

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

KWT

Support person present: Yes

1. My full name is KWT. My birth certificate actually says KWT but I have always been known as KWT. My date of birth is 1949. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in and I was the of eight children. I lived with my mum and dad, and. The next sibling after me was my sister, then there was, , , and or.
3. My mother was a Catholic and my father was a Protestant and when they married my father changed religion to a Catholic. My mother wanted us to grow up as Catholics. I remember when I was born which is all my father's side of the family were gathered round and were quite pleased I'd been born that day. However, on my mother's side of the family they were all saying I was going to be baptised as a Catholic. That all created quite a bit of friction between the two families.
4. Then over time it became apparent that I wasn't responding to noise and when I was about six months old the doctors started to suspect that I was profoundly deaf. I think that actually helped to bridge the division between my father and mother's sides of the family. The family then decided that the Catholicism thing wasn't an issue worth talking about or falling out over.

5. As I got a bit older my mother started looking for a school for me. Originally I was to go to [REDACTED] Primary School in [REDACTED] but when my mother had discussions with them they said they only took hearing children. She was told to try a school in Glasgow [REDACTED]. My mother went to see them about me attending that school but they only took Protestant children and we were Catholic.
6. [REDACTED] gave my mother the address of St. Vincent's School in Tollcross, Glasgow but we needed to take two buses to get to that school from where we stayed. That was the reason I ended up boarding at the school during the week.
7. I was two and a half then and these are all things I didn't know about when I was younger.

St. Vincent's School for the Deaf and Blind, Tollcross, Glasgow

General

8. St. Vincent's School had no hearing children, it was just deaf, deaf blind and disabled children. There was segregation between the deaf and deaf blind and disabled children in the classrooms.
9. I don't know who was paying for me to be at St. Vincent's. I think there was a sponsor or a donor of some description because somebody gave the building to the church or to the sisters. I remember a picture of a wealthy gentleman that hung in the school, I don't know his name, but he was the owner of the land that the school sat on. He donated it for the cause of deaf children. Over time the number of deaf children attending the school increased so much that the school had to build a new wing. There wasn't enough space to house all the children so they made the new wing. Since then St. Vincent's has closed.

10. As you walked into St. Vincent's school the girls' side was on the left and boys' section was on the right. It was like that in every room. Upstairs was the bedrooms so the girls' rooms were on the left and the boys' were on the right. In essence the whole school was split in half and there was a demarcation line in some rooms, like the dining room for example.
11. All the kids room were upstairs and the kids were put in rooms according to their age. There was a baby room off to the left upstairs which had about twelve to fifteen kids. Then on the right, the boys' side, there were about 22 younger kids in a room, about 30 middle aged kids in a room and about 40 more adult kids in a room. I think it was the same for the girls who were all to the left upstairs. There were two rooms for adults upstairs as well.
12. There was an old coal burner that heated up the building but the pipes were never warm in the dorms and the building was always cold. I remember it being very damp and cold and I remember I told my mum about that. The school was always cold, yet the church was always warm. Myself and other kids used to wonder why the church was always warm and the school was always cold. That was something we just accepted but it was a very cruel thing to do to children.
13. I was in the older kids section from about the age of ten to fifteen and a half, when I left school.
14. I remember all the nuns used to wear these big hats. I found that very intimidating, I didn't understand what was going on and that carried on for quite a while.
15. The sisters I remember are Sister ^{KTA} who was and I think she the school. there was Sister Margaret who was and worked on the boys' side. Sister ^{PCA} was on the boys' side and worked supporting the deaf, deaf blind and disabled kids, she was small and wore glasses and was particularly cruel and vicious. Sister ^{KXD} was also very cruel and vicious, she was on the boys' side and she was also a teacher. Sister ^{KYA} was very cruel, she was one of the first sisters I met and she looked after the kids aged from two and a half. Sister ^{KUA} looked

after the younger and older boys, she was a big woman and had a body like a man. She came to St. Vincent's when I was older, I think she replaced one of the other Sisters. All the deaf kids were terrified of her. I also remember Sister LXH who worked on the girls' side of the school, she was nice.

16. I was with other deaf and deaf blind children at St. Vincent's School. We would use the deaf blind manual to communicate and I would make sure other children were okay.

Routine at St. Vincent's

First day

17. I remember going to school on my very first day. I was sitting with my mum and I asked her what's happening, what was going on. I saw the Sisters for the first time on that first day at the school and it was very unnerving for me.
18. I remember looking back and seeing my mother crying and I could see my father was upset as well. I was crying too. My parents and the Sisters had discussions that day, which lasted about sixty or ninety minutes and then I was taken away.
19. I remember I was in floods of tears because my mother and father left me. I was taken into the school and I remember I just cried and cried all day that first day. A member of staff put a dummy in my mouth because I was crying nonstop. I remember being in my bed and there were just rows and rows of other beds with other kids in them. It was like being in an army barracks. All I remember is crying. I was crying for my mum. I wanted my mum and all I remember is consistently being told to stop crying.
20. I remember waking up the next morning and having a walk around before I was taken to school. In essence I started school when I was two and a half.

