

## **Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

KYU

Support person present: No.

1. My name is KYU. My date of birth is 1955. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### **Background and experience**

2. I graduated from Durham in 1977 with a degree in Sociology and Social Administration. During that degree, I had a placement of approximately three weeks at Aycliffe School in County Durham. At that time, Aycliffe was a combination of a children's home and a special school and was also where convicted child offenders were held.
3. I then did my middle years Post Graduate Certificate in Education at St. Martin's College, completing that in 1978.
4. During my teacher training, I did a special education placement at Cedar House Residential School near Lancaster, where I lived. I was then offered a post there. I worked there for almost three years before being offered a promotion within the group of schools. I then continued in special education and went to work at Witherslack for years. I think working in special education moved me towards a career path and gave me experience that a lot of other people wouldn't have had.
5. My SNR was FXE. He came to Scotland and Starley Hall School with his wife, in 198. After two and a bit years they decided

they needed somebody, SNR, to come the school and give them a bit more space.

### Starley Hall

6. FXE-SPO then asked me and my wife if we would go to Scotland and we accepted. We moved to Scotland in 198. There was no interview process for Starley Hall, my interview was really over the four year period I worked with FXE. FXE has said, when asked if I was recruited by FXE because I was his pal, that it was because they needed me to bring the skills and the culture they wanted at Starley Hall.
7. There was no formal programme that FXE had put together for me being SNR at Starley Hall but I was working alongside him every day, watching what was happening, so it was full on training all the time.
8. The middle years qualification I had from England didn't carry the same weight in Scotland so I had to do a period of two years teaching at Starley Hall to show that I was a teacher. I completed a two year course in family therapy in the early 1990s and my SVQ4 Managers Award in the late 1990s. I was also a Physical Intervention Trainer from early 2000s.
9. The two years' teaching I had to do when I first came to Scotland wasn't an issue for being employed, it was just a question that I couldn't be full time on the register until I'd actually done two years' teaching. The middle years qualification dealt with the last two or three years of primary school and the first two years of secondary school and wasn't seen as a qualification in Scotland. I was on the teaching register.
10. It was a pretty quick promotion for me, from probationary teacher at Cedar House to SNR at Starley Hall within five years, but there was already a teaching team in place at Starley Hall. I was more overseeing the education programme and the whole organisation rather than being as actively involved in teaching, as I was in

the previous two posts. That role only increased throughout the 1980s, term by term, year by year.

11. I know moving to Starley Hall was a vast move but, knowing what happened afterwards, there was merit in that decision and it was great to be part of making those changes.
12. After a couple of years it would have been disrespectful to my colleagues, who were teachers, to say I was a teacher. I was SNR [REDACTED] and had more of a managerial role. There was a head of care [REDACTED].
13. Starley Hall has had about three or four stages in its development from what it was when I started to what it is now.
14. Starley Hall was opened in 1981 [REDACTED] FXE-SPO [REDACTED]. It was a 39 week placement programme, so not full time residential. There were day pupils and the focus was on education. The first intakes were small, about six to eight young people, which grew to maybe twelve during the first term. It took a while, which was sensible, to take the numbers up to over thirty as you can't have that many youngsters all arriving at once.
15. FXE [REDACTED] was a psychologist from America. His knowledge of Scotland came from the fact that Cedar House and the two other schools in the group in the Lake District had a number of Scottish children placed in those schools because there weren't appropriate placements in Scotland. Local authorities had to outsource support for those young people. So FXE [REDACTED] wanted to establish [REDACTED] in Scotland. He had dialogue with the local authorities in Scotland about [REDACTED] a school, which made sense when they were transporting youngsters down to the Lake District. That was the essence of how Starley Hall started and there were youngsters placed there from a number of local authority areas.
16. They were educational placements, not social work placements. Children were referred by the education department and until the late '90s that was almost 100% the case. Occasionally, we would have a parental referral where parents were exercising



their right to say their child's needs were not being met and were pointing their finger at the education department. Over its lifetime, every single local authority in Scotland has sent at least one young person to Starley Hall. Some local authorities were more significant users than others.

17. In the '80s and '90s we weren't working with the young people that are now placed in residential schools. The young people that Starley Hall and residential schools worked with changed completely once this tranche of children whose needs weren't being met in mainstream school came along. There were special departments and resources and hubs which actually took away from the need for placements like Starley Hall.
18. When we got a referral from the education department we would receive contact from the psychologist, who may know about Starley Hall, in which case they wouldn't have to go through the process of finding out more about the school. We would receive paperwork, there would be visits, some were home visits and some children visited Starley Hall but primarily, we wanted the parents to come to Starley Hall so they knew what they were involved in.
19. Things grew and developed and then [REDACTED] years later, in 198[REDACTED]. There were about 39 residential pupils [REDACTED] at Starley Hall and one or two day pupils, which was pretty much the numbers all the way through. I think the most we ever had was about 48 in total. It was always co-educational. The numbers did always ebb and flow as we had youngsters going back to mainstream school. We had staged returns through the summer term and we also had some youngsters who didn't start until the autumn.
20. The young people went home every second weekend and during the school holidays. It was a slightly different programme in the summer holidays because a full six weeks could disrupt the process we had so, we had them back for a week during those holidays. We basically had four terms because of that week back. We had a two week break in October to compensate for the week they attended during the summer holiday. Fife also had that two week break for their schools so it fitted in.
21. As the 1980s went on, some local authorities started to develop their own resources to meet young people's needs. Young people who'd previously dropped out of school



and some of the other needs of young people weren't recognised back then, not in a way that we would recognise them now. Aspergers, for example, wasn't a term that was used in Scotland so people didn't know what it was then. We were certainly working with young people who had conditions and special needs at that time.

22. The important thing for **FXE** and his wife, and the ethos of the school, was that young people would be able to make choices. That also came from the parents, so the parents were involved in making those choices.
23. If a parent came in and said they didn't like it then their children didn't come. We felt it was important to give them that choice, although it's fair to say they couldn't always have that complete free choice of here, there and everywhere. It was important to start that dialogue and that arrangement of talking about positive choices. It was also vital that the young person also visited before placement.
24. The young person would then come to the school. They might not be sure about leaving home, and the decision to come might have come from different points, but it was always about choice. There were always regular reviews and meetings with the first being about six to eight weeks after they came to the school. There was always contact with the parents as well because we took the children home every two weeks. This direct home contact with parents/carers was critical.
25. There were some young people who had an agreement or plan where they went home every weekend. If they were travelling home every weekend the usual mode of transport was public transport. Home wasn't always to stay with parents, it could have been to stay with grandparents or other carers.
26. There would always be contact with the psychologist for the young people on placements. **FXE** was a psychologist so he did do that but there were also local authority psychologists who had the more dominant role. We also had a consultant child psychiatrist who came regularly to the school for meetings. I can't remember any of their names. **FXE**'s title was **SNR**, so he was **SNR** when I arrived as **SNR**. He also played an active role as the psychologist, but that reduced over time.

27. I brought my sense of what was important to the school so things changed all the time. The idea was to build a team, supporting the young person, helping them to make choices. You have to make the young person feel safe if you want to support them making better choices. It was about consistency in rules and consistency in how you spoke to young people and how you wanted them to relate with each other. Many of the young people were struggling in mainstream school and for whatever reason, couldn't do that. It could have been because they were mistreated at home or their needs weren't being met in school from a very early age and they had just gradually disengaged.
28. There were youngsters at Starley as young as eight. There wasn't a maximum age set as such because local authorities didn't always go on school leaving age. There were young people who stayed on all the way through their education for four or five years. It did depend on individual circumstances. There were also a significant number who transitioned back to mainstream school. A good point for us to aim for was if they started at Starley at primary age, to try and get them back to mainstream secondary school. I'd say about a third of young people successfully returned to mainstream school. A proportion never made it back for whatever reason, be it school, home, the community. They would probably have gone on to other resources. I don't remember anybody who was at Starley progressing back to mainstream school and then having to come back to Starley Hall.
29. If there was a plan for a young person to go back to mainstream school there would be significant preparation with the school and input from the psychologist.
30. Starley Hall did go on to take 52 week placements for young people. As we progressed through the '90s, it became increasingly clear that the local authorities weren't seeing us as meeting the needs of some young people because some weren't okay to be at home every weekend and needed 52 week placements, or more flexibility in their placement. We realised, planning ahead, that to remain viable and continue to develop services, it was what we needed to do.

31. An example would be if a young person was at home one weekend but there was an incident at home which then prevented them going home again the following week. The social work would be aware it wasn't safe for the young person to go home the next weekend and would need to find a place for that young person to stay. When that first happened, it was okay, but when it became a pattern and the young person shouldn't go home at all, we would need to find an extra resource or the young person would have to leave. During the late 1990s this became an increasing type of issue we needed to discuss it and do something about it.
32. We gradually started to have more and more requests for youngsters to stay over the weekends and as soon as that happened, it distorted the whole balance of staffing. This proved to be a challenge to manage. We were having to recruit staff at a time when we were also acquiring additional premises.
33. Architecturally, Starley Hall is described as a Scottish baronial house. It was built in the 1860s. It has turrets here and there and was one of those houses that a wealthy person built in that century. It's located between Aberdour and Burntisland in Fife and looks out across the Forth to Edinburgh. It had been used by Fife Council as an old peoples home, but I think that closed in 1979 or 1980. The reason was because Fife Council said it was a building they could no longer maintain.
34. It was basically because of a blocked drain that had caused damage. FXE [REDACTED] sussed what the problem was and ended up getting a good deal [REDACTED] the building because as far as Fife were concerned, it was unusable.
35. The buildings at Starley Hall remained the same during my time but there were additions made or the use of different parts changed. The first classroom downstairs became a girls' bedroom, portacabins were hired as classrooms, another building was added and another section was added to the building. A range of classrooms were also added to accommodate home economics and domestic science classes. Over time, it was about developing the range of subjects so we could be closer to mainstream school. That was with the understanding that equally the young people we worked with were so far behind in many cases. That's not to say they didn't have



the capabilities of achieving exams, they just hadn't had the same learning experiences.

