

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

KIS [REDACTED]

Support person present: No

1. My name is KIS [REDACTED] My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1966. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. The family home when I was young was in the Leith area of Edinburgh. In 1971 the family moved to Hawthornvale, Edinburgh. I stayed there with my mother, [REDACTED] and father, [REDACTED]. My younger brother [REDACTED] was born in 1973.
3. I remember my mother saying that she had a difficult birth with me. She thought that I may have suffered from oxygen starvation. About five years ago I was diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome. I think this might have explained some of my behaviour when I was younger.
4. My first school was Fort Primary School, Leith. When I started at primary school I didn't fit in. I was bullied a lot. My mother was aware of this as the teachers would contact her when something happened. I don't think that the school was initially receptive to my mother's complaints.
5. I was a very difficult child. I caused a lot of bother around the house, punching and kicking things. I think because of the bullying at school this affected how I dealt with

my younger brother. By the time I was nine years old I thought giving younger ones a hard time was the norm. This was the case with me and my brother.

6. My mother and father didn't know what to do with me. They contacted the education services and asked them what they should do. I think by this time the school recognised that there was a problem. I'm not sure if the social work were involved. They might have been and seen that there was an issue.
7. In 1977 it was decided that I would go to Forteviot House. I know it was 1977 as it was the Queen's jubilee. Forteviot was in Hope Terrace. It was part of the Sick Kids Hospital in Edinburgh. It may have been that my parents had spoken to a psychologist before I went into Forteviot. I don't know for certain.

Forteviot, 14-16 Hope Terrace, Edinburgh

8. Forteviot was a big mansion in its own grounds. I can't remember if I had any assessments before I went there. It was a residential place. I stayed there six nights a week. I went home on a Saturday morning and back on a Sunday night.
9. The building was split into two. On one side was the classroom area. It was linked by a corridor to where the sleeping area was. There were about 25 children there, both boys and girls. I think everyone was roughly the same age.
10. All the children were at the same stage of their education, primary six or seven. Everyone was in there for the same reasons as me.

Staff

11. Mrs Acton was the matron and in charge of the nurses who worked there. The other staff I remember were Mrs Martin, who was my teacher, and nurse Cruise. There were other nurses and auxiliaries on duty as well.

Dormitories

12. There were two rooms near the front door. Each room had four or five boys. The girls stayed in other rooms in a different part of the building.

Routine at Forteviot*Mornings*

13. I got up about eight every morning. There were no chores to do. You just went for breakfast.

Mealtimes / Food

14. There was a communal dining room where we had our meals. The food was good. There was always a choice. It was probably the best food of my life.

Washing / bathing

15. I had a bath every night. This was supervised by the staff who worked there. There were no issues with this.

School

16. I think I did okay academically. The staff seemed happy enough with how I was doing at school.

Leisure time

17. There were extensive grounds to explore. There was also a small swimming pool in the grounds, which we could use. If you were out in the grounds this was supervised

by staff. At night you could go to the TV room. There was no supervision if you were in the TV room.

Trips / Holidays

18. There was the occasional trip that we went on outside the school. I can't remember much about these trips. I know that we were taken out once to see the household cavalry.

Visits / Inspections/ Review of Detention

19. There was a psychologist called Mr Aldridge who I would see. He would ask me a lot of questions which I answered to the best of my ability. I can't remember any visits from the social work. My dad used to visit me regularly.

Running away

20. There was a front door which had a Yale lock on either side. Some of the other kids were prone to running away. I think they had problems that were worse than mine. I never ran away. I was quite settled there and didn't have any thoughts about running away.

Bed Wetting

21. I never had any problems with bed-wetting. I can't remember any of the other boys bed-wetting.

Discipline

22. I don't remember being disciplined at the school. I can't remember ever getting the belt or anything similar to that.

Abuse at Forteviot

Bullying

23. I was bullied by [REDACTED] who was a pupil at the school. He was about ten years old. [REDACTED] was from the Clovenstone area of Edinburgh.
24. [REDACTED] was a typical bully. He would pull my hair and slap me. He was a 'sleekit' wee bugger. I couldn't say one way or the other if the staff were aware that bullying was going on.

Reporting of abuse at Forteviot

25. I don't think I reported any of the bullying to the teachers. I didn't feel that I could approach them to tell them this. I didn't really give it much thought at the time.

Leaving Forteviot

26. It was [REDACTED] primary six when I left Forteviot. I think looking back it had been identified that I had learning issues that needed looked into. After I had been at Forteviot I would say my behaviour was a bit better.
27. When I started primary seven I went to Pennywell day unit in Edinburgh. I was picked up and dropped off in a private car. I think it was a council vehicle. [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions
[REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later
28. I started my secondary education at David Kilpatrick's, which is known as Trinity Academy. This school was also in Edinburgh. The bullying continued at secondary and my mother decided to take me to have a look at Lendrick Muir School at Crook of Devon. I don't remember speaking to a psychologist at this time or the social work

being involved. It might have been that my mother was interviewed by a psychologist and it had been suggested to her that I could go to Lendrick Muir.