Mornings and bedtime

21. We were arisen at six o'clock in the morning because we had to go to chapel at half past six. I couldn't understand why we had to go to the chapel at that time of day. At eight o'clock we had breakfast and then we got changed into our school gear. We never had access to any clean clothes I do remember the clothes were always smelly.
22. School would begin at nine o'clock and then we would have the school day. We had a break from school at half past ten when we had a glass of milk. That was it, a glass of freezing cold milk, even in the cold weather, so we never had access to anything warm.
23. Lunch was at half past twelve and the food that was provided was disgusting. We were back in school after lunch and that was more or less school life.
24. In the evenings after tea we would be sent up to our dorms and we would have nothing to do. There was no stimulation for us. Between six and eight o'clock we would be sitting there with nothing for us to do before going to bed. Then we would go to bed, sleep, get up in the morning. It was awful. That's what happened every day Monday to Friday.
25. I remember other kids saying they were bored and they wanted Friday to come along so they could go home and spend time with their parents.
26. I remember one of Sister PCA's jobs was to walk through the bedrooms at night time to make sure all the kids were sleeping. She would then turn the light off.
27. If I needed the toilet during the night, I would get taken down to use the toilet facilities and then come back up. Sometimes I used to go over and talk to the deaf blind children at night when it was really dark. I would use the deaf blind manual to ask them if they needed the toilet. If they said yes I would take them down to the toilet in the middle of the night. I remember these old metal pipes that ran along the inside of the building and I used to tell the deaf blind kids to do the toilet there. We had to feel our way about the building.

28. The older kids had access to a toilet at night because their door was open, the younger kids didn't have the same access because their dorm door was closed. I think the reason for that was to stop the older kids coming into the younger kids dorm. The younger kids would also be in bed earlier so it stopped the older kids interrupting us. It was like a one way system so was no alternative way round.
29. The Sisters were upstairs somewhere with the keys. Eventually the sisters figured out what was going on because they got a plumber out and the plumber said there was a smell of urine in the corner by the pipes. The sisters asked who was responsible but nobody said anything and they never got to the bottom of that.

Mealtimes/Food

30. We had our dinner in this big hall with boys on one side and girls on the other side. We were segregated from the girls at dinner, in fact we were segregated all the time, that was my entire school experience.
31. I don't know what I was eating the food was disgusting. I remember the mince, it was horrible and was never properly cooked. In essence it was kind of raw and you couldn't chew it, it was swimming in greasy water. I used to go home and my mum would make mince and I'd have to tell her I couldn't eat it because that was what they forced us to eat at school. That always stuck with my mum, the fact I'd had such a reaction towards mince.
32. We had sausages, mashed potato, beans, bread, basically the same food all the time. You could tell nothing was cooked properly and when the food was presented to us it wasn't even hot. Some children were so hungry they just ate it. Sometimes I had some of my food and gave the rest to another child because I knew they were so hungry they would eat it regardless.
33. I didn't like the food at all and if you didn't like it the nuns would force you to eat it with a spoon. Myself and other deaf children would say we didn't want to eat it but we were

grabbed by the nuns and forced to eat it. Sometimes the Sisters would just grab the plates of food and shove them right into the faces of the children. I remember a bottle of milk being pushed into my mouth when I was younger. All the deaf children were treated that way.

34. We didn't get anything to drink other than water. We didn't have soda or soft drinks and didn't get any treats. I would only ever get things like that when I was at home.

Washing/bathing

35. When I was two and a half it was a Sister who washed me. Then when I was four and no longer in nappies, I was expected to do it on my own, we all were. We only had access to a sink not a bath so we only got to wash our hands and face, we couldn't wash from head to toe in a bath. I was moved to the adult dorms when I was ten, and there were shower cubicles installed there when I was eleven. We could shower whenever we wanted after that.
36. Sister KUA showed us how to operate the showers and left us to get on with it. After the showers she would usher us up to our dorms. We would change back into the same dirty clothes or pyjamas that we had been wearing before the shower. Some kids didn't use the showers because they were so used to using a basin to wash and clean themselves.
37. We didn't have access to clean water or to soap and I seldom got to wash my hair. The soap they gave us was a big green bar and was the stuff that was appropriate for cleaning floors. That was the kind of soap we all had access to. We used to see the cleaners using it to clean the floors, that was the same soap that was given to us.
38. I once challenged that and said we were getting the soap that was used to clean the floors and I remember some of the staff just pointing upstairs as if to indicate that's what they had decided upstairs was the soap we were to use.

39. I remember occasions when I didn't wash my hair for four or five days and I remember my mum consistently saying to me when I was coming home that I was really smelly.
40. I seem to remember Sister ^{KTA} being challenged by my mum about why there was no provision for the children to remain clean. I'm not sure what happened but there was no change afterwards, that I remember.

Clothing/uniform

41. At St. Vincent's the school clothing was a grey jumper, a white shirt, a green and black tie, grey shorts and I remember wearing the same underwear for five days. We had one of everything including just one set of underwear. We had to wear everything for the five days we were at St. Vincent's and the clothes would be washed when we went home at the weekend.
42. We never had access to any new clothes, so we wore exactly the same clothes in the playground after school and in the evenings. The clothes that we had were soiled, dirty and absolutely stinking. When I got back home on a Friday my mum would give me a cuddle as soon as I walked in the door and the first thing she would then do was bath me.
43. There were kids who travelled to the school on a daily basis and they were okay because they had access to clean clothes. We didn't have access to any clean alternative clothing. Some kids were really fortunate because the parents were told to provide alternative clothing by the sisters and could afford to do that for their kids. A lot of the parents back then didn't have the money for alternative clothing though so we just had to wear the same clothes every day.
44. Another thing is that the Sisters would check our underwear and if anybody had soiled themselves or had dirty underwear they would be chastised and reprimanded and then told to go and clean their underwear. We would have to hand wash our own underwear in the toilet area. That happened to me and all the deaf children and it happened most of the way through school. I once took my underwear home and started to clean it and

my mother questioned that. I told her that's what we had to do at school. She told me to leave it and she did it for me.