36. When they first arrived at Starley Hall, FXE-SPO lived on site in a house called [REDACTED]. They then rented a house in Aberdour which is near Starley Hall. [REDACTED] then became a house for the older boys, the group of boys who went home every weekend.
37. The big baronial house was the main residential building. It had four levels and up until the end of the '90s, the bottom level, or basement, contained the laundry, the kitchen and a staff room. The next level up was the main ground level with a big entrance hall, two rooms on the left, a big lounge, the dining room and the office at the bottom of the stairs. The two rooms on the left became two girls' bedrooms by the time I arrived. At that time there were no single rooms, they didn't become an obligation until after 2000 or thereabouts.
38. There was also a corridor on that ground level that led to the boot room, where all the coats, shoes, wellies, and things stayed. The youngsters did have clothing and shoes with numbers on them but that was needed so that if someone's clothes went missing, we knew exactly who they belonged to when they were found. When I [REDACTED] the organisation in 199 [REDACTED] we got rid of the numbers.
39. The boot room did give a sense of Starley Hall being a bit institutional. There were 38 pairs of wellies and 38 coats, but the alternative was having them everywhere and not being able to find them when you needed them. It was also a good place for class groups to come into the building, take off their boots and coats then sit and talk with their teacher or care worker. They would have lots of dialogue and encouragement and lots of feedback with the young people about how to manage things.
40. Up the stairs, on the first level up, there were five bedrooms, showers, toilets and the bathroom. They were all boys' rooms with variations on numbers but there could be between four and six boys in a room. Night care staff would go to the office, at the bottom of the stairs, during the night. In later times, I took that away. It just wasn't right. It was like a portacabin stuck at the bottom of the stairs. This was removed about 1994

in a refurbishment, it was not necessary to have staff using an office in this space. It allowed more light into the building and a more welcoming entrance. There was a half floor, between the main floor and the first floor which is where the medical room was.

41. On the top floor, there was one staff bedroom. At night we always had waking night staff but then we also always had another member of staff on duty who would be sleeping. We went on to convert the top floor into a girls' flat. There was another floor, the attic, but we didn't go up there, the fire service didn't want us to use it. In the late '90s a former pupil came back and set fire to the building by setting a fire in the attic. The whole building was nearly lost but thankfully the fire service got there in time and nobody was hurt.
42. There was also an old stable outside in the grounds which was converted into a small gym space.
43. There was a member of staff living in [REDACTED] during the week, with the boys who were staying there. Those boys went home at weekends and there was a very clear expectation that if it was felt they couldn't manage they would be back in the main house. That was after FXE-SPO [REDACTED] moved from there to Aberdour. It was mostly the same person but if that person wasn't on duty, someone else would stay in it. There was always a waking night person in the main building and that changed to two night care workers after I started at Starley Hall.
44. Later in my time at Starley Hall, we made several significant changes to the building. Over a transition period of about a year we changed the bedrooms and layout so that instead of having a kitchen downstairs and dining room upstairs, where the youngsters couldn't see where the food was coming from, we built a big open plan kitchen and dining room area. The boot room had long gone and we created more bedrooms and bathrooms and refurbished the whole building. They were massive changes and we had them all completed by the early 2000s.
45. Another major addition was the building of a sports hall on site. It was a full sized hall with a five-a-side pitch and gave us a really great sports facility. We also made it available to the local community so they could bring groups and use that facility. The

condition we introduced was that they didn't have to pay, so long as any of our young people, who wanted to be involved in their activity, be it basketball, football or whatever, they could. A member of staff would obviously be there as well and that worked pretty well.

46. The next big investment was to do with the school. People were coming and thinking that we might have a good education programme but we didn't have a good school, physically. So in the 2000s we decided we would convert the sports hall into a school. We put in a new floor in so we could have offices and classrooms upstairs and classrooms downstairs. That gave us a purpose built new school and we then got rid of the portacabins.
47. We then started to develop our services off-site and in the early 2000s we had three external houses for the young people to live in; two in Kirkcaldy and one in Ballingry. That started because we had a young girl who lived in Inverness who was doing really well with us but her school in Inverness refused to take her back. We then arranged for her to remain with us and attend mainstream school as a day pupil but that led to us being questioned about why she was staying with us if she was doing well. We then started discussions and negotiations with the Care Inspectorate to get a single property in Kirkcaldy where three young people could live together. That became an exciting development and we then developed our three separate properties off-site.
48. The young people lived in those properties with staff and either went to mainstream school or came to Starley Hall for education. There would be two members of staff working on a rota in a property with three young people and someone would stay overnight. Two houses could have up to four young people. The staff rota and standard we had to reach was always clearly described by the Care Inspectorate. We always met it and sometimes exceeded it.

### **My time at Starley Hall**



49. When I worked in the Lake District, I was coming up to Scotland for Children's Panels and I obviously knew FXE as SNR so I knew the place and saw it pretty soon after it started.
50. My first impression of Starley Hall was that it promised to be an excellent opportunity to develop a service for children in Scotland.
51. When I first arrived in 198, I was SNR at Starley Hall and I shared an office with FXE. He dealt more with the finances and management of the business. I did have an input but worked alongside him for the first few months. As time went on, I was responsible for being involved in the recruitment of staff, visits to families and making decisions about placements. I was also increasingly involved in reviews along with the psychologists, parents and the child's individual care worker. The term individual care worker became a responsible adult. Every child had a responsible adult they knew they could go to. The child would always be involved in the review as well.
52. By 198 the day-to-day the establishment was my responsibility. FXE was still there working on the business but if it was about staffing, then that was my responsibility. After about four or five years, I started thinking about my career development and looked at a job at Beamish Museum in the northeast of England. I spoke to FXE about that and about my career progression and he then came up with a plan.
53. He told me he was thinking and that if I stayed on SNR, until about 199, then I would have an opportunity to the whole business. is the term I would use. I talked to my wife about it, took some advice and decided I could do it and take Starley Hall to the next level.
54. From the '80s into the '90s FXE had less and less involvement. some collateral, put some money down and then purchased the business and became in 199.

55. We were still on a 39 week programme but [REDACTED] started making changes. In the summer, as well as having the young people back for a week, [REDACTED] the staff back for a week, so we had a compulsory staff training week. It was about developing a team culture and showing the value of each staff member, always remembering that the children were the most important.
56. We won our Investor in People Award in 1997 and we were told we were the first special school in the UK, and first residential school in Scotland, to win that award.
57. When I first went to Starley Hall, I was a senior member of staff but I still had my share of duty days working with the young people. A senior member of staff would always be the duty person for a day or an evening or weekend day. FxE [REDACTED] was the same, he had his share as well, although not so much as we moved through the '80s. There was also an on-call responsibility which I tended to share with SNR [REDACTED] of Starley Hall, Jeremy Leach, who was also SNR [REDACTED].
58. I became a key figure at Starley Hall and I was the person linking in with external resources, so I had quite a full on role. I wasn't teaching then, my teaching commitments were all during my first years at Starley Hall. My role through the '90s was increasingly external in terms of being involved. I was [REDACTED] the Scottish Independent Special Schools Group and I was also involved with the Scottish Office Working Group writing National Care Standards and I kept involved in groups like that.
59. Part of my role through the '90s had also been about developing resources and new ideas. One was making sure parents had all the right information and it was presented to them in a positive way.
60. We did a video of the school, 'Searching for Starley', which went down really well. It was designed for parents and young people to see what Starley Hall was about before they came to visit. I thought that was an important step.
61. Another thing that was introduced was the role of an Independent Adult. We employed a former reporter from the Children's Panel, Sandra Elgey, whose role was to come into Starley Hall, whenever she wanted to, or at the request of a young person, and

she had unlimited access to the young people. Young people could speak to her about other young people or staff and she could then carry out whatever reconciliation she felt necessary. The only thing she had to do was feedback what she thought we should know. If something happened that she felt should go straight to an external authority, then that's what she did. If it was a misunderstanding or something that could be resolved, then she would resolve it.

62. That felt like a big step, it was something that just developed nicely and I always felt we had some checks and balances because back in the '80s, and certainly through the '90s, the level of involvement of HMIE was limited compared to what it is now.
63. There was an Advisory Board for the school which FXE established when he first came. This was a group of professionals from local authorities to advise the management. It was not an executive body. Members would be asked to participate in discussions such as developing practice/service/staffing. It was made up of a psychiatrist, a senior social worker from one of the local authorities and a psychologist who worked with the school. They would meet with FXE and myself about four times a year but they were always available, should you need to call on them.
64. As my role increased, I also had more of an involvement nationally as well. I was involved in the Scottish Independent Special Schools Group, I was meeting care staff from other residential schools, working with the Scottish office and so on. We had to build more strength within the team so we recruited a new senior social worker, Claire Robinson, who managed the care programme.
65. When I was XXXXXX I also tried the model of having three excellent teachers being the bosses of the education department, and that worked pretty well. In the end, however, it just wasn't quite working so as we went past 2000 we made some changes. Each member of this trio was an excellent teacher/practitioner the main issue was that this structure impacted on the amount of teaching time as opposed to management time. Educational establishments work better with a clear hierarchy.
66. There was actually a major change in what was happening at Starley Hall around 2000. I have spoken about the need we had to accommodate more children over the



weekends and it was as a result of that increase that we had to make changes. All services were facing new regulations and inspections at this time.

67. Starley Hall itself wasn't a building that was suited to a 52 week programme. You could not have rooms with six, five or even four children, the most you could have would be two. So we then acquired a neighbouring property, [REDACTED] House, which was a former RAF building. It was adjacent to Starley Hall and we felt we could use that. It was a difficult time for the business but we did get through it and expanded Starley Hall to allow us to then think about a 52 week resource.
68. At that point, although the school continued to be important, Starley Hall was a care establishment more than an educational one. That's not diminishing the importance of education but after becoming a 52 week resource, we were social work led. Children came to us through social work referrals, with Children's Panel involvement.
69. We were then working with young people who might have been going to secure care, so we were the last stop, like many other similar resources across Scotland. We always felt that local authorities could choose Starley Hall because they saw something different there.
70. Of course, the week of staff training that I've mentioned, during the summer holiday, was blown out the water because, if your staff are working 52 weeks, you can't say to them to down tools for a full week of staff training. However, because Investing in People have been so successful, that culture of staff and training was embedded in the school. We actually came out of the Investing in People programme around 2010 or 2011 because the money that it cost to keep getting assessed was far better used to pay for our staff to go on professional training.
71. It was a great experience to be involved in Starley Hall and developing it the way that we did. During the period of time I was at Starley Hall we were an independent resource and on several occasions we had big private groups coming along showing interest, saying we had a great reputation and they wanted to buy our service. [REDACTED] always dismissed them because they would have changed the culture in an instant.