29. I went for a visit to the school before it was decided that I should go. It was a big imposing building. SNR [REDACTED] KVV [REDACTED] showed us round. He said that you weren't there for an easy time. You were there to work. After this visit my dad said it was a horrible place.
30. I was still giving my brother a hard time. My dad was at the end of his tether with me. He offered me £2 a week pocket money if I went to Lendrick Muir. That was a lot of money back in 1979 so I said I would go. I think if I had refused it I would still have been sent there anyway.

Lendrick Muir School, Crook of Devon, Perthshire

31. Lendrick Muir was set in about fifty or sixty acres of its own grounds. The school claimed to specialise in children from all over. There was a boy from England at the school when I was there. I presumed that it was a government run school.
32. The school was mixed with more boys than girls. I think there were only six girls when I arrived. They stayed in a separate building. The number of pupils ranged between 65 and 70.
33. There were a lot kids there as a last chance saloon after being at a children's panel. They had been sent there as a punishment. The next thing would be a list D school. When I was at Lendrick Muir I learnt how to hot wire a car from these boys.
34. It was a residential school. I went home on a Friday and then back on a Sunday night. I would make my own way home on a Friday. This was by bus and train. On a Sunday evening a family member would normally give me a lift.

Staff

35. As well as Mr ^{KVV} there were around twenty members of staff. It was quite a high ratio of staff to pupils. I remember there was also a nurse, Mrs Gillet.
36. The staff were all very good. There were only about four that I had any problems with.

Dormitories

37. There were five or six boys in each dormitory. They were all about the same age. There was a junior, middle and top corridor. This depended on your age with the older boys or swots in the top corridor.
38. If you didn't sleep at night one of the seniors would take you to the gym. They would make you round around it until you were tired. Everyone had to do this, not just the ones who wouldn't sleep.

Routine at Lendrick Muir

39. The staff worked on a rota. At night they would patrol the junior and middle corridors. If it was the staff who were good we would behave. If it was the ones we didn't like we would misbehave. I just kept my head down.
40. There was a lot of mischief at night. One night [REDACTED], who stayed in another dormitory, came into my room. He tipped my bed up about four or five times during the night.

Bathing/showers

41. In my first week at the school I was waiting for one of the showers to become available. There were three communal showers side by side. ^{KVV} was

supervising. He lost his temper when I didn't step into the shower. I couldn't as all three were still occupied. He slapped me on the back to force me to go in. This left a handprint on my back, which stung for a few hours. I think the person in front of me in the shower, [REDACTED], was deliberately taking his time as he knew what was going to happen. As soon as I was slapped [REDACTED] stepped out.

Clothing / uniform

42. When I first started there was a uniform but this was abolished in 1982. If we were going on a school trip we had to wear the school tie and a blazer. The rest of the time after classes were finished we wore what we wanted.

School

43. There were different teachers for each school subject. It was a full educational system, the same as a comprehensive. It was everything you would get at a normal school with the same qualifications.
44. Some of the teachers would allow the kids to smoke in the classroom. I detested this and you weren't allowed to open the windows.
45. You were given regular school reports. These went to my parents.

Punishments

46. I never got the belt. I think that had stopped by then. If you did do something wrong you might get a hefty slap around the ear. There were some of the others got a lot worse depending on what they had done.

Chores

47. You were given chores to do by the older pupils. This was under the direction of the staff. You would sweep the floors and pick up litter.

48. One of the boys, [REDACTED], hated me. He would give me duties four times a week. Normally it would just be once a fortnight that you were given a task to do.

Leisure

49. You were encouraged to take part in sport activities. There was a sports field and tennis court at the bottom of the estate. We would play football, cricket and rounders. There was also a games hall. There was something for everyone except me. I wanted a bike.

50. I can't remember if there was any access to books.

51. My father was true to his word. I was given £2 a week pocket money.

Visits / Inspections/ Review of Detention

52. I can't remember any visits or inspections at the school. I think that there must have been inspections because of the type of place it was.

Healthcare

53. When I was at Lendrick Muir I wasn't on any medication.

Running away

54. I ran away a lot, more than twenty times. This was because of the bullying. I just kept doing it again and again. As a result I missed a lot of school. SNR [REDACTED] or SNR [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED] KMN [REDACTED] would turn up at my house. They would drag me kicking and screaming back to the school. This would lead to beatings from the other pupils when I got back.