45. The punishment we received would be to get hit with a wooden ruler or a brush handle for having dirty underwear. I once saw a deaf kid who had poo'd himself and on the floor, being hit with the brush handle for doing that. That was by Sister KUA but it could occasionally be other Sisters as well.
46. We didn't have access to anything else and the Sisters knew that. I remember trying to wash my clothes, other kids did that as well, but the pipes in the dorm were never on so we were putting our underwear on cold pipes to dry off. We would put our underwear on in the morning and they would be cold, wet and damp.

Leisure time

47. There was a playground with a set of swings and we would get a football to kick around, that was the only two activities we had. There was absolutely nothing for any of the children to use and nothing in terms of stimulation. There was no television, no books, no cards or games and nothing for us to read. All we would do is sit and chat until lights out at 9 o'clock. It was the same monotony every single day and we were segregated from the girls, so we couldn't even see them.
48. St. Vincent's did have a deaf football team. They weren't particularly good and I didn't really get involved in that. I wasn't cut out for football, I just remember spending a lot of time mulling around.
49. In the playground there was boys on one side and girls on the other and if we said hello or waved to the girls Sister KUA would push us and tell us not to look at the girls. I remember not understanding that and wondering what was going on.

Trips

50. We were never taken on any trips but we did go out and take swimming lessons, that was all.

Schooling

51. The school at St. Vincent's was quite a big school. We were segregated all the time with boys on one side of a room and girls on the other. There was a line segregating us from the girls and we weren't allowed to cross that line.
52. My first teacher at St. Vincent's was Miss Russell. I remember she asked if I was from [REDACTED] and said she knew where that was and she would keep in touch with my parents and let them know how I was getting on. She never made any contact with my family.
53. I remember the teacher put out toys for me to play with and there were other boys and girls there and we were all in a big group. I have a memory of crying and the teacher picking me up. Miss Russell used to write stuff down and show it to the children. The children were then expected to learn in that fashion.
54. Something they gave us was a hearing aid that was a big box that hung around our necks and was battery operated. I first started using that when I was about eight which was far too late, for someone that started school as young as I did and was of no use to me anyway as I was profoundly deaf. It would vibrate and was very heavy, it was so frustrating to use and was of no benefit to me. I told my mum and she told Sister Margaret it was of no use so I was then allowed not to use it.
55. As I moved up through the school I got moved into different rooms. I remember getting to the age of seven and things changed through the school. I changed teachers to Sister ^{KXD} [REDACTED] who was a teacher and a Sister. We did exercises and written work with her and she would punish children who got things wrong. I was with her from the ages of about seven to eleven.

56. None of the Sisters really communicated with the deaf children in sign language. We were spoken to in English so much of the time we didn't know what it was the teachers were talking to us about. We would all sit confused most of the time. They did use it a little bit but most of the education took place on the blackboard. It was just written in English on the board and we were then meant to deduce what was being said and meant. They certainly weren't fluent signers, far from it.
57. There was an Irish teacher who used to spend time trying to teach us a wee bit of sign language but he passed away, so that only lasted a short time. That was really unfortunate for us but aside from him St. Vincent's wasn't geared up to teach deaf and blind kids.
58. We really learned sign from other older deaf children at St. Vincent's. We basically learned from our peers. We would use the time in the evening when there was nothing to do, as time to solidify and improve our own sign language.
59. Another teacher I remember is Miss Carsey who was lovely but couldn't sign either. She helped me with my workings if they were incorrect, she supported me and helped me. Then I changed rooms and went to the higher school at St. Vincent's. Mr. LXL was another good teacher he was a technical teacher, and I remember him very fondly.
60. In the high school I had Sister KUA, who arrived when I was maybe eight years of age. I remember she was a big woman with a stern face, and would have been about twenty five to thirty years of age. She watched after the children, she didn't teach at the school she just supervised children. If they were cheeky at all she would hit them. She frequently hit the kids and she was doing that within a week of arriving. She once hit a boy called [REDACTED] but he hit her back and then they started hitting each other. She was such a bully and really wicked. After that he wasn't treated as badly.
61. [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and a boy called [REDACTED] were three Irish boys at the school. They were singled out and given worse treatment than other children. I don't know why that was and I don't know why they were even at our school as there was a school for deaf children in Dublin. The three of them were about my age, I'm not sure how

long they were there, they maybe arrived when I was about six. They have all passed now.

- 62. None of the Sisters were deaf, they were all hearing, so they didn't understand the experience of being deaf. It's night and day to what it's like now. For kids these days it's fantastic, they have access to a teacher who speaks their first language.
- 63. In essence we didn't get access to a standard education. We didn't sit 'O' levels or anything like that. Our school existence pretty much consisted of nodding your head and saying yes.

Healthcare

- 64. I don't remember seeing a doctor or dentist. My teeth were generally okay but if anyone needed it they would get access to dentistry. I do remember getting some kind of check at the school, where I stuck my tongue out and got checked over.
- 65. I do know decisions were made outside of my mum and dad being consulted. My mum always checked my teeth and one day she asked how one of my teeth had been removed. She disagreed with what had been done because she hadn't been consulted and didn't think I needed to have the tooth removed, so that was all quite upsetting. I didn't even have toothache it wasn't hurting. I was just taken to a dentist and the tooth was removed. I remember it was bleeding and there was blood on my pillow the next morning.
- 66. I also remember an occasion when I was about seven or eight when I had a problem with my throat and I was taken to hospital. I remember being driven there. No one explained to me what was going on and I was put under general anaesthetic. I had this gas mask put on my face and no one was explaining anything so I was struggling before I fell asleep and that was very distressing. I wasn't pre-warned or told anything about what was going to happen. That was to have my tonsils removed.