## **Personal influence**

72. I think for children to be safe you need a good culture and a good trust between everybody. You've always got to be thinking about meeting the young people's needs. You have to have good recruitment procedures, good supervision, staff training, the right building, good food, good communications with parents and social workers, all those things. Without any of those, you've not got a safe platform.
73. Sometimes some of the complaints that are made in residential schools aren't about abuse, they're about misunderstandings. Someone has had a view, and sometimes it's years later, looking back and thinking it was horrible. If I was a young person looking back at Starley Hall or even my own school, I can think of a teacher that I thought was a right sod. He wasn't, but I can look back and think he was.
74. You have to have good alertness of staff and if something isn't right you have to be absolutely clear and say something. There are so many different ways to manage young people but the most important thing is that, if there is a problem, you deal with it. If you don't, then danger can set in and people don't trust you, people don't feel safe.
75. You should never do something to someone that you wouldn't want to happen to you or your own children. That was the sort of mantra or theme I hoped to communicate at Starley Hall.
76. Lots of people wanted to say that bad things happened at Starley Hall. Some people's lives haven't turned out like they wanted them to and there's lots of reasons why they haven't. I still believe that we did a good job and I hope I did my best.

## **Policy**

77. I don't remember what documentation existed back in the '80s when I started at Starley Hall, so I can't compare what we had from the '90s onwards, to what we had prior to

that. I can only say that there was documentation about expectations and guidelines. In relative terms they were small and not as extensive as the documentation we built up to.

78. We went on to put a lot of work into preparing policy documents from the '90s onwards. We had a safety policy, a care and control policy, a discipline and punishment policy, we had a range of policies as well as guidelines of expectations in youngsters.
79. Monday to Friday there was a daily assembly in the school. Rules and guidelines would be spoken about, expectations of behaviour would be spoken about and things the youngsters talked about would be discussed. The assembly was somewhere we had lots of verbal reinforcement on what was happening and lots of interaction with the young people about expectations and sharing positive feedback.
80. As time went on, I was involved more with policy. I was involved in writing Starley Hall policies and while I wouldn't like to take all the credit, I did have a key role. By producing those papers you're setting a standard and expectation and you're giving something for someone to refer back to rather than what they'd been used to in training or college.
81. From 1994 or 1995 all staff had a personal folder containing all the policy documents. They had to bring it to the staff training week. This folder was a working document, not just for staff training week.
82. When HMIE came into Starley Hall, they paid nowhere near the same amount of attention to the care programme as the Care Inspectorate or the Care Commission did. HMIE did pay attention to what we had, just not in the same detail. There was no getting away from documentation with the Care Inspectorate or the Care Commission because they were extremely thorough. If we didn't have the correct documentation we would be in trouble, so we had it.
83. The Care Inspectorate would come in and ask to see the files and care plans for random young people. They would then go over those plans and there were occasions



when they would sit with the youngster and evaluate whether or not what was written down on paper made any sense.

### **Strategic Planning**

84. I was involved in strategic planning at Starley Hall. It developed in depth and rigour, all the time, as we started to understand it more, particularly when the Care Commission, Care Inspectorate and HMIE visited and told us we needed a strategic plan.
85. I would say that decisions relating to strategy and managing the direction we wanted to go in were never solo decisions by me. I couldn't have done it without support. I was perhaps a driving force but all the ideas weren't necessarily mine. The idea was to build a culture so that I didn't have to be there. My view of whether I was doing a good job was based on everything being looked after and running smoothly when I wasn't there. I was suspended in 2011 following the first allegations and Starley Hall has continued to go from strength to strength. I'm not sure if that's evidence but that was the culture I was after.
86. It's very difficult to say everything was all down to me and I made all the decisions because it never felt like that. Clearly if someone had said we're going to do something and I didn't think it was a good idea, they would have to work blooming hard to convince me or it wouldn't have happened.
87. I was involved in all key decisions relating to Starley Hall but decisions that were being made on a day-to-day basis about the care and welfare of young people were really down to the professional team that were working with the young people. If Liz Duff, our senior psychiatric nurse, told me a way something was meant to happen, I wasn't qualified to counter that. But if it was a decision about whether or not to borrow £200,000 from the bank to develop a service or whatever it was, then that was my decision.

88. Each time we developed a strategic plan, be it one year or three year, it got bigger and bigger, when we were responding to specific issues that were raised by inspection authorities. There was a real focus on those but there was a strategic plan all the way through from a business point of view, as well as developing the skill set of the organisation.
89. We were absolutely aware that if we didn't do things properly then things could go wrong and people could be mistreated. That was from the moment of youngsters coming, to staff recruitment, to daily organisation and logbooks, to making sure that things were written down about planning events. I don't think you started every day thinking 'we've got to make sure that we stop abuse', you started the day by saying 'can we have good experiences today, good learning opportunities' and so on and so forth. I didn't wake up every morning wondering where there might be some abusive situations that day. I looked at it the other way around, ensuring we were encountering positive experiences. That was the drive, rather than the negative of preventing or responding to abuse, you create a situation where we didn't have it.
90. Things change with the passage of time but even at the time people had different views on what had happened so we had to address it. What one person might say was wrong, another might call abuse. It's very difficult to look at this one subject and ask how we dealt with it, because so many different situations in any one day could be interpreted in that way.

### **Structure and recruitment of staff**

91. When I started at Starley Hall I was SNR [REDACTED] and FXE [REDACTED] was SNR [REDACTED]. I'm not being glib about it but I was answerable to the whole team all the time. There was an Advisory Board but in the end, when I was [REDACTED], [REDACTED] was answerable to myself and the local authorities. Post 199 [REDACTED] I didn't have [REDACTED] as such as it was an independent service [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED].
92. Most staff hierarchy is usually described as being a pyramid. When I first drew up a staff map for Starley Hall it was concentric circles, flat, with [REDACTED] and the two senior

managers in the middle. This was from 199█ when I was █. I can't really remember what FxE's staff map was like when he was █, but it would probably have been pyramidal.

93. Everybody had their role or area of responsibility. My task or role was to cascade or spread it out so that everybody could do their job. I never really thought about it as being a hierarchy. Everybody had a part to play and from a day-to-day point of view, when I wasn't there, my part wasn't important.
94. The teachers at Starley Hall were mostly full time. A good number of them also did an evening or weekend day working in the residential programme in the middle weekend. It was a twelve day programme for the care staff. From the late 1990s teachers were not expected to be involved in residential duties.
95. There was a routine for the care staff during the fortnight which was balanced the shifts. Nobody would work with exactly the same people all the time either, there was a rota.
96. The night care workers at Starley Hall, only worked nights but there was also always a sleeping person, a member of the care team, staying there through the night. Some night care workers became care workers, like Cathy Osinska, but they were much later on. I can't remember any names from back in the '80s.
97. After we expanded and acquired █ House, Dave Christie stayed on at Starley Hall as manager there. Sarah Pollock, who is now Sarah Butters, ran The Lodge and Lynne Douglas, was manager at █ House which was where we could develop a 52 week resource.
98. The local authority liked that so we got set up and registered. Most of the rooms were single rooms but we had some for two. There were some problems balancing out the 39 and 52 week placements. Staff were having to adapt as they were used to going home every second weekend and switching off but that all had to change. They got holidays but the whole package changed and we needed extra staff to manage that.



99. Recruitment was always hard. If we held a recruitment drive we would advertise posts in the papers, or we might meet people at conferences who liked what we said. If they were unhappy in their current position, we would ask them to come and talk to us to explore employment opportunities. Sometimes, people who worked with us would come across friends or acquaintances they knew who were looking for a job. Those were many ways that might start a recruitment process. I always made sure we held interviews for staff coming to Starley Hall.
100. Some recruitment drives worked very well with many candidates, but as we went through the process and weeded out the CV's and looked at them in a bit more detail, a crop of ten or more could turn out with us having to start all over again.
101. If we were recruiting for a post that had to have a qualification, which sometimes happened, then they had to have proof of that, otherwise we couldn't recruit them. The most successful recruitment was when we appointed somebody at one level and they gradually moved through because this reflected that they had very good qualities.
102. This refers to the current senior care manager, Lorraine Brown. She started off working in our kitchen. She then became manager of the house staff, then a care worker, a senior care worker and is now head of care, gaining all the appropriate qualifications on the way.
103. Some people did come to Starley Hall with qualifications but it wasn't compulsory for us to recruit people with a childcare qualification until the late 90s. They had to be the right people and then they had to make a commitment to doing the training. In the past, I've been in a position where I was criticised for getting staff on the cheap, because [REDACTED] deputy head of care, Dave Christie, started as a caretaker and ran the football team. He did, but he was a talented guy. He got through his professional social work training and after he left us, he went on to teach social work students at Dundee University. So we were giving the right people the opportunity to do the job.
104. We paid for about half a dozen staff to get professional social work qualifications and sponsored them through that. We did put a lot of time into the recruitment of staff, it was very important and we did the best we could, there were no shortcuts.

105. We always asked for CV's and references from people applying for jobs. I think it was two references and one would have to be a professional one from someone who worked with them. We would speak to references for the staff that we were considering. It wouldn't necessarily be me that spoke to them, but if it wasn't, it would be one of the senior managers.
106. The thing with care work is there isn't a massive pool of resources, particularly with residential. We were involved in the conference circle and went to national conferences so we were getting to meet people and getting ideas about good practice. It was all part of developing the service and that could lead to meeting people who were interested in working for us.
107. Once disclosure came in we had to do those checks but there was a spell where that wasn't the case. It's not that we didn't do disclosure checks, they just weren't available back in the '80s. As soon as they were available, or required, then they became part of our process. We carried out the advanced disclosure checks when they were in place. I'm not sure when that started.
108. The teaching staff employed at Starley Hall were all fully qualified teachers. An example of that recruitment was that we put out an advert, then invited six candidates to come along for a day together. That gave us an impression of them and how they dealt with that. If we liked them and they were still interested, we then invited them to do a shadow shift with a member of staff and spend some time at Starley Hall. That could then lead to an interview. It wasn't always just the one interview, they would sometimes have to come back again. There could be variances to that, if you only had one applicant you obviously couldn't have that group setting.
109. We also always involved the young people. We asked them to show candidates around Starley and spend some time with them. Staff were there to support the young people meeting the candidates. We would then ask the young people what they thought and what they liked about them. The young people might say something that's encouraging or they might say something that makes us realise they may not be the sort of person we want. Any recruitment was never a one person decision.

