. We went to bed about 8.30 or 9pm unless we had been sent to bed early as a punishment. We had house parents to look after us at these times and it would one of them who would wake us up and make sure we went to bed.

#### *Mealtimes/Food*

15. All meals were served in the dining room and there were no seating rules, you just sat wherever there was space and the food was either already served or it would be brought to the table by staff. Each day we would be given breakfast, dinner, tea and supper. I didn't have any issue with the routine food and if I didn't want to eat something that was not a problem. Breakfast was either cereal or toast but you didn't get a choice it was just what was put down to you. I remember supper was usually toast with hot chocolate or hot milk but if you were under your points you missed out on supper.
16. The only issue I had with the food is that I was put on a special diet following a visit to the hospital. I think I would have been about nine years old at this time and I had no idea why I was having to eat different food from everyone else. All I knew was my food tasted like cardboard and it couldn't have any colourings, preservatives or additives. Even my bread was different from the bread everyone else was eating. This diet lasted for about six to eight months and I found it difficult to cope with as it tasted bland and awful. I remember not eating a lot of food at that time and always feeling quite hungry. I was not allowed to buy any sweets from the van that used to come to the school once per week when I was on the diet.

### *Washing/bathing*

17. I had complete privacy to wash and go to the toilet as we had two separate bathrooms each with a toilet, sink and bath in the north wing. We had a bath every morning and our house parent would run the bath however they did not supervise us as we washed. I remember we used to brush our teeth before going for breakfast and then again after we had finished breakfast.

### *Clothing/uniform*

18. We all wore a grey uniform which the school supplied and my uniform had name tags attached so I always got my own issue of clothes to wear. They supplied everything including pants and socks. Every Sunday when I returned from being at home the first thing I had to do was take off my own clothes and put on the uniform they gave me.

### *Leisure time*

19. I found I spent a lot of time in my room alone and constantly felt lonely. I had no playroom to use where I could meet the other kids and had no personal possessions like books, toys or games to play with. There wasn't a TV for me to watch.
20. There was a bike shed outside however most of the bikes were not working properly and there was limited areas to cycle within the grounds. I seem to recall there may have been a couple of skateboards as well.
21. The staff did organise activities in the evening and they had a minibus to take us places. Normally two house parents would take us swimming to a local college two or three times per week or down to the harbour for a walk and we would get chips. They also took us to a fishing museum nearby and sometimes to the coastal chain walk. There was always something to do at night as long as you were not sent to bed as a punishment. I do have a few good memories of times like Halloween when we were allowed to dress up.

### *Trips and holidays*

22. I did not go on any trips when I was at Ovenstone and I went home during the school holidays such as Easter and Christmas.

### *School*

23. The school comprised of two portacabins joined together to form two classrooms and was located in the grounds next to the house. For maths and general subjects my teacher was Mr LUR and I think it was Miss Dow who taught English. I did have classes with some other teachers and I remember Mr Herd being a nice teacher, I think he may have been a stand in as I also got him at the next school I went to after Ovenstone. I did not learn much at Ovenstone and when I left there I was lucky if I could spell my own name.
24. I found it difficult to focus and concentrate at school. I was a day dreamer, lacked attention and was regularly frustrated which made me argumentative. This meant that I was in trouble a lot and Mr LUR often made me stand outside or send me to Mr LUS. Mr LUR wasn't patient so he shouted at me often and I spent a lot of time outside standing for periods of two or three hours. I knew what was coming but I just didn't know how to stop it. I felt no-one ever gave me a break and tried to help me with all these issues I had. I think they thought I was deliberately behaving like this when I felt I didn't have any control of my behaviour.
25. I never got any feedback on my schooling progress and I do not believe my parents got any either. I never saw a report card and I am sure my parents didn't get one as they never spoke to me about it. I do not believe my parents were ever invited to the school to discuss how I was doing.

### *Healthcare*

26. When I was about nine my mum took me to the Victoria Hospital in Kirkcaldy. I don't remember much about this appointment other than they shaved my hair and put

sensors on my head. I got time off school to go to this appointment however I do not know why I went or what the outcome was other than the following day is when I was put on a special diet. I was upset my hair had been shaved off as I was growing it but my mum bought me a tammy hat which I wore to cover my bald head.