67. I remember going home after that and telling my mum what had happened. She was beside herself because she hadn't been consulted at any time about what was going to take place. I was in hospital for about a week and my mum hadn't been consulted and didn't know I had been in hospital. I didn't have any visitors at all but I do remember the nurses coming round and speaking to me. I didn't know what they were saying to me.
68. I think a few of my brothers and sisters had their tonsils removed and my mother was always consulted about that, but in my instance that wasn't the case.

Religious instruction

69. I remember going to chapel at six thirty in the morning every single day. I never understood why we did that. I didn't know what was being said by any of the priests as they spoke English, there was no interpreter at all. All the other kids were the same as me. We would look at each other and none of us had a clue what was being said.
70. Kids were always falling asleep in the chapel, I did that as did many others. Sister KUA would sit behind us and if you fell asleep she would punch you and tell you to wake up. It was awful. The nuns would push us to the floor and get us to kneel on the floor and we didn't have a clue what was being said in the Mass. I remember getting up and my knees were red raw, it was that kind of cruelty.
71. I remember telling my mum that I didn't want to go to chapel at home because I was getting next to no benefit because I couldn't hear what was being said. She understood that as when it came to going to chapel on a Sunday at home there was nobody that could sign for me separately at mass so she said I didn't need to go.
72. When we were back at St. Vincent's the nuns would ask who all went to mass on Sunday and the kids would all say they had gone and I had to say I didn't go. The Sisters would then call me a bad child for not going to mass.

73. I had my holy communion at St. Vincent's when I was about eleven. My parents weren't there and I can remember thinking where's my mum, my mum should be here. We got books afterwards which I took home to my mum and she told me no one at the school had told her about me making my holy communion and having my confirmation. My parents should have been there for that. That should have been a family celebration.
74. I remember my sister and my brother [REDACTED] both having parties after their holy communions and all the family were there. Photos were taken at our holy communion at St. Vincent's but it was just all the children, there were no other parents informed about it, so there were no parents there at all. I look at that photo now and there is no one still living other than me.
75. The priest at St. Vincent's was Father Gavigan. He was in his fifties and had grey hair, I'm not sure if he is still alive. At confession we would write out our sins, hand them over to Father Gavigan through an opening in the confession and he would then tell us what our penance was in broken sign language.
76. I remember one occasion when we were lined up for confession and a boy, [REDACTED] who was about eleven, was giving his confession. Father Gavigan suddenly jumped out the confession box and shouted out that what [REDACTED] had written down was wrong. It was the speed and ferocity that Father Gavigan leapt out that made us all turn and notice him. I remember Mrs LXM [REDACTED] was there as well.
77. [REDACTED] told us later that he had written on his bit of paper that the nuns were hitting us at St. Vincent's and that's why Father Gavigan reacted the way he had.

Birthdays and Christmas

78. We didn't get anything from the school at Christmas or for birthdays. I got things from my family but never from the school.

79. What they did do is remove the wall that segregated the boys and girls for a day. They took it down and we could see the girls and talk to them and then the following day the wall went back up.
80. The school did have a Christmas tree but there was no celebrations in the school. I would go home for Christmas for a period of about three weeks.

Personal possessions/treats

81. We had no personal possessions or pocket money and we never got any kind of treats. I never had chocolate, cakes or sweets, nothing like that, it was bread, butter and jam, and that was it.

Bed Wetting

82. There was no potty training at St. Vincent's we were just given nappies when I first went there. I think I was about three when we were given potties. We were probably toilet trained from about that age.
83. Sister PCA would check the bedsheets in the morning to make sure no one had toileted their bed. I remember one morning I saw one of the deaf blind children being assaulted, being hit with something because they had wet their bed. That happened to me because I wet the bed up to about the age of five. I saw it happen to other deaf children as well.
84. It was usually Sister PCA and she would then take the bed sheets off other children's beds including mine, to see if anyone had soiled the bed or not. If they had she would hit them. I didn't understand what was going on but that was happening to deaf blind children. The bed sheet and pillow case would be changed over the weekend but sometimes the blanket wasn't replaced. We would have to wear the same pyjamas Monday to Friday without being washed, but sometimes they wouldn't be washed over the weekend and would just be sitting in a pile on the Monday.

85. There was big industrial size washing machines with the Sisters clothing piled up beside them. We would rarely see any children's clothes piled up at all. The sheet that went over the alter would be washed daily, and ironed and cleaned yet none of our clothing was washed that way. The only thing that was ever ironed that belonged to us was our school shirts.
86. I remember telling Sister PCA to stop hitting children for wetting the bed and to leave the kids alone because they were deaf and blind and that is wasn't fair. In response she hit me with a hard wooden brush on my hands. My hands were bruised from that. I told my mum about that and she spoke to the school but they refused to believe it.
87. I also remember that for children that were constipated and couldn't poo there was this pump thing that the sisters would insert into your anus to help induce a bowel movement. That happened to me and I went home and told my mum.

Family Contact

88. My mum never actually came into the school to see me. There was a hall area and that was as much as she would ever see in or around the school. She would pick me up on a Friday and drop me back at the school on a Sunday night. As I was older, from about the age of ten or eleven, I did that on my own. I knew the buses to take and it was a straight forward journey.

Running away

89. I never ran away from the school, we were essentially locked inside the school gates. As far as I remember the gates were always locked when I was there and we were all stuck there and couldn't get access outside of the walls around the school. There were gates but there was one person, Mr Connor, who stood at the gates and he would chase you if you got too near them. It felt like you were in prison.

90. I do remember one occasion when a child ran away, I forget who it was. The police found that boy and brought him back to the school. He told his mum and dad about what was happening at the school and I remember seeing his mum and dad arguing with someone from the school. His parents took him away from the school and I never saw that boy again after that.
91. There was a shop round the corner and my mum used to give me pennies so I could go and buy something but we were locked in and couldn't go to the shop to buy anything. We used to get a deaf boy's brother to go and get sweets from the shop for us. That's what it was like for us for about fifteen years.