55. When I ran away I would hitch hike back home. Nobody ever asked me why I was out and about. I would just make something up if I did get asked.
56. If it was SNR [REDACTED] who came to my house he would bring two or three of the older boys. These boys were also the ones who were bullying me at school. To me they were there for intimidation reasons.
57. On one occasion when I had ran away KVV [REDACTED] turned up at my house with three other boys. One of the boys, [REDACTED], came into my room. He was intimidating me with his presence. [REDACTED] had already knocked one of my teeth out in a separate incident at the school.
58. When my tooth had been knocked out I had reported this to a male member of staff and informed him who was responsible. The staff member spoke with the nurse who made an appointment for me to see the dentist at Kinross.
59. Another time when I ran away KMN [REDACTED] came to my house. I grabbed on to a pole with my hands when he tried to drag me away. My dad peeled my fingers off the pole.
60. Every time that I ran away I fought to stay at my house. This caused my mother to lose her temper with me. She said I had cried wolf for the last time and was sending me back to the school the next day. I called the school myself and spoke with KMN [REDACTED]. I tried to ask him what he was going to do about the bullies. He just replied that I should be at the school. I don't know if my mother believed me after this or not. In any case I had to go back to school.
61. I know that Mr KMN [REDACTED] had warned my mother and father that if my running away continued they could end up in court. My dad said it couldn't continue and it was clear that he didn't believe me either.
62. In the winter my jacket and shoes were taken from me by KMN [REDACTED]. This was all to stop me running away instead of trying to stop the bullying against me.

63. One of the boys, [REDACTED], saw this as a weakness and stamped on my feet. I started swearing and KMN [REDACTED] heard me. He gave me a right rollicking for swearing. I asked him what he was going to do about my feet getting stamped on. He said he didn't care about that.
64. The next day I saw [REDACTED] again and he spat on my face. He knew he could get away with it.

Bed wetting

65. When I was in the junior corridor there were some bed wetters. There was no punishment. They would just be given clean bed clothes. A plastic sheet was also put on their beds.

Religion

66. If you were Roman Catholic you were made to go to church on a Sunday morning. Back in the day I was Protestant so I didn't go. I would classify myself now as an atheist.

Substance abuse

67. I saw some of the boys rolling joints. I thought it was an oxo cube they had. There were also a couple of boys sniffing glue in the grounds.

Abuse at Lendrick Muir

MKF [REDACTED]

68. One of the teachers that I had a problem with was MKF [REDACTED]. He was the junior form teacher. He taught reading and comprehension. He was fine when things were going okay.
69. There were about twelve pupils in his class. We sat in two's at each table. On one occasion I was asked to read a passage from a book. I couldn't as the page had been ripped out. When I didn't start reading Mr MKF [REDACTED] threw a bunch of keys at me but they missed. He then came over and was screaming in my ears. I couldn't say anything. This lasted about three or four minutes. The same thing happened to me on two or three other occasions.
70. I also saw [REDACTED] being slapped on the head by Mr MKF [REDACTED]. This was because [REDACTED] laughed when the teacher mentioned about tossing the caber. [REDACTED] wore glasses and Mr MKF [REDACTED] took these off before he slapped him.
71. When Mr MKF [REDACTED] was on late's he would pace up and down the junior corridor. He would check the boys to see if they were wearing underwear beneath their pyjama bottoms. He shouted me over more than once and told me to take my underwear off. I would go away and do this. When I came back MKF [REDACTED] would have a look and check then say "That's fine".
72. MKF [REDACTED] used to take all the boys to his room after class to listen to music. I noticed that he was making wine in his room . He never offered any to me.
73. MKF [REDACTED] had one of the boys. MWK [REDACTED], in his pocket. He was always with him. MKF [REDACTED] used to let MWK [REDACTED] sit in the front of the minibus on trips. I didn't see anything happen with him and MWK [REDACTED] but the talk was rife with the other boys that something was going on. What this was I don't know.
74. Around 1980, when I was in form 1, we went on an outing to Dunfermline. MKF [REDACTED] was in charge of the trip. I tried to stay away from the trouble makers. Some of them, including [REDACTED], had found some small petrol capsules. They set fire to a waste paper bin in the street. A shop keeper saw this and shouted at them. [REDACTED]

told the man to 'f off. MKF [REDACTED] turned up and the shopkeeper informed him what had happened and pointed out [REDACTED] as the worst offender.

75. Even though I hadn't been involved in this MKF [REDACTED] still made me do the same punishments as the rest when we got back to the school. I saw this as another occasion when I was picked on for something I hadn't done despite my protestations.