27. I remember that the house parents dealt with any minor injuries and for anything more serious we were taken to the local health centre to see the doctor. I seem to recall Mr LUS had to approve anyone being taken for any form of medical attention out of the school.
28. One time when I had tonsillitis a female teacher who I think must have been a stand-in was told to take me to either Anstruther or Pittenweem to get medication. On the way there we were involved in a bad car accident as she pulled out of a junction and stalled. I think it was her own car which was a Mini. Another car smashed into us and an ambulance attended. I was checked over and had bumps and bruises but was allowed to return to Ovenstone. I had to spend two days in bed and I saw this as a punishment and didn't understand why I couldn't leave my room. I felt fine but I was just lonely there on my own.
29. I was also plagued with mouth ulcers and would be taken to the local doctor's surgery by a member of staff when I needed. If I was prescribed any medication the staff would make sure I got it.
30. I do not recall ever going to see the dentist during the four years I was at Ovenstone.

#### *Religious instruction*

31. There was no religious education at Ovenstone and we did not have to follow any particular religious beliefs or customs. I had never been brought up to be religious so there was no change for me.

### *Work*

32. I have no recollection of having to do any chores when I stayed at Ovenstone. On a couple of occasions we had a fete and I helped cook crab on an open fire, supervised by KLG which was an experience I enjoyed. We all had to do things to help on these days. I do not know where the proceeds went but think it must have been for school funds.

### *Birthdays and Christmas*

33. I went home for Christmas to spend the holidays with my family and there was nothing done for my birthday when I was at Ovenstone.

### *Visits*

34. My parents never visited me and I do not know if they were allowed to. I do not know why they didn't visit, whether it was because they were working and found it difficult to come or because I was home most weekends.
35. My social worker never came to visit me at any time over the four years I was in Ovenstone and I never saw any sort of official visitors coming to inspect the place or to speak to me.

### *Family contact*

36. I was allowed to go home at weekends from Friday after school until Sunday. A staff member would drive me home and arrange to collect me normally around 3 or 4pm on Sunday. Sometimes Mr LUS would cancel my weekends home as a punishment and he would call my parents to let them know. I would normally know by the Thursday of that week if he had decided I was not allowed to go home.

### *Personal possessions*

37. I was not allowed to have any personal possessions in my room, no posters, radio, TV or anything else that would have kept me amused. I was one of the youngest children there and I remember spending a lot of time alone in my room just staring out of the window as I had nothing else to do. I know that KPV and who were also in their own rooms were the same however those in the dormitories were not. They had a playroom and had lots of things to do to keep them occupied as well as a TV to watch.

### *Running away*

38. One night I ran away with KPV and some other boys as we had had enough. We were in the middle of nowhere so the police must have sat waiting for us and took us back. Mr LUS was there and he shouted and roared at us telling us he would deal with us in the morning. I had to go to bed knowing that he would punish me when I woke up.
39. I ran away one other time however that ended up the same as before with the police finding us and taking us back to Ovenstone. The police never asked why I was running away and neither did any staff, it just ended up with me having to spend more time alone in my room as punishment.
40. Although I only ran away twice I am aware that others ran away and I would say it happened quite often as it wasn't just me who got it bad in there. There was probably two or three incidents a month where kids ran away and I am sure it was the police who would bring them back.

### *Discipline*

41. Mr LUS was the main person who would discipline children and I found out he operated a points system for the teachers and staff to use. He hadn't explained this to me on the first day. Everyone had ten points during the day and ten points at night and

any bad behaviour resulted in a point being deducted. Points could be deducted for anything from asking to go to the toilet during class, answering a teacher back, being late or being somewhere you were not supposed to be, basically anything could mean a point was deducted. I have no idea how the staff recorded the points and those they deducted however before we had our tea all the children were gathered in a room and if you had a score under twelve your name would be shouted out by Mr LUS . You would have to go to bed straight after tea which meant you missed out on any activities that night and it also meant you had to report to him the following morning when he would physically punish you.

42. There was also a reward system which meant if you behaved you could visit the sweet van which came to Ovenstone once per week. You got to spend any pocket money your parents gave you which Mr LUS set as a maximum of sixty pence per week. If you didn't behave you were not allowed to buy any sweets.
43. I was allowed to go home every weekend to spend that time with my family, however, Mr LUS would sometimes punish me by not granting me permission to go home. He would inform my parents and as far as I remember the longest time I didn't get home was three weekends in a row. I really struggled to deal with not getting home so wouldn't react well when he told me.
44. Mr LUR would discipline me by sending me out of the class to stand outside the door for what seemed like hours. Sometimes he would drag me out of the class by the arm. I spent a lot of time standing outside the classroom. No teacher ever used a belt on me but if I had been really bad they would send me to Mr LUS who would belt me or hit me with a trainer.