110. There was always a six month probationary period. I think that was under employment law, making it easier to get rid of people during their first six months. I think you knew pretty well within the first few weeks though if they were the right person.
111. If someone was the wrong person or it wasn't working out, or they did something that we didn't like, then they were moved on. We never halted from dealing with bad situations and if we were asked to deal with a situation or something was brought to our attention, we had to deal with it. If we didn't do that, then it wasn't a safe place, but that doesn't mean something is happening every single evening.
112. After the changes in 2000 I couldn't carry on doing everything I was doing. It wasn't the right thing for the organisation either, about succession and so on, so we recruited a former SNR [REDACTED] from another residential school to come and be our SNR [REDACTED], PNC [REDACTED]. He was then running the programme on a day-to-day basis. PNC [REDACTED] left around 2004 and Sarah Butters then became head of the care programme and Alison Middleton was recruited as head of education.
113. We didn't ever have official volunteers working at Starley Hall. We did have a consultant who worked on the care side for us, who thought it might be a good idea to set up a befriending service. I don't think that actually went anywhere. If you have volunteers it suggests you might have less of a scrutiny than if you're employing staff, and that was the main reason the befriending service never really developed. If you're going to have a befriender, the young person is going to go out with them, and not a member of staff, so that had to be discussed and it never came to anything. I don't think it's a bad idea, I just think the checks and balances for it are too complicated.
114. We did have some people who were people who would come into Starley Hall and speak to the young people or bring in pets to give the young people experiences, things like that, but they were more visitors than volunteers.

## **Training**



115. Early on, we had the compulsory staff training week at the end of the summer, but once we were involved in the Investor in People programme, training became part and parcel of what we did, it was embedded. If it hadn't been we wouldn't have got the Investor in People award.
116. During the course of the year everyone had to do Child Protection Training, Fire Training and, relative to their role, staff had to do CALM (Crisis Aggression Limitation Management) training and Health and Safety. There were also individual staff who received training in how to respond to children with specific conditions, like Aspergers or dealing with family bereavement and loss. That wouldn't be training that was across the board, but if one of the houses was dealing with a youngster with a specific issue, appropriate training would be put in place to deal with that.
117. We had a youngster who was in our care that committed suicide and that obviously affected the whole organisation, it was a really tough time. Individual work had to be done, group work had to be done and we relied on members of staff with the appropriate experience.
118. A lot of the training wasn't formal training where you earn a certificate. Some aspect of learning how to support the young people came from experience. Liz Duff and Claire Robinson had key roles around those aspects.
119. We encouraged people to get qualifications at Starley Hall. People couldn't apply for a senior post unless they had, or were engaged in, the SVQ4 care programme. Teachers were always encouraged to continue their professional development.
120. Domestic staff had to do health and safety, everyone did fire training and if anyone missed it for whatever reason they had to do it in the next batch. We also had people asking us to sponsor them on social work training courses or courses to develop their skills, so we always did the best that we could for that.

#### **Supervision / appraisal / evaluation**

121. Supervision and appraisal was absolutely crucial for the Investor in People process. If we didn't have rigorous supervision and appraisal, we wouldn't have got close to getting that award.
122. When I first started at Starley Hall the supervision was pretty informal but the staff were always allocated to a senior manager. Compared to what it became, it was rudimentary at the beginning. As time went on, and certainly by the mid-1990s, because we won the Investors in People Award in 1997, there was clear supervision. We called it support and supervision. It wasn't just about a monthly sit down with your manager it had to be ongoing all the time.
123. There were recorded notes of supervision, and depending on when you were appointed, there were reviews. Newer people would probably have three monthly and then six monthly reviews, but you would also be watching their performance closely. After that, there would be an annual review. If there was a reason to speak to somebody outside that, then you would. That system was the same for everybody, care staff and house staff as well. Everybody had to be accountable to somebody else.
124. So who was I accountable to? It was always, in a sense, 'mirrored back down' because any of the senior managers could have a word with [REDACTED]. I wasn't precious about that. The measure of whether I was doing a good job, I would say, was reflected by what was happening on a day-to-day basis.
125. The Starley Hall Advisory Board ceased to exist around the mid-nineties. It was replaced with other experts, Sandra Elgey, a consultant social worker, a consultant psychiatrist and the input of Care Commission inspectors etc. It was always an advisory board, never an executive board. We were answerable to inspections by HMIE, the Care Inspectorate and so on, not to the board.
126. All the staff who weren't involved in transporting children home at weekends, as part of the fortnightly cycle, would have a Friday afternoon staff meeting. We then had another staff meeting on a Monday morning, after the weekend, once all the youngsters had been picked up. This pattern was no longer possible with the 52 week programme.

## **Children**

### *Placement/assessment*

127. The first thing we had to rely on with any referral was the papers, description and information that came in from the local authorities. We relied on the depth and detail which differed from referral to referral. The referral process varied in length depending on a whole variety of circumstances.
128. We had youngsters with us who had been abused, but we didn't necessarily know that and it was a whole range of abuse. Then, we had youngsters who were actually abusers themselves or had been abused and were now abusers.
129. There were always discussions, they included professionals, key people from our team and the local authority and the parents, if at all possible. We would all then discuss how best to manage situations, what had been done and what still needed to be done, but we didn't have any entrance test or checklist, there was nothing like that.
130. Each youngster had their own care plan, each was different and had to be managed in a different way. They would detail how we might deal with certain situations but youngsters' days weren't managed minute by minute by their plan. The care plan could be pretty specific though, with difficult situations or areas that you wanted to work on with the youngster and it would always be reviewed.
131. Post 2000, it might have been quite inappropriate to place youngster 'X' in one particular house, whereas another house might have been ideal. The decision on where to place young people was a key responsibility of the managers of the houses. Although they didn't have the veto of it all, it was never just one person's decision.
132. Educational ability was perhaps an important decision back in the day but sometimes we felt it wasn't the most important decision. The type of young person that had to be in residential, if they were coming to us within the care programme, rather than from



school, had to have some degree of fit, but the rigour had to be around the residential placement.

### *Routine*

133. The routine at Starley did change over time. If you were there in 2010 and went back to 1995 or 1980 it would be like a different world.
134. Going back to the '80s, the youngsters were woken in the morning by staff going round the bedrooms. They would get up, washed or showered and changed, then line up at the top of the stairs, ready to go down for breakfast. The young people would go down to the lounge and be told what was happening for the day before going for breakfast.
135. We did say grace, not because it was a religious school but because it's a starting point and gets people settled. Then we all sat down for a meal together. Some youngsters had never sat down for a meal with their own families.
136. After breakfast, the children would line up in uniform, smart and ready for school then go to the lounge, the biggest room, for assembly. After assembly the children got up in their classes, one class at a time and walked down to the school block. At break time they would line up before going out for a break.
137. It does all sound very institutional but it was a way of giving a sense of order and nobody minded it. So they all lined up again to go to lunch and dinner. They would be sent upstairs to wash hands and get ready for meals then it was always the lounge before going into the dining room. That was the routine all the time. The bedtime routine was clear as well.
138. As time went on and the groups became smaller, Starley Hall was more of a home to the youngsters rather than a residential school. We were definitely a residential educational resource that moved into something else. The whole routine thing shifted more and more. People would be in their rooms and would just be shouted on to come down for breakfast. We also had young people who needed one-to-one attention all

the time. There were some youngsters where the expectation was that they would have an adult with them all the time which made things that bit more difficult.

139. When you start working with groups of youngsters like that it's important for the staff to understand the key issues that they have to take into account before the youngsters come to us. That was really important. The young people group we were working with in the '80s was a very different body than we were working with in the 2000s.
140. The staff ratios were very different as well. Back in the '80s it was about one staff member to four young people, sometimes less and in the 2000s it was rarely less than one staff member to two young people but it could be one-to-one.

#### *Personal involvement*

141. When I was at Starley Hall my involvement with the young people was very often full on. Sometimes I was the last port of call to support the team, particularly in difficult situations.
142. At some point through the 2000s, decisions about referrals and young people coming in would be the responsibility of Dave Christie and Sarah Butters as much as mine. Everybody wants to be involved in making plans for things that are going well but when things weren't going very well, I tended to have to get involved in discussions about what we were doing.
143. I certainly got involved in disciplinary situations with staff, if that was needed, and those difficult situations with young people. I was one of the CALM instructors, and I did that because PNC was in post then. I had that little bit more wriggle room to say I can do that training in-house, rather than take key members of staff away for it.
144. At times, as a CALM trainer, I would get called in to situations where there was a physical confrontation. You can't shy away from that because if you do, young people aren't safe, so I would get involved in those situations. My involvement would be to support staff and diffuse the situation, if possible. In some situations as a CALM instructor I would assist directly. All events were recorded and reviewed by a manager.

If I was involved that would be by another manager. All difficult situations were reported to social workers etc.

### *Mealtimes / Food*

145. In the early days of Starley Hall meals were always seen as an important time. There was a pretty clear routine in the dining room for meals. It's about being a safe place and everybody knowing what the expectations were.
146. There was a structure to each meal, all the children sat at a table with an adult. If there wasn't an adult, then we would have four or five youngsters together who we knew would get on well.
147. When I was first at Starley Hall, all the staff were called sir or madam or by their surnames. From 1992 that changed as you couldn't live with people when everybody was calling each other by surnames. That was something FXE didn't really want to move on but it didn't become a big deal.
148. After the meal the young people would be told when they could leave to go upstairs and clean their teeth before going to school.
149. I would say the food was very good at Starley Hall. Margaret was a super cook and she listened to the children to hear what they liked to eat. There was always some choice but it was nothing like what they have today. FXE did have rules about the meals and insisted the children had to eat something. If they didn't like something then they could ask for a small portion and if they really hated something, they could ask for a minute portion. A minute portion of peas was one pea and you had to eat the pea.
150. I do remember a girl called [REDACTED] who just refused to eat one pea. I remember KNU KNU, who was [REDACTED] at the time, having this battle with [REDACTED] who ended up having a '[REDACTED] portion' and not eating her one pea.

151. I can't remember any specific examples of people not wanting to eat specific foods. I do remember a spell when people started to say they were vegetarian and so on. No one was made to starve, everyone was encouraged to eat and if they really didn't like something, I'm sure there would have been an alternative. Although it might have had to be something simple. Food was never used as a punishment or a reward.
152. I'm not saying it never happened, but I can't remember a child refusing to eat. I'm not sure what we would have done, but I'd like to think we'd have been as reasonable as we could be and deal with it after the meal. I can imagine it would be along the lines of not allowing them to play football or go swimming, something like that. There was no punishment like sitting in the room until the next morning or until they'd eaten their meal, nothing like that.
153. There was far more flexibility over the years because we had smaller groups and a chef, who came in long after Margaret, who would ask the youngsters to choose something every day. That had worked really well until someone picked something so whacky that he was the only person who liked it. So we changed that.

#### *Washing and Bathing*

154. Some rooms have ensuite facilities now, and some not, but there is a bathroom for every couple of young people. We started changing to that from around 2000 onwards, when we had [REDACTED] House. There was adequate washing facilities and privacy for all the young people.
155. If we go back to the 1980s there was a shower room and a bathroom with a bath. A member of staff would run the water and, if we knew they were safe in the water, they would be left to have a bath. Some youngsters were so young and hadn't had the experience so didn't know what to do. If a young person was absolutely okay to have a bath by themselves they could.
156. The showering, particularly for the boys, was in a shower room. There were three curtained cubicles for the boys and they all had to have a shower on a Thursday and a Monday. We did have more flexibility as time went on, but when you have a group



of 24 boys, it was a bit of a conveyer belt. Boys could close the curtain if they chose to, but not all of them did. I've certainly no recollection of any situation where someone wasn't allowed to do that. There was very little privacy compared to what you would expect now, because they were all in the same room. It was never seen as a problem, it was just what was done then.