Inspections

92. There were never any inspections that I am aware of. I do remember being asked by deaf adults how I was getting on at school. I couldn't tell you who they were. I think that could have been after I left the school.

Friendships

93. We were all good friends at St. Vincent's. Once Willie Malley left the school we all grew up together and there was a sense of cohesion in the group. There was never any incidents of anybody being bullied or abuse. The experience after he left was definitely more positive.

Discipline

94. We did have food withheld from us. We were sometimes punished by not getting access to our dinner.
95. Sister ^{KXD} would also discipline children by using this long leather rubber strap thing, it wasn't quite a belt, but it was like one. She would use that but kids would take their hands away just as the Sister was swinging it. I used to do that as well.

Abuse at St. Vincent's

96. Sister **KYA** was very cruel to me as a young kid. When I first went to St. Vincent's she used to gag me until I got to sleep at night when I was crying all the time. There were also occasions when I had soiled my nappy and the staff just left me, they didn't clean me. Sometimes staff would even consciously put a hand over my mouth and tell me to stop crying.
97. I've spoken about some abuse and some of the punishments the Sisters administered. When children were found wearing dirty underwear, it was usually Sister **PCA** that dealt with them. She would hit children with a wooden ruler or a long hard wooden comb. She treated all the children the same she would get them to hold their hands palm down and hit the back of their hands. We had bruises on our hands, there was redness as well, it was very painful. Sister **PCA** also used her hairbrush, I remember seeing her grey hairs in the brush when she hit my hands with it.
98. I remember being hit on the back of my hand by Sister **PCA** and the palm of my hand by Sister **KXD** and being upset about it and crying, because it was very painful. I remember asking my teacher why I was being hit by Sister **PCA** and she would ask what I had done, I would tell her it was because I wet the bed and she wouldn't do anything.
99. I remember an occasion when my mum was visiting me and took me out. I had a nappy on and one of the pins that had been used to keep the nappy on me had pierced my skin. I was constantly crying because of that and my mum picked me up to see what was wrong she put her hands on my abdomen to see what was happening and there was blood all over the place.
100. My mum erupted at that, she took me home, spoke to my dad and I think I stayed at home for a week after that. Sister **KYA** apologised to my parents. What happened was one of the pins had penetrated the skin and caused a lot of bleeding. I believe my

mum and dad spoke to St. Vincent's about alternative schools but there were no alternative schools so I was taken back again.

101. When we were awoken at six o'clock in the morning, if kids didn't get out their beds, they would get hit with the handle of the brush that was used for cleaning the floor. That was in order to get the children up and it was Sister KUA who was particularly nasty that did that. Sister KUA would hit us with a stick if we didn't get out of bed quick enough.
102. I learnt to automatically get up when the sisters walked into the room and turned the lights on, that was the cue to get up. If you didn't get up then you would be hit with a broomstick while you were in your bed. I was never hit with the broom I was always up in time, my bed was near the light, but I felt really bad for those kids.
103. I was sexually abused on three occasions by Willie Malley. Twice at St. Vincent's and then once again after I had left the school. Willie Malley was a deaf pupil at St. Vincent's, he was older than me and was in the older kids' dorm. I was in the younger kids' dorm at the time he abused me. The first time I was nine and he was fourteen and the second time I was ten and he was fifteen.
104. The first time was about seven or eight o'clock at night and the Sisters were all away to chapel. I remember I was in the toilets when it happened. The lights went out and Willie Malley grabbed me. I believe I was targeted by him. I was screaming during it but there was no one around to hear me.
105. After it had happened I saw Sister KUA. I was in a dishevelled state and I was dirty and she could see something was wrong, she said I was smelly. I told her that Willie Malley had just sexually assaulted me and was responsible for the state I was in. I had his sperm on me. She called me a '*dirty boy*' and started hitting me. She thought I'd been playing with myself. I couldn't understand why she was hitting me because I was the one who had been assaulted. No one ever did anything about that it was just swept under the rug.

106. The second time there was no one around again and I had gone to the toilet. I was standing doing a pee and Willie Malley came in and grabbed me. I was screaming at the top of my voice but he knew the time and that the Sisters would be in church and no one would be around. He did the same to me on the second occasion.
107. After that second time I saw a girl called Margaret Walker, who was a cleaner and used to look after me. I told her Willie Malley had attacked me again and she went and spoke to one of the Sisters. I was told I was a bad boy and I was lying and nothing was done about it on that occasion either. I think all the staff were scared of Willie Malley because of an incident where he had wrestled with Sister KUA. I couldn't understand why I was the one who was being singled out. I don't know if any other boys were sexually abused by Willie Malley.
108. I would actively hide from Willie Malley at school. Nothing ever happened to him for what he did and he left St. Vincent's when he was fifteen and a half.
109. The third time Willie Malley abused me was when I was sixteen and I was back home, it wasn't long after I left St. Vincent's. There was a knock at our door and he was there, I couldn't believe it was Willie Malley. What really shocked me was that someone had given him my address. He asked me to go for a pint and I'd said no, but my mum was telling me to just go. My mum thought he was a dead friend from school. I was in a situation where I felt like I had to go, so I did and that was the third time he abused me.
110. Willie took me away in this small white van and fed me cans of Harp lager. He drove me to the moors, tried to take my clothes off and tried to put his hands on me again and he sexually assaulted me. He then dropped me back at my house afterwards.
111. When I got home my mum told me I was looking dishevelled and smelly and I told her then who Willie Malley was, that he was the man who had abused me previously at St. Vincent's and that he had just abused me again. My mum erupted and got really upset. Willie Malley had driven off and I never saw him again. That was reported to

the police, a police officer came to the house and took all the details. I never heard anything more about that.