#### *Bed Wetting*

45. Not long after I started at Ovenstone I began to wet the bed which I hadn't done when I stayed at home. This happened two or three times a week over a six or eight month period and I believe it was because of the fear I felt every day. If I had wet the bed I

had to tell my house parent and after my bath, but before breakfast, I had to roll up my bedsheets and take them to the laundry. I felt this was like the walk of shame through the building as anyone would be able to see me. I had to wash the soiled sheets twice in freezing cold water and put them through a huge mangle. I wasn't the only kid who had to do this, there was quite a few others. There was an old lady who worked there and she would stand over me talking in my ear telling me how disgusting I was. I found it difficult to deal with this woman speaking to me like that and it made me feel dirty and humiliated. I do not remember her name but I do remember there was another woman who also worked in the laundry who was nice. No-one ever spoke to me about why this was happening.

### **Abuse at Ovenstone**

46. When I first started at Ovenstone there was lots of fighting and bullying from the boys who had been there the longest. It was like they had to stamp their authority. I tried to avoid it and initially I didn't fight back even though I got day to day beatings from other kids. After about three or four weeks that changed, something snapped and I wasn't taking it anymore. I was caught fighting back with another boy so Mr LUS took us into one of the playrooms and put adult sized boxing gloves on me and the other boy. He told us to fight but I didn't know how to fight, I was only seven years old, so I just tried to defend myself. It was one on one and I was in shock, the staff and pupils had been brought in to watch and the kids were jeering from the side. It just looked like a boxing match with two kids who didn't know how to box. This happened to me about five or six times and it always made things worse as me and the other kid would hold grudges because we were boxing each other. Over the years KPV and I looked out for each other and that helped as I felt I had someone to watch my back.
47. Mr LUS was an evil and sadistic man. When I was summoned or sent to see him to be punished he would put me over his knee and strike my bare bottom four or five times with either his belt or a training shoe. He would take the training shoe out of his sports bag. It was an Arrows trainer with a black sole with three big red grips in the middle. This would happen three to four times a week and sometimes more than once in a day. It was very sore with me being unable to sit down afterwards. It wasn't just

me who was punished like this, often there would be a queue of four or five boys lined up to be punished and we would be taken in one by one to his office. I was only a kid and I was always terrified. I think this is what caused me to start wetting the bed as I had never been treated like this before. Mr LUS terrified me and I knew what was coming so I did try to be on my best behaviour but I felt I couldn't control my behaviour very well. I would say he ran the place harshly and as the years went on I became used to it, it became routine. I became more angry and frustrated so I would punch and kick things often hurting myself in the process but I never lashed out at people. I built up a temper and felt I was always seen to be in the wrong rather than anyone trying to work with me and my difficulties.

### **Reporting of abuse at Ovenstone**

48. I told my dad about Mr LUS hitting me when I was home at sometime within the first month of me being at Ovenstone. I know he was angry and he phoned the school and spoke to Mr LUS. He told my dad that I was lying and my dad believed him. As a result I was punished by my dad by not giving me any pocket money that week. I learned my lesson and never told anyone about it after that. When I returned to the school Mr LUS spoke to me telling me that what goes on at the school stays at the school. He said that it was my word against his and who would believe a troublemaker like me. Not being believed had a great impact on me as I only told my wife about being made to box recently after twenty eight years of marriage. I have never told anyone else about the abuse I suffered.

### **Leaving Ovenstone**

49. I knew I would be leaving Ovenstone when I was eleven or twelve as they only kept children until they were ready for secondary school. I got one week's notice that I was leaving to go to Linwood Hall and although I don't remember the date it was not at the start of a term time. I have no idea why that school was chosen and think it was social work and not my parents who decided. I had hoped I could return to mainstream

schooling. By the time I left Ovenstone I had really bad anger management problems and without warning I would explode.