KIT [REDACTED]

76. KIT [REDACTED] was the French teacher. He had a really quick temper. I was kept back in class one particular day. It was a one to one session that lasted over an hour. It just wasn't sinking in. Mr KIT [REDACTED] slapped me with his hand. He then hit me on the back of the head with a book.

77. Because this had happened I ran away. I arrived back home just as my dad was going to work. He went ballistic. I told him I didn't want to go back. He said that I would have to.

[REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

78. One day when I left the crush hall I was called back by [REDACTED]. He told everyone that was there that I liked the band "The Police". The next thing I remember was a lot of boots laying into me. I was also punched in the face. I got away with sore shins and stomach.

79. I saw KMN [REDACTED] who saw the state I was in. He stopped me and I told him what had happened to me. I was forced back to where the bullies were. KMN [REDACTED] asked them if they had did what I had said. They all denied it. KMN [REDACTED] asked me if I was making things up again. As a result of this I ran away. When I was taken back from my house. Three of the boys involved in the kicking, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] turned up along with KVV [REDACTED]. This was clearly for intimidation.

80. On the journey back to the school in KVV's car I had to sit between [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I was being squeezed for the whole trip back. I prodded KVV in the shoulder to try and get his attention. He completely ignored me despite my complaints.
81. A couple of days later I tried to raise the matter with KVV again. I was shouting and swearing at him. He just looked at me and didn't say anything. If this had been any other staff member they wouldn't have let me speak to them like that.

Bullying

82. I was being bullied all of the time. The main bullies were [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] is dead now. I think it was drug overdose.
83. One day one of the girls, [REDACTED], asked me if I had been de-bagged. It was a group of four or five girls that were there. They started to laugh. I knew something was up so I ran off. I was eventually caught at the other side of the playing field. My trousers and pants were then pulled down. After this they all ran away laughing. I felt embarrassed and humiliated. If this had happened to a girl it would have been a different story. I'm sure the police would have been called. I didn't tell anyone about this as I knew no one would have believed me.

Reporting of abuse at Lendrick Muir

84. When I ran away I told my mother and father about the bullying. I don't think I was being believed. When my mum and dad asked the school what was happening they would just say I would have to toughen up. It was like the survival of the fittest.
85. One or two of the teachers knew what was going on and would try and stop it. Jimmy Smith, the maths teacher, stopped one of the bullies when he saw him bullying me.

He grabbed the boy and told him that he better not do this again. Jimmy was a good guy.

Leaving Lendrick Muir

86. I left Lendrick Muir two days after my sixteenth birthday. The day after my birthday I was assaulted by one of the other pupils. I can't remember who it was. I ran away again.
87. PDV [REDACTED] one of the teachers, saw me. He gave me a lift back to the school. I told him that I wanted to leave. I was allowed to go and Jimmy gave me a lift in his own car back to Dunfermline. I then got a bus back to Edinburgh.
88. There was no preparation for me leaving the school. There might have been a guidance or careers teacher but I wasn't given any encouragement to engage with this.
89. When I left Lendrick Muir I didn't have any qualifications. I sat some exams at school that might have been national exams but I'm not sure.
90. One thing I did know was how to hot wire a car. I knew a lot about electrics because of this. I think if I had been given a bit of encouragement I might have managed to train as an electrician.

Life after being in care

91. After I left Lendrick Muir I went back and lived with my parents. I was unemployed for a few months. I still wasn't getting on with my brother. I used to go out and cycle a lot.

92. I started on a youth opportunities scheme at Dock Street in Leith. I learnt to do metalwork there. I had a succession of jobs after this including a [REDACTED] with LRT, Lothian Regional Transport. I did this for about seven years. In 2003 I started working as a [REDACTED] driver in Edinburgh. I've been a taxi driver for the last fifteen years.
93. When I was diagnosed with Asperger's I looked online at the symptoms. One is never enough for me. Instead of one bike I have nine. I also repair classic cars but I always need to be doing more than one at a time. I have a narrow range of interests. I do have relationship issues. I have difficulty with sustained eye contact. These are all traits of Asperger's.

Impact

94. I feel that I have been let down by the system. It's the broad brush idea of putting me in with sixty or seventy kids that had problems far worse than mine.
95. I think that in terms of the bullying I should have retaliated but I know this might have made things worse.

Reporting of Abuse

96. About five years ago I went to Drylaw Police Station in Edinburgh and reported what had happened to me at school. I don't remember who I spoke with. I told them about the bullying and about MKF [REDACTED]. I have never heard any more from them.

Records

97. I have never tried to access my records. I would like to find out about these if I could.

Lessons to be Learned

98. Kids with different troubles shouldn't be put in the same place. The bullies should not be in the same place as the quiet kids.
99. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed..... .....

Dated..... 29/MAY 2018