157. I've seen comments since then from people saying that they didn't like that and I don't think I would like it now but that's how it was done. It was done in all schools with groups like that, so it wasn't any different. There would always be two members of staff around the shower area and two or three in the bedrooms corralling everybody around. After they'd had their shower they would get changed into bed clothes and they could go down and watch TV.

#### *Leisure time*

158. On site we had a gym, there were leisure activities like dancing, snooker, pool, soccer, board games and watching TV. When PlayStation started we had games like that. Offsite, we encouraged the youngsters to join local groups like scouts, guides, brownies, cadets and some joined local sports teams. They were given all those opportunities.
159. We also took regular trips to parks and swimming. There were many group activities, more so than individual activities and they got on those group activities if they were doing well. From a young person's point of view there was a real incentive to do well and most youngsters did their very best to do that.
160. You did occasionally get the odd youngster who was in the doldrums and didn't care what they did for a few days, so they would get a bit more individual, personal attention from a member of staff, just to try and work out what the issue was.
161. Some youngsters could probably work the system better and got on more trips than others.

162. We also did school camping trips sometimes. Summer camp at Aviemore was a regular. There was a centre where there were tents or cabins. Some youngsters also did their Duke of Edinburgh awards so they would have residential overnight experiences that were part of that.
163. Latterly, more and more as we had smaller houses, some of the youngsters might go away and stay somewhere. A group went on a sailing trip from Oban right round to Newcastle. There were lots of different experiences and they even had a couple of trips abroad over time as well.
164. One member of staff, Robert DeKoning, had horses so there were occasions when young people would go to his house to experience horse riding. If it was in a group then there would be other staff present but if it was just one or two young people, there wouldn't necessarily be any other staff other than the staff member who had the horses.
165. Activities like that would be arranged and risk assessed in advance in terms of balancing it out. If there was ever any doubt about the competence of a staff member, it wouldn't be considered.
166. As time went on and we were working with smaller groups, you knew which youngsters were going to guides or swimming lessons, or whatever it was, on any given night and it became a completely different way of managing things. We went from a group of thirty down to a group of five or six. Everybody will understand that is quite different. The decision making around group living, when you have thirty people living in one building, as opposed to four, five or six, as is the norm now, is quite different.
167. Nobody ever went to stay with a member of staff overnight.

#### *Healthcare*

168. Quite a lot of the youngsters were on medication. We didn't prescribe medication, the psychiatrist did that. Ritalin was certainly one that was used at the time and we had

an obligation to continue with that medication. There was always a morning surgery for the purpose of administering medication to children who required it.

169. There was a qualified nurse who was a member of the team, but if someone needed to see a doctor, or needed medical treatment, they would go to see the doctor in Burntisland. That was Dr Halliday. All the children were registered with him.
170. The nurse at Starley Hall, when I first went there, was May Alexander. She's dead now. Then there was another one called Anne and we appointed another, Liz Duff, in the early '90s. Liz was a qualified senior psychiatric nurse and was our senior mental health practitioner. She was at Starley Hall until after I stopped working there in 2016.
171. Before Liz, the role was more of a matron, none of the nurses before her were qualified to deal with mental health issues in the same way she was. From the early '90s the needs of the young people had started to change so we needed someone with Liz's qualifications. Liz Duff was based in the Gatehouse which was a building within the grounds of Starley Hall, for a couple of years. She would use that space during the day to meet young people and staff. A youngster could have time to themselves there, be it for their own safety or for the safety of others, always under supervision. We needed that after we became a 52 week resource because young people then had to stay at Starley Hall, it was their home, we could no longer make a case for any young person staying with us to have an extra few days at home.
172. The change to a 52 week programme was a big change, a step up in terms of how we had to think about young people. It wasn't a care service anymore, it was a home.

### *Schooling*

173. Education was important at Starley Hall, if there wasn't education it wouldn't be Starley Hall School.
174. There was a school day, with the same timetable as mainstream schools, but because it was smaller, the class groups were less, about five or six in number. There was primary and secondary education available.

175. Classes were mostly made up around ability, but we had to take age into account as well. The first class would be those who had no or little literacy. Children with serious learning difficulties were viewed differently in the '80s to what they are now.
176. These were young people who could be disruptive but if we, the parents and the psychologists got the placement right, there was a sense of wanting to do okay at school.
177. All the basic subjects were covered but as time went on, sometimes, depending on the skill set of the teachers, you might get a new subject as there was a range of specialities. There were qualification courses available to the youngsters as they went further up the school. Very few of the youngsters achieved national accreditation in the early days, but by the end of the '80s, there were youngsters doing accredited courses and there was lots of variety.
178. The education programme was always very important. I think that's why local authorities gradually moved towards providing resources for young people in mainstream schools where they could have access to a wider range of resources. From a professional point of view, I think it was the right thing that happened, coming to Starley Hall School. However, when you compare what youngsters could access in mainstream schools, with the right level of support, then it was far more than a small school of four or five teachers. It did then move on for the right reasons because local authorities started to invest in schools in a way that was important.
179. By the time we got through the '90s we were working with a different group and were in a different place, we had a new school and appointed a new headteacher, Alison Middleton. Alison came with the reputation that she could make changes in special education and was so determined about what she wanted to do. The school programme really took off with Alison, in terms of expectations.
180. In the early days of Starley Hall the youngsters wore a school uniform to school. They would get changed into their play clothes after school. The clothes were all provided by Starley Hall. The rationale for that was that many of the youngsters had been in



schools where their families were deprived and some came from pretty well to do families, so getting them to bring their own clothes was going to cause some problems. The clothing was therefore provided by Starley Hall and there was a range of clothing the youngsters could choose from. That changed as time went on and I stopped it when I took over. I didn't like it. I felt there was an institutional quality to it.

181. I introduced a clothing budget for the young people so they could go out and choose their own clothes. They had to go out with an adult and there were limits and for some of them, it was their first experience of going to buy clothes.

#### *Chores*

182. The youngsters were expected to make their beds in the morning and look after their own spaces. They weren't leaving it for somebody else to do, that was a reasonable expectation. If anyone needed a bit of help to make their bed, that was different and they would be given that assistance.
183. The youngsters did like to have a chance to work with the caretaker if they could, doing odd jobs but there were no punishment jobs or chores during my time at Starley Hall. There was no compulsion to do jobs or help the caretaker, it was only if they wanted to and if it was the right thing for them to get involved in.
184. They would sometimes wash the cars to get a bit of pocket money. Pocket money came from the fees, from the school. I think, over time, one or two of the site houses developed reward structures for pocket money, so the better a young person looked after their room, they could get a bit extra pocket money.
185. It would depend on the stage a youngster was at as to what access they would have to spend pocket money at any particular time. If they were thirteen or fourteen, had been there a while and had been doing well, they would get to walk down to the town and spend their pocket money, so long as they were back by seven o'clock. That happened on occasions.

186. If a youngster damaged something, there would be an expectation in them doing something to help put that right and make some contribution from their pocket money.

#### *Visitors*

187. If a parent chose to they could come and visit their child. There were reviews when they could come, but they could also come and visit and some parents did dropping off and picking up.
188. Home contact, whether that was phone contact or in the home, was never ever sanctioned. We didn't want them to have home contact every day, that would take up too much of everybody's time, but there was no limit, as such. Equally some youngsters wouldn't phone home at all and some parents wouldn't phone the school at all. If that ever became a concern then we would speak about it, one way or the other.
189. There was an occasion when a youngster had an outburst at school and then damaged property on the way home in a vehicle. It was questioned if it was safe for them to go home to their parents when it was 30 miles up the road in Perth. A decision was made between the parent and social worker and the young person didn't get to go home because of what they'd done. He misbehaved on a Thursday so it was agreed that if he behaved on the Friday he would be taken home on the Saturday. So those sorts of decisions were being made.
190. Although the very clear rule was home contact couldn't be used as a punishment or reward, that wasn't an issue about home contact, it was an issue about being safe in the vehicles for everybody.

#### *Running away*

191. At times youngsters did abscond or run away from Starley Hall if they weren't happy with something. There were no locked doors, other than at night, to stop people coming in, but that could be opened from the inside.

192. If we had a notion that it had been a tantrum that had caused a young person to run away, that we knew who it was and it might only be for a short period of time, then the risk assessment may be that we wait fifteen minutes or half an hour before involving the police. We actually had a good relationship with the local police as the local police sergeant paid us regular visits, irrespective of what was happening at the school, to meet people and be involved with the young people.
193. If a youngster went missing who we felt was vulnerable in any way, and missing needn't mean they necessarily left the grounds, but certainly if we did know they had left the grounds, then we called the police straight away.
194. A youngster who ran away may not get to go out on special activities for some time, a couple of days maybe. They wouldn't lose pocket money, that was never used as a sanction. If someone had damaged another person's property then we would have to come up with a plan to have them pay the person back, but cutting pocket money wasn't a punishment we liked to use.

#### *Review of care/Social work contact*

195. Three reviews a year was the norm for every youngster so we would expect to see their social workers at least three times in the year, plus lots of phone contact and maybe one or two other contacts. However, there were some social workers we didn't see other than at the original placement. So visits and contact from individual social workers very much depended on the social workers and how good they were.
196. We never refused any contact from a social worker. There were private rooms in the school for such visits or they very often went outside in the grounds with the young person, there was plenty of space. The social worker was in charge once they came to see a young person, it was their responsibility. The social worker would also often want to have a discussion with the adults as well.

#### *Discharge from placement*

197. If it was a long-term planned leaving then that would be mapped out with review meetings. It could include visits to the next school. I don't remember us getting many visits from any receiving secondary schools, but I do remember our teachers going out to see teachers at receiving schools.
198. The plans could be very significant. Although it would have been an educational referral, the social work and the families would very probably have been involved. The time scales could also vary quite significantly. The issue would be when we had placements that had to end abruptly and weren't planned. They were difficult because usually someone doesn't know what's happening, hasn't prepared enough or doesn't think it's the right decision.
199. We did endeavour to keep placements going as long as we could and, on reflection, perhaps sometimes longer than we should. A lot of that was down to local authorities saying they didn't have any resources for the young people. Sometimes some local authorities just weren't prepared to respond, especially if we were talking about secure accommodation which was occasionally the case.