### **Linwood Hall School, Leven**

50. Linwood Hall School was a Victorian building on three levels and catered for boys and girls who were all secondary school age so the age range was eleven to sixteen years old. It was a residential school but I got to go home each night as I stayed so close to it. There were approximately twenty or thirty kids who were not residential and about forty or fifty who were. There was a lot of staff and I would think there might have been about thirty of them in total. On the ground floor there were dormitories to the left hand side and these had four or six single beds in each room with a shower unit and toilets to the right hand side. The house parent had a room near to the entrance to the dormitory. On the second floor there was the photography room, a classroom as well as the girls dormitory and an office. I think it was run by Fife Council.
51. Mr **LUT** was **SNR** and he was a huge man probably weighing thirty or thirty five stones. Mr **KZZ** was **SNR**. I can remember some of the teachers including Mr **KNG** who taught science and Mr **HTZ** the woodwork teacher. There was a teacher called **KZP** who took us camping and he was firm but fair. He would have a carry on but there was a line. The house parents I can recall are Dave Murphy, **KNF** and Margaret but there were others.

### *First day*

52. My social worker collected me and my mum from our house and drove us to Linwood. Mr **LUT** met us and we were taken into his office where he explained about the education I would be given although I don't remember what he said. What I do remember is that during that conversation he roared and thumped his hand on the table. He was a big man so my mum and I got a fright and I nearly soiled myself. He was telling me that I would be doing as I was told.

### *Mealtimes and food*

53. I got my dinner there each day I was at school and the food was a hit or a miss but there was no issue if you didn't want to eat it.

### *Clothing and uniform*

54. I did not have to wear a school uniform and the only rule was that we had to wear moccasins when we were indoors to protect the carpets. We all had a locker to store our outside shoes.

### *Trips and holidays*

55. Linwood offered me lots of opportunities for trips away which included two weeks in the Isle of Man which I really enjoyed as I was really into motor sport. This trip was a huge incentive for me to try and adjust and improve my behaviour. I found it very difficult and I think I only just made it but I was so happy when I got to go. I think the school paid for this trip with my parents having to contribute as well. I also completed parts of the West Highland Way twice and managed to achieve my bronze and silver Duke of Edinburgh awards.

### *School*

56. I left home at 7am every school day to catch a public service bus and it took about an hour to get to Linwood. The school day finished at 4pm and I would then get the bus back home unless I had something I wanted to do in which case I stayed at the school. I found the days very long with the travelling and although I was glad I was staying at home it didn't leave me much time to spend with my family or friends. I did make a good friendship with a boy called [REDACTED] who stayed near me and also travelled to the school every day. I know he is dead now. I was also friends with a boy called [REDACTED].

### *Discipline*

57. There was no corporal punishment at Linwood so no-one got the belt and there was no point system for behaviour. Staff always had you working towards a privilege such as trips or bike rides. I did try and work harder to control my behaviour and anger and I earned the trophy for the most improved pupil when I was fifteen. This meant a lot to me and I still have the trophy in my house today. Punishments were either detention or losing a privilege and any of the staff or teachers could give a punishment of this type. Detention usually meant being sent to the science class in school breaks or after school had finished and was supervised by Mr **KNG**. I was punished with detention every week for things like answering back, losing my temper or being somewhere I shouldn't have been.
58. By the time I was at Linwood I was older and had learned a lot about how to behave and look after myself from my time at Ovenstone. I still struggled with my concentration and focus as well as having a very bad temper so this meant I got detention a lot. If I got detention it meant that by the time I got home it was 7pm so I wouldn't react well if I was told this was happening and would lose my temper.
59. Margaret, who was one of the house parents, would also search us by patting us down, smelling our fingers and breath as she was looking for cigarettes. If she found cigarettes she would confiscate them and tell Mr **LUT** who would phone your parents to let them know. I never smoked until I was twelve and started at Linwood. I always suspected that Margaret kept any confiscated cigarettes for her own use.

### **Abuse at Linwood**

60. I had changed a lot when I got to Linwood compared to when I had started at Ovenstone and although I didn't bully anyone the bullying at Linwood was horrendous. I started defending myself, I was streetwise and knew how to look after myself. I remember one boy called **[REDACTED]** who had obsessive-compulsive disorder and took everything anyone said very literally. Over the first few months I watched kids

being nasty and bullying him and I knew it wasn't right. They would pull down his trousers and beat him up, even when they knocked him to the ground they would punch and kick him and he never defended himself. I got into a lot of trouble when I was defending him but the staff never looked out for him and they could have prevented it. I battered a boy picking on him and when I was caught I explained to Mr LUT why I had been fighting. He called my mum to tell her about my behaviour so I was punished with detention and I lost some privileges. I continued to look after as did who would also defend him. I learned a lot from my friendship with and I think helping him actually helped me in lots of ways.