112. There was another deaf boy at St. Vincent's called [REDACTED] who attacked Willie Malley. He was the same age as Willie Malley and he approached me once and asked me what had happened with Willie Malley. He then took matters into his own hands and spoke to Willie Malley. I was only about nine or ten when that happened. Sadly [REDACTED] has since passed but I remember him fondly as he helped me and was a good guy.
113. One of my teachers, Sister ^{KXD} [REDACTED], used to punish me for getting my exercises wrong. She was trying to explain what the word 'against' meant and I wasn't understanding her. She then pulled my head back and battered it against the wall and against the table as an example of what it meant. She would give that same treatment to other children who got their work wrong as well. All the children were terrified of her.
114. Sister ^{KXD} [REDACTED] also used to use a ruler to hit the children. The physical abuse always used to shock me because these were supposed to be Christians, compassionate people. This was a Sister and I just couldn't understand it. I just used to get so upset. We just lived with fear and intimidation all the time at St. Vincent's. The sisters would actually use their fists on the children.
115. I told my mum about Sister ^{KUA} [REDACTED] being cruel and assaulting me, and my mum then approached the school. After that Sister ^{KUA} [REDACTED] came to me and told me what my mum had said and she then assaulted me again for reporting her. She punched me and assaulted me and when I got home on the Friday I told my mum again. My mum then contacted the police and reported it, but nothing ever happened.
116. I remember being out the back of the playground where there was an area I would go to do the toilet. One of the sisters was standing there, watching me as I did the toilet, she was in the loft at a window, which was the Sisters sleeping area and gave her a higher vantage point. They sometimes watched the kids from up there, to try and catch

kids smoking. She stood and watched me peeing and I wondered why she was doing that. I ended up going somewhere else for some privacy.

117. KSH-LXM were both teachers at St. Vincent's. She was a generic teacher and he was a woodwork techy teacher and they were both awful and very cruel. They both used to hit all the children. If we signed to a peer within the classroom, just lifted our hands to start to sign she would hit us with this foot long ruler. She would tell us not to sign and called it a no signing classroom. The other teachers wouldn't bother but she used to always chastise us in the classroom for using sign language to one another. The thing is we would only be asking each other how to do things.
118. We used to do homework classes with KSH-LXM's every Tuesday evening and he had this tube which was like the leg of a table that he used to hit the children. He would hit us on the back with the tube and it was sore, it was painful. We were all terrified of him.
119. I remember once, when I was fourteen, there were four of us in the class, , and myself and we all refused to take part in an activity. We had tolerated enough of his bullying and collectively decided to take action. Mr KSH went to hit us but the four of us turned the tables on him and attacked him instead. Then we all ran off and hid so we couldn't be found. I am the last one of those four, the other three have all since passed.
120. Later on Sister KUA approached me and told me what she'd heard we had done. I told her that it was correct and that we had hit Mr KSH back. I told her I was just doing to him what all the Sisters did to us. I remember I walked in to my dorm after that and all the other deaf kids were applauding me for what we'd done. There was a really good spirit and a good vibe from that.
121. I was then told I was to be seen the next morning at nine o'clock and I wasn't getting any food that night. That was me and the other three boys. I refused to go to chapel as well.

122. When the four of us went down the next morning we were met by Sister KTA who was with these two big men. The men were teachers, Mr KXX and Mr Connor, who was the housekeeper at St. Vincent's. They will have passed now. Sister KTA told us we were going to get whipped and I said that was fine but let's also get the police to tell them about it. I also threatened to get my mum and I think they all backed down as the two men then left and there was no whipping. I did tell Sister KTA how Mr KSH had been bullying us and at that point she stopped everything and nothing happened. That tells you all you need to know about that situation.

Reporting of abuse at St. Vincent's

123. By the time I was three I was telling my mum about the way we were being treated at St. Vincent's. I would go home at weekends and she was picking me up and telling me I was stinking and smelly. She was asking why we weren't getting washed and wearing clean clothes. That carried on from the ages of two, three, four and five.
124. When I was about five or six I told our teacher Miss Russell that the sisters were hitting the children because they were wetting their beds. She just shrugged her shoulders. I think she felt there wasn't anything she could do about it, that she was powerless to do anything.
125. I went on to tell my mum that they were very cruel at St. Vincent's and they were hitting me, they were hitting children that wet the bed and they were locking the toilet door at night. I told her Sister KXD this holy person, was hitting us. I told her I wanted to leave the school and I didn't want to go back.
126. My mum then spoke to Sister KTA and challenged her about the treatment of the children. They had a big set too but I don't know what was said. I know Sister KTA told my mum that type of thing didn't happen and that it wasn't true. Sister KTA denied I had ever been hit and said I had been a bad boy.