### **Discipline and Punishment**

200. From the very beginning, when young people first arrived we would talk about what was expected in terms of their behaviour. Young people also showed new arrivals around and I'm sure they had their own way of describing the rules and consequences at Starley Hall. It was something that was talked about.
201. There was never a set of rules printed for every youngster. There were expectations. The local authorities were satisfied with that and there were school inspections. We didn't have the social work inspectorate in the '80s but in the '90s and 2000s the scrutiny we had was appropriate. The Care Inspectorate and everyone involved were pretty hot on expectations.
202. The language we always used at Starley Hall was care and control rather than care and punishment. I would say it's about choices and consequences, it's not about



punishment. It's about trying to find some way to adapt and modify the way you deal with young people and help them understand what's happened.

203. We always spoke to the young person, or to the group. The daily assembly gathering before school, was always an important time to say what had or hadn't gone well. We also broke the youngsters up into smaller groups of boys and girls, when we would speak to them about expectations. We were always setting expectations.
204. There was a policy on discipline, money wasn't allowed to be a sanction, although if a youngster broke somebody's toys or possessions there would be some dialogue about how that would be put right.
205. Withdrawing contact with parents wasn't allowed. Having said that, we did have an incident where a youngster grabbed a member of staff while they were being driven home in a car. There was a consequence there because they didn't get to go home, but alternative arrangements had to be made. We didn't want to reinforce negative behaviour.
206. If a youngster had been out at an activity and disrupted it in some way, it would be unusual for them to get that choice again, until there had been an understanding as to what they had done wrong.
207. It was the duty person or senior member of staff who would make decisions on disciplining young people, but it could depend on the scale of what was done wrong. If a youngster was smashing up some property, then the team would have a responsibility to make sure that young person and others were safe. If that meant removing the young person to their room, then those decisions would be made.
208. During my time at Starley Hall, there was never any corporal punishment used.
209. Smoking was the most difficult thing to manage. There was a rule at Starley Hall that the youngsters didn't smoke at all. Staff were allowed to smoke but I introduced a rule that staff had to go off-site to smoke. That did cause some problems with duties and things but nevertheless, that was my rule. You couldn't have staff smoking round the

'back of the bike shed' when that's where the children wanted to be. I don't think we ever found the answer because it was always a potential source of conflict.

210. You do always have to remember that all the youngsters at Starley Hall came from situations where they were finding it very difficult and the range and scale of those situations were so different. Many had been abused in horrible ways and some had been abusers themselves. Those were the young people we were working with.
211. There was a daily log for recording any incidents or difficult situations. There should have been some reference recorded in that log by the responsible adult, the carer or teacher, who was responsible for that young person. Each care worker, depending on their level of experience, would have two or three youngsters who were their responsibility. At the end of a fortnight, that worker would have to pull from the daily log any key things that had happened, so the best way of doing that was to ensure things were recorded at the time. It was important to have that information as a point of reference for any review.
212. It would depend on the scale of the incident for example, if a youngster lost their temper in a game of football because no one was passing the ball to them, there wouldn't necessarily be any reference to that, however, if they started hitting other people in the team because they weren't passing the ball, that would be referenced, along with the fact that they were perhaps not allowed to play football for so many games. There would also have been some discussion about that, between staff and with the young person as well.
213. When there was physical intervention or restraint, that always had to be recorded on the daily log.

### **Restraint**

214. In the late '90s we introduced training in physical intervention at Starley Hall. I know this is a big theme for the Inquiry and one of the things I was involved in. All the way through the late '80s, I was trying to encourage help from the government, local

authorities and the social work. We were doing the very best that we could and we just needed a little help to manage it. The Skinner Report then came out which was really important and we fully embraced what he was talking about but there were still gaps. Problems were being highlighted but we all needed a little more guidance on how to manage the most difficult behaviour. We faced some very difficult behaviour because that's why these young people get these placements.

215. Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) was one of the themes and Claire Robinson, who came as head of care and our senior social worker, had some experience with that. I think she felt the structure and the rigour of it may get in the way, not that she didn't feel we needed something, so we didn't adopt TCI. I can't remember the exact ins and outs as to why we didn't use TCI but there was a conscious decision that we would go on to something else.
216. We got a company in who ran a management of violence course and we trained all our staff in the management of violence. The training came from institutions with young offenders and it was helpful to have. We used their model for a couple of years and it gave us some sort of structure about how to manage physical interventions. We did all our training for that in the sports hall with masks and crash mats and things.
217. Sometimes physical interventions didn't work like we were shown on the video in training, when there were arms flying and everything else, but there were times when young people needed to be held. We never liked to use the word restraint because that adds some connotation. If I use the word now, it's only because that's the word people now use. Physical intervention is how we really talked about it.
218. At times when it was needed, and physical intervention was used, there was a strict reporting process. A report had to be completed in full as soon as possible after the incident, but in any case reference had to be made to it, before you left shift. Somebody had to write a note in the incident book. That would be the name of the person involved and a basic, brief description of what it was. A full report followed as soon as possible thereafter. That report included a space for comments by the young person. A member of staff would sit down with the young person afterwards and go over it, so the young person had a better understanding.

219. There could also be follow up contact with the member of staff, depending on the level of intervention. It might be incredibly brief after a successful intervention that was de-escalated quickly or well managed.
220. When PNC [REDACTED] was recruited as SNR [REDACTED] in 2000, he had experience with CALM so we fully embraced getting CALM instructors. I was one of three we had at Starley Hall. We made sure we fulfilled the obligations that you have with CALM, with everyone having to go through a course and then having to attend annual assessments.
221. We then adopted CALM, and it was better than management of violence. It had more subtlety about it. We also needed the management of violence team to come and train us whereas with CALM, we had three senior members of staff, Gus Munn, Claire Robinson and myself, who completed the instructors training programme, so we had control of our own training. We could train new staff and then provide regular refresher training to existing staff.
222. If you were a new member of staff, you couldn't do physical intervention until you were CALM trained. The initial training session was a full day of training. You could then attend regular top-ups, on approximately a monthly basis, but everyone had to attend an annual review. As time went on, additional staff became instructors.
223. All of the time, the safety of the young people was really important. I would expect my team, if they needed to, to hold a young person to keep them safe or to keep them from harming someone else.
224. An example of an occasion when restraint might be required would be when two youngsters are involved in attacking one another or one young person is attacking another young person. We would want to separate them and try to keep them apart. If it was necessary, because they were so angry or agitated, and set on hurting another person, then holding the young person to keep them and others safe, might be the only option.



225. I remember a situation when a youngster in his teens, who had hurt himself previously on a number of occasions, was causing a scene at Starley Hall. He had been taken out of the building earlier in the evening, to try and calm things down, and I was called in. He then tried to get back in by smashing a window with his arms. I simply pulled him away from the window to stop any injury and held him on the ground. The police and social work dealt with that, but that was a serious incident. I don't remember having many incidents like that. I don't remember that boy's name.
226. There had to be a risk to the young person or the youngsters involved, to justify any kind of physical intervention. It wasn't something any staff member wanted to do. It could be quite traumatic for staff, as well as the young person, but it was part of your responsibility.
227. There was always an effort to de-escalate but sometimes those efforts were very brief. You wouldn't have a dialogue with someone who was about to jump on someone. That was all part of the training, de-escalation, anticipating something happening and understanding the young people were all crucial.
228. It became more relevant when CALM came in because we had a very clear system and there was an understanding of the different levels of intervention, crisis and aggression. Some youngsters came to us instead of secure accommodation so the levels of extreme behaviour, at times, increased and things changed in terms of how you needed to respond.
229. I am not aware of any incidents at Starley Hall where I would describe the use of physical intervention as excessive. That would be an assault and would have to be brought to the attention of senior staff. I don't know of any examples of a situation like that. However, excessive could be in terms of a member of staff who's been in a situation again, where looking back they could perhaps have seen how they didn't need to go to the level they went to. That could happen and was part of training, development and understanding how to manage a situation. Some of that discussion would also be about the young person understanding why it went to the level of hold that it went to.

230. I haven't been involved in CALM training since 2014. A level 1 hold was turning or guiding a young person away from a situation, a level 2 was holding a young person standing up, level 3 was holding a young person while sitting on the ground, level 4 involved increased staff intervention and level 5, the highest level, was holding someone in the prone position. Level 5 was removed by CALM after concerns were raised about the prone position.
231. If an adult didn't deal with a situation in the right way, then there could be disciplinary action. It would need to be reviewed and understood. There may need to be retraining or ultimately they could lose their job. That would apply wherever CALM in use.

### **Concerns about Starley Hall**

232. There were occasions when Starley Hall was the subject of concern and there are some examples of this in the paperwork the Inquiry has sent me. The important thing for me was that whatever concerns were raised, they were discussed, not hidden, dealt with and we moved on. Some of the moving on was because mistakes had been made or it wasn't deemed to have been the most up to date practice.
233. I'm less aware of issues in the early days but I do remember HMIE coming in and saying we needed to change some of our subjects as we didn't have as wide a range of subjects as they would have liked.
234. I'm aware of complaints that came in from social workers who went to the Care Inspectorate or Care Commission. While we never welcomed any complaints because it meant we hadn't done something well, we did appreciate and never resisted any concerns or complaints.
235. The only one we got agitated by was the situation with PEQ a member of staff. He had a relationship with a young person and the police were involved. the police provided us with information and we dealt with that information. The Care Inspectorate then came in with additional information they'd been given by the police, information

that hadn't been given to us. We were then being told we'd done something wrong but we couldn't do the right thing if we weren't being given all the information.

236. I also remember the Care Inspectorate coming in and making a complaint about the décor in a particular room, but you just had to respond to any concerns and continue to develop the service. There was no shame, harm or problem in that, it's just what you have to do at times.
237. If something came to light then parents, or significant adults, would be kept informed. Sometimes it would need to be a significant adult, because the problem or issue that had been raised related to the parent. The responsibility of dealing with that would then be passed on to the social work department or local authority. It might also be backed up with the psychologist.
238. Depending on the situation with the youngster, the parent may not be the first point of contact but they would need to know at some point. It may be a social worker's responsibility and the parent may be called in to Starley Hall to discuss it. As to the timings of how and when all other people are involved, it would vary and depend on lots of circumstances. I can't think of a reason why you would ever not want the people involved, who needed to be involved, because at some point someone's going to say something anyway. It would be the poorest of practice to not say something and then three or six months later have someone asking why we didn't tell them about it.