61. Mr LUT used to restrain me by getting me to the floor in his office, sitting astride me on my chest and pinning my arms down with his hands. Other staff members would be present and sometimes some of them would have dragged me there if I had been misbehaving. He was a huge man and whilst he struggled to walk, he was very strong and I found it very difficult to breath when he was sitting on me. I used to panic as I couldn't breath and I would be shouting at him to get off me telling him I was struggling for breath. He would pin my arms to the floor until I had calmed down as I had generally lost my temper and had been thrown out of class for swearing at a teacher or caught wandering somewhere I should not have been. I have no idea if he restrained anyone else like this. He would also throw me about a bit by grabbing the scruff of my neck and back of my trousers. I remember seeing a boy thrown out of Mr LUT's office into the wall outside although I don't remember who he was. I also remember a boy whose name I don't recall telling me that the first time he met me at the school was when he was standing in the queue for dinner and I came flying out of Mr LUT's office landing against the wall.
62. Another thing Mr LUT used to do was walk around the dining room with a big spoon and if he caught anyone with their elbows on the table he would hit them with the spoon which was very sore. This was a daily thing and we all feared him. Having said that I did find Mr LUT a decent man who was fair and would never lift his hands to anyone. He did try to help my during my time at Linwood.

63. Once when I was at woodwork class and had been cheeky to Mr HTZ he clamped me to four woodwork benches he had pushed together. I was trying to resist as he and Mr KZZ physically restrained me putting me on top of the benches and they clamped both my trousers legs and sleeves so I was lying on my back in a star shape. I couldn't move and they left me there for anything between fifteen to thirty minutes and during that time were laughing and joking about me. I was seething when they let me out and went berserk calling them names and punching and kicking things. I found them taunting me was the worst part of it and I was powerless to do anything. Mr HTZ would also shove or push me about sometimes.
64. We had a gardener at Linwood and he had a plot of land with a bungalow that he and his wife stayed in. We spent time with him learning about how he grew things I do remember him but not his name. Mr LUT announced to the school that he had lost his job as he had been caught sexually abusing a child. It was talked about at school however I never knew who the child was. This man never did anything improper towards me. I remember him as being in his thirties, dark hair, slim build and was five and a half feet tall. I believe he was sent to jail for the abuse.
65. We had a house parent called Dave Murphy and I remember he used to have a caravan at a farm. He used to take groups of kids out cycling and would go to his caravan but I never got to go, probably as I would be on a punishment, and at the time I was gutted. As an adult the police came to see me and asked me if Dave had ever touched me or took me to his caravan. I learned that he had been responsible for sexually abusing children from the school and he was jailed for that which made me feel relieved I hadn't gone on these trips.

### **Leaving Linwood**

66. I left Linwood just before my sixteenth birthday so I was staying back at home and having to get a job. That was it, I was an adult left to get on with my life and I never heard from my social worker again.

## **Life after being in care**

67. Life at home was not good as I felt a stranger in my own house. [REDACTED] had married and had his own life and [REDACTED] and I had never connected anyway. I applied for a lot of jobs but I felt I was at a disadvantage because of the schools I had attended. If I got any interviews I would be asked about these schools and why I had gone to them. With the help of my dad I got a Youth Training Scheme job with the local council and started doing joinery however at my request I transferred to gardening as I preferred being outdoors. I went to Elmwood College in Cupar to study Estate and Farm Maintenance and I got my apprenticeship out of it. After I qualified I couldn't get a job and I ended up doing a number of other types of jobs until sometime in 2000 I got a job as a porter at the Victoria Hospital. I lasted six months and nearly had a nervous breakdown as I couldn't cope having to deal with dead bodies.
68. The early 1990s were not a good time for me, I was an angry person and would go out drinking and start fighting with people. In 1992 I met my wife [REDACTED] and she turned my life around. If someone looked at me the wrong way I would want to hit them but she would physically prevent me from fighting. I have never hit a woman so with her help I learned to walk away. We have had three children, [REDACTED] who is twenty-six, [REDACTED] who is twenty-four and [REDACTED] who is sixteen. We also have a grandchild, [REDACTED] who is seven. Our family is very close and I have always tried to be a good parent. I never wanted my children to go into care and any contact we have had with social workers has never been good as I do not trust them. I struggle with giving affection or praise as I never experienced these things and if my kids ask me for a cuddle I tell them to ask their mum. It has kept me awake as my kids deserve better.
69. We have had a lot of challenges with our sons as they were both diagnosed with ADHD in childhood and this has meant that social workers have had involvement with us. Once [REDACTED] set fire to his bedroom and I smacked him as a punishment. All the social worker could say is I should not smack my son. I did not feel supported at all and I was only trying to teach my son he had done wrong. On another occasion [REDACTED] tried a Blue WKD drink and the social worker referred him to drug and alcohol counselling which was completely out of proportion. At the first appointment the

counsellor told us this was just nonsense and said he had no need to attend any further appointments. That's been our only involvement with social work as I don't want them near my family. When [REDACTED] was struggling I was terrified they would take him into care to be in the same type of places I was in.