127. My mum did say she was going to come back to the school and check to make sure everything was okay. It was after that I was assaulted by Sister KUA and my mum ended up reporting that to the police. I would have been about eleven or twelve then. The police did approach the school and Sister KTA told them nothing had happened and that was it, nothing else happened. I was never spoken to by the police.
128. I told Sister KUA and Margaret Walker about Willie Malley sexually abusing me and nothing was done. As time went on I also told my teacher about what had happened and she spoke to the Sisters but once again nothing happened. I'm not sure which teacher that was but I think it could have been Miss Carsey, who will have passed away by now. She was elderly but was really nice, she did approach the Sisters about it, but nothing ever happened about it afterwards. I also told Sister KXD, who was my teacher as well, but she just said it was me.
129. I told my mother about Willy Malley sexually abusing me as well. I remember she approached Sister KTA and spoke to her about that. The whole thing was disputed and I remember my mum asking her who Willy Malley was. Sister KTA said they would speak to him. We never heard anything subsequent to that.
130. I also told my mum about the incident with Mr KSH. She told me I had done well because we knew what the Sisters were doing was wrong. From that time on Mr and Mrs KSH-LXM, Sister KUA and all the other sisters and teachers seemed to take a step back from me. The way they all behaved towards me changed, they were all such hypocrites. I think Sister KTA must have told them to leave me alone, because I had stood up for myself.
131. The way they were treating those deaf blind children was just awful. I used to say to the other deaf kids that they needed to go home and report what was happening to their mums, but they were just too scared to do that. I told my mum everything that was going on.

Leaving St. Vincent's

132. When I was fifteen and a half my mum told me that she thought it was about time I left the school, so that's when I left St. Vincent's.

Life after being in care

133. My brother [REDACTED] who [REDACTED] deaf too, and he attended St. Vincent's, after I had been there. [REDACTED] about sixteen years younger than me. I remember telling him to watch himself when he was there. Every day I saw him when he came back from the school I would ask him how he was getting on. He always came back and told me it was great, that he loved it and the school was great.
134. He told me the boys and girls all mixed and they had a great time. [REDACTED]'s experiences absolutely perplexed me but by then the Sisters had left and were replaced by teachers and the whole school had moved on. The old school had also been brought down and a new building and chapel had been built on the grounds of the old school. Everything was on a ground floor and all the facilities were better. My experience was very different to that of my brother [REDACTED] and I was very happy for him.
135. Our family were still living in [REDACTED] and we were very poor so as soon as I left school aged fifteen and a half I had to try and earn money in terms of the incomings and outgoings of the house. I worked picking fruit to begin with, earning £3.50 a week. I would keep £1 for myself and put £2.50 into the house. I ended up with a variety of very low paid jobs and that was the situation because we were poor.
136. I went on to get a job with [REDACTED] manufacturing cardboard boxes. They were an employer of deaf people. The wage was quite good and I was earning £15 a week so I quite liked it there. I then did some welding and I also worked with [REDACTED] Shipbuilders in Glasgow. They were taken over by [REDACTED] and I did try to get a job with them but I was told I was too old. I was only thirty two, but they said they were wanting to employ younger people. I haven't worked since then.

137. I did look for a job as a blacksmith making gates but a lot of the places I applied to wouldn't give me a job because of my deafness. That was always a barrier to employment for me. It got to the stage where I'd applied for so many jobs always meeting that same barrier that I became so demotivated. A few years after that I became quite poorly and I was never in a situation after that where I was able or fit enough to get employment.
138. There was a period just after I'd left school where I was training and boxing and I had a training coach, worked hard and built myself up physically. I did well in amateur boxing and there was talk of me going professional but once again because of my deafness that was stopped. That was a crying shame because had I managed to pursue a boxing career who knows what might have happened I could have made a living from that. Being deaf just presented so many barriers throughout my life. It was just the same for my brother [REDACTED] he met all the same employment barriers I did because of his deafness. My experience is not peculiar or unique though, that applied across the board to everybody who was deaf or was a sign user.
139. Another area where I wasn't allowed to progress was in [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I was a good player, I won [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I played in [REDACTED] and won many medals and trophies. There was a professional [REDACTED] who once told me he felt bad for me because I was deaf. He felt I was winning because when people were booing and cheering it wasn't putting me off, so I had a bit of an unfair advantage. He told me I wouldn't be able to turn professional as I just wouldn't be accepted because I was deaf. I did ask why, but I never got an answer to that and I was never accepted. I played in hearing leagues and I used to win all the time but they just would not accept me in the professional circuit because of my deafness.
140. I married my first wife when I was twenty one and we had two sons, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and a daughter, [REDACTED] who I haven't been in touch with for years. I also have a daughter, [REDACTED] from the relationship with my second wife [REDACTED] who I married when I was forty six. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

141.

[REDACTED]

Impact

142. Willie Malley had his hands on me at the ages of nine and ten and then again at the age of sixteen. It still bothers me how he managed to find out my mum and dad's address, who gave him that address. That's something that still lives with me now, sixty years on. I had managed to bury it in the back of my mind and then one day last year [REDACTED] contacted me and asked me if I had been abused by Willie Malley years and years ago.
143. [REDACTED] was a profoundly deaf boy who was at St. Vincent's when I was there. He travelled back and forth to the school on a daily basis while I stayed there Monday to Friday. I do remember him, he was about five or six years younger than me. I don't know for sure but I believe [REDACTED] was also abused by Willie Malley and he had put it out amongst the deaf community to try and find other people who had been abused by Willie Malley. I told [REDACTED] I had been abused but that I wanted to forget all about it. Next thing, I had the police at my door asking me all about Willie Malley and the abuse towards me. That was in 2021 and it all came flooding back.
144. After speaking to [REDACTED] I started to experience flashbacks. Sometimes they have affected me quite badly and I had to go and see my doctor. I was given diazepam to help me sleep because it was constantly all going through my head. It has all affected me quite badly. I sometimes get up through the night and just wander about. I was managing it well and had done throughout my life until the whole incident about the

sexual abuse and Willie Malley was all thrown back into my life again. It has had a big impact of recent and my family have told me they have noticed that.