### **Problems at Starley Hall**

239. When I went home at night I never looked back thinking we had a real major problem that we were deliberately not dealing with. Over time, if I laid the education programme that was delivered in 2000 over the education programme that was delivered in 2005, after Alison Middleton had arrived as head of education, then there was a massive difference.
240. We'd invested into converting the sports hall into a proper school building, rather than having portacabins. We realised that we had to do something about the school building

as it was looking tired and there are lots of examples of developing good practice, where we were looking at how we could change it.

241. We had two or three young people who were making good progress but for lots of reasons it wasn't being allowed or considered okay, for them to go back home. That was our trigger to open our first house, in Kirkcaldy, where youngsters could move to and live in the community, and go to day school.
242. The residential buildings changed significantly from having six boys sleeping in a room in the early days, to single room accommodation. You wouldn't be allowed six in a room by today's standards. It was okay with six in a room and we were meeting expectations, as a residential school, but I wouldn't say it was something I was happy with. I didn't ever say we can't have that because there was a viability about it as an organisation; there had to be a level of occupancy to keep things going.
243. I'd like to think that we were always very pleased with how we always managed to keep things moving. Key milestones were 'Investors in People', good HMIE reports and opening up the three different houses over a period of time. All of them added to the range and quality of service in meeting specific needs, and each young person that came to Starley Hall had their own specific needs. Responding to those needs was really important to us.
244. Looking back over any year at Starley Hall, my overall view would be what a great job we've done and what a great service we're offering. That was how each year would have been summarised. We had to deal with this and with that, and we wished this hadn't happened, but overall the service was developing. It was open and was regarded so by other services as well. Yes there were concerns and problems, but they were never pushed under the carpet, they were always looked at.

### **Reporting of complaints/concerns**

245. If a child wished to make a complaint or raise a concern there was a process. That process developed and changed over time but there were always ways that young



people could make contact and express any concerns. I can't think of any times when youngsters were not allowed to make contact and raise any concerns.

246. Ways that young people could make a complaint were to speak to the independent adult, that was Sandra Elgey. They could call her or wait until she came in and speak with her. All the children had her number. There were different support groups that were there for the children that they could call. All the children had cards with the numbers to call on them.
247. A child could also speak to an adult. If they felt they could speak to an adult, an adult they liked, then that adult had a responsibility to pass it on to whoever they felt needed to deal with it. If it was the type of complaint where the young person was trying to get their own back on somebody, then it was still regarded as something that had to be followed up. Senior staff were available to young people. There were lots of ways for a child to make a complaint and sometimes they didn't need to make a complaint, the adults could see there was an issue and deal with it on their behalf.
248. In the early days of Starley Hall, if a child had a complaint, the first person they might speak to would be their mother or an auntie or big brother. It may then have been fed back to staff when the child was being dropped off or picked up. It would then have been down to the member of staff to do something about it.
249. Youngsters also had access to social workers and they had the responsibility of visiting regularly. Some visited with more consistency than others. Back in the '80s some psychologists might have had three or four young people who were their responsibility, so they might visit more often. Regular reviews were important and were another opportunity for young people to speak about any issues or complaints they might have.
250. In my first fifteen years or so at Starley Hall, we occasionally got the children to engage in groups and encouraged them to work with each other. If a problem arose, then we would deal with it.
251. If a complaint came into the school I might not be the first to hear about, as I may not have been there when it was received. If necessary, I would get actively involved. I felt

that was important. I wouldn't necessarily deal with it solo and the involvement I would have depended on the level of the complaint. You couldn't demonstrate caring for people if you're sat in an office. My work would involve being around and about and being involved. Sometimes someone else would review a complaint but I would always be a presence on site, I had to be there, I couldn't hide in the corner.

252. If there was a complaint about what was for meals, it wasn't necessarily for me to resolve. If it was a more serious issue, perhaps to do with the behaviour of a member of staff, that a senior member of the team was dealing with, then I would expect that to come to my attention. I would probably have known anyway as we all shared the same office in the latter days at Starley Hall.
253. What is important is that if a complaint was made or someone made an accusation, we addressed it. If we were asked to look at something at Starley Hall then we did it. That's a sign of a good organisation, a responsible organisation. In my personal life, if I come across a company where there's been a mistake and they sort it out, then they immediately go up a level. It's better that than pretend there isn't a problem and we never avoided dealing with those issues.
254. Anyone who thinks these organisations should never have had a problem are living on the wrong planet. Our service or sector was dealing with the most difficult, damaged young people who have gone on to have difficult and damaged lives. You couldn't sort them, mend them, or heal them.
255. It's not that this isn't an issue that should be addressed at all. I hope that eventually there's a balance that comes out of it so that it's addressed with some level of understanding of things and not just looking at it from one viewpoint.
256. If a complaint was serious, of a level that needed to be reported and discussed at the care plan or review, then they would be recorded. Things like complaints of bullying, being picked on or being abused would definitely be picked up, recorded and followed up. If the word abuse is being used, it's clearly at a level where you deal with it with the rigour that you needed to. Daily things like what channel was being watched on

the telly or why someone wasn't being picked for the football team, wouldn't be things that were recorded.

### **External monitoring**

257. There are some specific examples of external monitoring in the documentation I've been provided with by the Inquiry. Generally speaking, the Sibcas portacabins I've spoken about, were something we got enough prompts and comments about. This was just general feedback not any specific requirement. That led to a major response when we replaced them and converted the sports hall, providing a new school.
258. During inspections there was a lot of checking up on how we had done things. There were interviews, reference taking and so on. We were never found not to have done something.
259. We had announced and unannounced inspections and my view was always not to worry about the unannounced inspections because we should be ready at any point. That's all very well being said but before an announced inspection there was always a little bit extra getting done. I think that's true of everywhere.
260. There were complaints that came to us via parents, to the social worker, then to the Care Inspectorate and we realised there was an investigation or issue to be discussed. We always responded to that and it was never anything that I can think of that was of major concern.
261. If something ever had to be dealt with, from the Care Inspectorate or wherever, then you had to respond. Without that you're going to get a comment on an inspection report which may affect your grading. As an independent provider, it was really important that we worked as hard as we could to provide the best service that we could. I've always felt that when questioned, as an independent provider who's doing it as part of a business, to survive and carry on being a business we had to continue to strive to reach the higher standards which don't necessarily apply in the local

authority profession. I'm not being dismissive of all local authorities, but the same driver wasn't there.

262. Inspection reports were a constant driver. If we failed in our inspection reports or got a demerit, a lot of work had to be done to remedy that. We never ignored any concerns, in fact, we often identified the issues before there was a concern. That was how we worked, no shortcuts.
263. At one point, after I [REDACTED] the business, the desire to provide more staff and better provision nearly backfired completely. We borrowed too much money from the bank and everything [REDACTED] aimed to achieve in the business wasn't going to be accomplished if we couldn't carry on to our best. We made some significant changes, making the business smaller, so [REDACTED] could continue to focus. It was then about me being a [REDACTED] rather than SNR [REDACTED] of a special service for young people. I had to be both, but equally at that point, I had to really shift the organisation and took a little bit more of a back step so I could see the whole picture, the whole time.
264. That was when PNC [REDACTED] came in as SNR [REDACTED] which gave me breathing space and I was less involved. I also stopped being a duty person so didn't have the same daily responsibility.

### **Record-keeping**

265. There was never any policy or practice of destroying or deleting records at Starley Hall. I can't speak for Starley Hall now, only throughout my time, but we never destroyed any records. I've no specific recollection of any instruction to keep records for a seven year period.
266. Some of the paperwork and records at Starley Hall got lost in a fire and subsequent water damage. It was then all stored downstairs and there was a flood and there was some further damage. That was information from the '80s.



267. When the first allegations surfaced against me, in 2016, the police came to Starley Hall and took away some records. The police then widened the discussions they were having with young people and I was then seen by the police. My lawyers then asked me about records at Starley Hall but I couldn't go there at that time as I had been suspended. The management at Starley Hall then brought lots of records to me because it was important for us to look at how we were going to defend ourselves.
268. There were hundreds and hundreds of records at that time, some going back to the '80s, lots from the '90s and piles from the 2000s. One thing we learnt from that was that the records were never really kept in an orderly way. I couldn't say the records that were kept were comprehensive records but they did go back to the '80s.
269. There was an incident book for each house and they were each numbered. Every incident had a sheet that was numbered and dated and they were all correlated and kept in the incident books.
270. I do remember Care Inspectorate input, advice or direction to the effect that our logbooks were too general, with different entries about different youngsters. We had to change it so that we could have a general log but also individual logs for the young people.
271. Sometimes youngsters would ask to read the logbook which could be a useful thing to do because they could see what had been written. It wasn't good practice if they could see anything that had been recorded about other young people. I remember being asked to show young people what I'd written about them and having to cover up sections on the log to prevent them seeing things that had been written about somebody else.
272. During my time at Starley Hall I was satisfied that adequate records were kept in terms of the children.

## **Abuse**

273. There was different documentation relating to abuse that developed over time. Generally everybody at Starley Hall knew that abuse was things like physical corporal punishment, withdrawing human rights of contact with home, using food as a punishment and so on. There could also be something that might make someone feel awful or unhappy which might not necessarily be abuse but could be a sign that something wasn't right.
274. We were very aware that some young people were placed at the school because of abuse. Abuse that was prior to placement and had been identified in case and referral papers. Referral papers were very important, some were very clear and the local authority provided all the information we felt we should get, but some wouldn't provide all the information at the time.
275. Before a young person came to Starley Hall, we would have identified what the risks and possible sources of abuse would be. The way adults spoke to young people was very important. People were coming to us with references that demonstrated that they had done the job before and had qualifications, were aware of and had a sense of what was abuse.
276. Over time, there was documentation at Starley Hall about the signs to look for and how to manage abuse. We also had to deal with the particular conditions the youngsters had like Aspergers or Tourette's. The staff had to learn how to manage those youngsters appropriately. Not managing those youngsters correctly wouldn't be classed as abuse in a criminal way, but you wouldn't be working as effectively as you could.
277. It doesn't take much, if you're not dealing with a youngster in the right way and that is sustained and everybody is getting it wrong. That's not helpful and may be considered abusive. That would have to be tackled.
278. We never started off saying to staff abuse is this and this so we don't do it. We talked about doing what was best for the young people and identifying abusive situations that must be avoided. We talked about the things that needed to be dealt with. If there was

some specification about a youngster being abused, in whatever shape or form that abuse was, that would affect the care plan for that young person.