### **Impact**

70. My education really suffered because I was in care especially at Ovenstone. I realise my behaviour was challenging however I felt I had no control over it. Rather than teachers trying to work with me to overcome and learn I was routinely punished instead. Over the years [REDACTED] has helped me a lot with learning things, particularly spelling. I find I am learning all the time but I have some issues with my memory and I feel I need more help. I think that if someone who cared about what they were doing and understood my problems could have given me one to one teaching that would have been a huge benefit. I saw Mr LUR [REDACTED] by chance at the local health centre and I went chalk white as it took me back to when I was a young boy with memories of Ovenstone and him shouting at me or sending me out his class.
71. I also have trust issues, I don't mix well with others and struggle to cope in busy places which I put down to being segregated from the other children at Ovenstone. Although I don't know why I was segregated I cannot understand why anyone would think a seven year old could be a threat to anyone. I felt I was treated differently from the other kids who were in the dormitories. They could feel the place was more like a home as they had their playroom and could have their personal possessions with them. When I did get home I found it hard to make and keep friends as I wouldn't be around during the week. I was able to make friends during the school holidays but after they finished I wasn't around to keep these friendships going.
72. I feel that my time at Ovenstone meant that I had not grown up with my family and I lost the connection with my brothers. I would go as far to say it split my family with my dad seeing me as the black sheep. I was jealous of my brothers being at home and I felt I was missing out on things. I definitely missed out on bonding and feeling part of the family.

73. In 2000 I was prescribed anti-depressants and sleeping pills. I have suffered some memory loss because the doctor prescribed the sleeping pills for twelve years and then suddenly stopped them. I was told I should have only been on them for six months. I am still prescribed anti-depressants. In 2000 I also went to see a psychologist as I had nearly lost the will to live, I wouldn't eat, speak or get out of bed and I became suicidal. After a while she moved on and I then started to see Dr Joan Galloway who was a psychiatrist and she diagnosed Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. In adult life I never go out alone so my wife [REDACTED] is always with me if we go to appointments or out for shopping. At home I like my personal space. If I am out of the house I feel safer when I have my back to a wall so no-one can come up behind me. I get nightmares and flashbacks about Mr LUS [REDACTED] and my time being in care at both Ovenstone and Linwood.
74. I have now been seeing Dr Clair Cassells, a psychologist, for the last five years and she has helped me a lot. I see her for an hour once per fortnight although sometimes this has been changed to once every four weeks as I am coming to the end of my treatment with her. She has told me my PTSD is caused by the trauma I suffered in care and also from my time as a porter dealing with the dead bodies. Dr Cassells believes dealing with the dead bodies was the trigger that tipped me over the edge. It was Dr Cassells who recommended that I speak to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry. A couple of years ago I could never have contacted the Inquiry or spoken to them about my time in care. Seeing Dr Cassells has made it easier to cope with my memories and mental health problems so things are definitely improving for me. I think speaking to the Inquiry will be another step towards my recovery.
75. One positive thing I believe to have come from my time in care is that I have tried hard to be a good parent to my children and have kept them out of the care system. I would say [REDACTED] and I have done a good job and believe that keeping social work out of the way as much as possible has helped. I blame social work for a lot of what happened to me as a child.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

76. Although I have never reported my abuse to the police they did come and see me in early 2000. It was completely out of the blue and I have no idea how they got my name. They wanted to know if Dave Murphy had ever behaved inappropriately towards me or if he had sexually assaulted me. I let them know that nothing like that had ever happened to me.

### **Records**

77. I have never tried to get my records as I didn't know I could get them. I had always thought that any records would either be burned or lost. I have never asked my doctor what was recorded about me and my behavioural problems as a child.

### **Lessons to be Learned**

78. I hope my statement will help other people to come forward to help the Inquiry look at ways to deal with kids with behavioural difficulties.

### **Other information**

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

LUW

Signed

Dated

21/1/20