145. There has been impact when it comes to relationships. I've been told by my second wife [REDACTED] that there were occasions when I would try to shut her down and when I would be particularly grumpy and be quite quick tempered. As an adult I wouldn't share sweets and things and [REDACTED] used to wonder if all that was part of my nature or if there was some other reason for that.
146. I can only say that it comes from my experiences at St. Vincent's school. We would sit and eat on our own at school and we had no access to sweets at school. We weren't allowed to go outside the perimeter so when my mum gave me money I didn't get to go to the shops and buy anything. When I then went home and my mum gave me sweets I would say no to any other kids asking for any. I wouldn't share any of my sweets. That was something that happened at St. Vincent's and perhaps it's something that stayed with me into adult life.
147. I definitely experienced anxiety when I was at school. I never felt free, there was never any sense of freedom. I kind of felt like I was constantly in a prison as we were behind these fifteen feet high walls. We were all stuck behind these gates and couldn't see beyond them, so I felt hemmed in and that experience was anxiety provoking. I always described it as being at prison to my mum. I always asked to go to another school but I couldn't because there were just no other deaf schools for me to go to. That saddened me and I just had to grin and bear that period of fear at St. Vincent's school.
148. I don't think the education or teaching at St. Vincent's was up to much at all. I would describe myself as stupid from the education I had there. I don't think the teachers, particularly the Sisters that taught, were even qualified. I couldn't imagine Sister KXD [REDACTED] having any qualifications, she was just so cruel to the children, so that would surprise me, I'd be sceptical about that being the case.

149. Being in St. Vincent's and being treated the way myself and other deaf children were by Sisters who are meant to be these holy people, has definitely affected my attitude towards religion. It's the same with the priests, they were cruel to us as well.
150. My sisters, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are both aware of what was going on at St. Vincent's and they are both willing to speak to anyone who is interested in knowing what they know about what happened at St. Vincent's. They both remember conversations that my mum had with the staff at St. Vincent's. I was never privy to this because I was deaf.
151. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] have told me that in relation to the incident where I was pricked with the pin from the nappy and was bleeding, a priest arrived at my mum's door. My mum told them that the priest, who was a Father Gavigan, came in to our house and apologised for what had happened and that he was acting in a strange way.
152. The same priest also visited and gave gifts and things to my mum later on whenever I told my mum about abuse. He would come to the house subsequently and deliver things. I once got a bike and my mum even got some money. Whenever that happened there was always a request not to say anything about what I had been telling her. It was like a bribe.
153. I still think about my abuse at St. Vincent's, it still comes up now and again. I think because of Willie Malley and the court case it's coming up even more at the moment. I was to have special arrangements when giving evidence at the court case but I've now decided I don't want a screen or anything like that, I want to look him in the eye.
154. I have a deaf grandson, my daughter's son, and now that my daughter has learned about my situation she is paranoid about her son having a similar experience to me. The school system is all very different now but there are still children who are victims of sexual abuse so whenever the subject of deaf children's schools comes up it's always a very contentious subject.

155. I think my daughter's son will be back and forth to school because of that, but my daughter and her son are now being affected by what has happened to me. If my daughter hadn't been aware of what happened to me she would have carried on and everything would have been fine. She has been told things are not like it once was and the family try to assure her not to panic.

Treatment/support

156. I've never had any counselling or support. I was referred to Rape Crisis by the police after I provided them with a statement last year. I then met Helen who has been in contact with me since. I've had no other contact or support.

Reporting of Abuse

157. Once I had left school I remember proactively asking around within the deaf community to see who remembered what happened at St. Vincent's School. A lot of them said they didn't really want to talk about it and didn't want to resurrect that part of their past. One of them was [REDACTED], who was at St. Vincent's and has been trying to engage with the deaf community about these kind of things. I think he feels he's banging his head of a brick wall. I told him I was going to be open and honest about what had happened.
158. I have spoken about [REDACTED] and the police coming to see me in 2021. I spoke to the police with the help of my daughter and again with an interpreter and I provided them with a statement about the abuse from Willie Malley.
159. The police asked me a series of questions about that abuse and what age I was. They wanted me to assist them with their case against Willie Malley. Willie Malley has been charged with abuse towards me when I was nine, ten and sixteen and I'm waiting to hear about a court date. I haven't spoken to the police about any of the other abuse, their focus was just on the sexual abuse by Willie Malley.

Records

160. I do not have any records from St. Vincent's and have never tried to obtain any. I would like to see any files if there were any available.

Hopes for the Inquiry

161. There was so much cruelty at St. Vincent's and none of us children could understand that. These Sisters were supposed to be holy and caring but they were so cruel. I don't think that is particular to St. Vincent's Deaf School though, I think it's quite common with other institutions that are run by the catholic church as well.
162. I would say that for me the schooling at St. Vincent's was a period of suffering. I would say that applied to all the deaf children of my generation. We all suffered and we were all terrified, which is why I feel I need to speak out. I don't want those individuals to get off with what they did, scot free. That said, I think Sister ^{KUA} might be the only one who is still alive. The priest, Father Gavigan, might also still be alive.
163. I would like to see charges brought against the people who were responsible and improvements to the system. I would also like to see Willie Malley served justice. I still have all these childhood memories of the treatment from the Sisters and Willie Malley at St. Vincent's school. They need to stop the cruelty, the beatings, being forced to eat food, the punishments dished out by people who were meant to be looking after us, and the sexual abuse.
164. I was challenging the Sisters and telling them they're treating us cruelly, then telling my mum about the Sisters and why I didn't want to go to school, but the Sisters would then beat me because my mum had challenged them after what I'd told my mum. Things like that have to stop. I never understood why I was being beaten, why were other kids being beaten, that continued daily and that still lives with me today.

165. There was no communication support at all, the deaf children never knew what was being said, we never knew what to do or how to behave, we basically never had a clue what was going on.

Other information

166. 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..... KWT

Dated..... 14 / 6 / 2022