279. If an adult thought another person wasn't managing a situation, not abusing but giving out the wrong messages to a young person, there would be a shared responsibility for the team to be aware and manage that young person. That could be a member of staff noticing a young person returning from a weekend home visit, not behaving as they normally would. There would then be some consideration as to what that was about.
280. There was a support and supervision process in place for staff if they wanted to report another member of staff they felt was acting inappropriately. The member of staff might go away and think about it and you would hope they would raise their concerns with a fellow colleague or the duty person. There was a whistleblowing policy that was clearly in place and if necessary, it could be dealt with under disciplinary action. There wasn't necessarily a whistleblowing policy in the '80s, but by the time we were preparing for Investors in People in 1994 and 1995, all those policies were in place.

#### **Child protection arrangements**

281. Everybody had a responsibility to follow the right procedures but there was always a person who was designated to be the main child protection worker. Sandra Elgey wasn't ever called our child protection worker but in a sense she was. She was available to young people and to adults, if necessary.
282. After Sandra Elgey, Claire Robinson was our senior social worker and head of care and she carried out that child protection role. There was always a recognised nominated person to take on the child protection role.
283. Liz Duffy was our senior practitioner for mental health and was in charge of medication. She was always an important go to person if there were any concerns about a young person. She could advise on helping to manage a young person's behaviour, particularly if they were on medication.

284. If someone was concerned about something that wasn't right with a child, I would expect them to deal with it as promptly as possible. The culture had to be that you had to do the right thing for the young person.

### **Allegations of abuse**

285. There were the allegations that were made against me in 2016 when I was suspended and went through the proper process. I was acquitted of all those allegations in court. I was never aware those allegations were forthcoming when I was working at Starley Hall.
286. During my time at Starley Hall, there were three or four occasions when youngsters made complaints of abuse or spoke to social workers. The social work then asked for a follow up report by the Care Inspectorate.
287. There was an allegation of assault made against me. That was by the boy who tried to smash the window with his arms that I had to restrain. I was suspended while that was investigated. That complaint was not upheld and I returned to work.
288. There was a boy who went home and told his mum I'd held or grabbed him in the wrong way. His mum spoke to the social work, they spoke to the Care Inspectorate or perhaps the local authority and child protection team, who came to us. There was no formal allegation made. It was a complaint that was passed back to us to deal with in-house, probably by Claire Robinson, as a senior social worker and head of care. Claire would have made me aware of the complaint. That complaint was not upheld.
289. When we were notified of a complaint, it would usually go to a senior worker at Starley Hall for investigation. We had that link with the local authority so they would know who they were.
290. There was another situation when I injured a youngster when I was preventing two girls seriously assaulting another girl in the minibus. I grabbed a hold of him and that resulted in an injury but it was out of necessity. That complaint was not upheld.



291. There were other situations where people made complaints and it didn't go any further than being dealt with, at the time, by the appropriate people. If we suspended a member of staff when every complaint was made, nobody would be able to do the job. We had to balance things, it was important not to just dismiss everybody we had a complaint about. All complaints were recorded and due process followed.

### **Investigations into abuse – personal involvement**

292. I would be involved, at some level, in investigating allegations of abuse towards members of staff at Starley Hall. Local authority personnel would likely be involved as well and depending on the complaint, possibly social work and the child protection team.
293. I may be involved in speaking to the young person, the adult named and other adults around at the time. My role would be to step back a little bit, get the right information and try to see the bigger picture. Not to pre-judge and certainly not immediately accuse a youngster by saying we don't believe them. That said, that might be where you end up, in terms of discovering information that doesn't look exactly as the young person has said. If every complaint that was made was true, then I'd have been in a different job years ago.
294. It's very difficult to summarise a process that has had so much variety and variability over the thirty year period I was at Starley Hall.
295. There were occasions we had to involve the local police. We had good relations with them. If there was a physical assault on an adult or a young person, we would not necessarily immediately call the police but it would be something that was considered. It would depend on the care plan for the youngster. There wasn't one single rule about when you would contact the police. There were times when it was appropriate to call the police and there were times young people called the police themselves. Sometimes the planning was to try and avoid calling the police because it would just be another notch on the young person's record, which wouldn't necessarily be helpful.

296. If a young person made an allegation of sexual abuse, I think the first contact would have been with child protection team. They would then take on notifying local authorities, the emergency team and the police. The police would obviously be contacted but it would depend on the circumstances as to who we informed first. If there was an immediate risk to someone's safety, I'm sure the police would have been the first call. The child protection team were really the decision making authority, particularly for a sexual abuse allegation.
297. There have been staff dismissed for abuse at Starley Hall. There was a teacher, PPR [REDACTED] who was dismissed for hitting a child in the playground. The police were called immediately for that and he was suspended straight away. That wasn't an easy situation because his wife worked in the school at the time and then continued to do so for many years after. There weren't actually any police charges brought against him but he never stepped foot in the school again after that.
298. PEQ [REDACTED], who was a member of the care staff was also dismissed after it was discovered he was having a sexual relationship with a young girl who was staying at Starley Hall.
299. Those two dismissals are the only ones I recall that were directly linked to behaviour with or against a young person at Starley Hall.
300. I can't think of any member of staff at Starley Hall resigning while under investigation and going through disciplinary procedures before any final decision was reached. If anybody had left and there was something that should still have been followed up regarding their professional integrity, we would have passed that on.
301. With regard to references, it's not a guaranteed science, but we were always clear if we had any concerns about someone we were asked to provide a reference for, we were honest in that reference. I can't think of an occasion where there was a child protection concern or poor attitude towards young people, it was more poor time keeping or a poor attitude to management but if we felt someone didn't have the qualities to work in residential care, then we said that.

### **Reports of historical abuse and civil claims**

302. I was never involved in handling any historical reports of abuse or any civil claims made by former residents at Starley Hall.

### **Police investigations/criminal proceedings**

303. I was the subject of allegations of abuse in 2016. There was a police investigation and I was acquitted of all charges at Edinburgh High Court in 2022. I did speak to the police about the Starley Hall staff, PBT [REDACTED], Nigel Lloyd, Robert De Koning and Angus Munn, who were the other people named on the indictment for that trial, albeit I made no comment about any of them.
304. There was a teacher from Starley Hall, Bertie Jennings, who the police spoke to me about. They contacted me by telephone that was the only contact I had with them about him. It was after he had been teaching at Starley Hall and was working at a special unit in Fife. As far as I remember they told me they were investigating an allegation against Bertie and they were looking to identify a girl from the Morningside area of Edinburgh who attended Starley Hall. I suggested the girls names may have been [REDACTED]. I was not aware at that time of any allegation that had been made against Bertie Jennings. It wasn't until later, I'm not sure when, that I became aware of any charges against Bertie.
305. I had no prior knowledge of that or any other allegations against Bertie Jennings and I had no concerns about him while he was teaching at Starley Hall.
306. I was spoken to by the police about PEQ [REDACTED].

### **Convicted abusers**

307. Bertie Jennings is the only staff member I know of who was convicted of abusing a child at Starley Hall. It was not in relation to what I spoke to the police about. His arrest and the investigation all took place after 2016, after I had been suspended. The alleged event did take place when I was at Starley Hall but I knew nothing about it at the time. It was something to do with putting his hand on a girl's bottom in the dining room.
308. I was involved in Bertie Jennings' recruitment. There was no indication of any previous complaints or concerns regarding his conduct. There were no disclosure checks back then but I can definitely say that had there been any concerns, he would never have been employed.

#### Other staff

FXE

309. As I have stated, FXE was of Starley Hall School, who employed me as SNR. He officially left the school sometime around 199, although I am not certain of that date.
310. FXE had previously me at Cedar House School, so I already knew him and his wife, . I used to come up to Scotland for children's panels while still at Cedar House and I went to visit them a couple of times when I did. It was a bed for the night for me and it gave me an opportunity to spend time with them. had been my teaching mentor at Cedar House and in 198, with FXE's agreement, they offered me the post of SNR. They had been looking for someone to help grow and build Starley Hall and, for various personal reasons, it was a good time for me to move.
311. FXE-SPO had lived on site at Starley Hall for the first year to fifteen months in what eventually became , which was one of the houses that children stayed in. They had moved out of there by the time I started, but the school was only years old at that time and so FXE was still actively involved with the children. He also



took on the role of duty person for one or two nights every fortnight for a period of time after I first started and would be the senior member of staff on duty.

312. After a couple of years, once I had settled in and other senior staff were able to take on the role of duty person, **FXE** no longer did so and his involvement with children was less. From time-to-time, he would attend a review or meet with a parent, but he wasn't at Starley Hall every day. He actually got involved with another school and in the late-1980s was spending a long period of time in Paraguay. He still had a say in **██████████** of Starley Hall and would communicate by fax machine, but he wasn't as involved in the day-to-day life of the school and with the children.

313. **FXE** **██████████** was a very confident, charismatic person. As a psychologist, he could engage very well with most people and he was very clear in what he wanted with Starley Hall. In that sense, he was a good **██████████**, albeit a hard **██████████**.

314. I never saw any behaviour from him towards children that would give me cause for concern and I never saw or heard of him abusing any child.

**PBT** **██████████**

315. **PBT** **██████████** was a teacher at Starley Hall, who became a senior teacher. I think he was primary school trained and may have taught maths and science, but I wouldn't be sure about that. He was also involved in P.E., although he wasn't the main P.E. teacher. He was at Starley Hall early on, but I'm not sure if he would have started after me. He actually left for a period of time before he then came back to the school and continued at Starley Hall for another ten to fifteen years. In those early years, **FXE** **██████████** **FXE** **██████████** people, so he would have **██████████** **PBT** **██████████**, whether that was before or after I started at the school, I don't know.

316. **PBT** **██████████** was a big guy, who was keen on sports. He liked to get involved in physical activities with the young people and taking them out on outward bound trips. He was a good worker and I never saw or heard of him using excessive restraint or abusing any child. The fact that he had worked at Starley Hall, left and then came back again, demonstrated that we had high regard for him both as a teacher and as a person.

317. PBT [REDACTED] was one of four people involved in the trial alongside me and was acquitted very early on in the trial. The judge dismissed the charges against him.

*Nigel Lloyd*

318. Nigel Lloyd was a care worker at Starley Hall to begin with before he stepped up to become the deputy head of care. He had worked with me before coming to Starley Hall and he came because he knew me, albeit he was [REDACTED] FXE [REDACTED]. He came in the 1980s and left after a few years to support his wife in her business. If I recall, I think their relationship ended and he returned to the career he had been involved in. I don't think he returned to Starley Hall immediately, but he did return when an opportunity arose, although he didn't stay for long. He wasn't the boss when he came back and I think he left because Starley Hall was quite a different place by then. The school had become 52-week residential and there was quite a different level of demand. He had some health issues as well. If Nigel had a fault, it was that he ignored his health.
319. He got on well with children and young people and was a really committed member of staff. When he wanted to come back to the school, I was very satisfied to have him back. I never saw or heard of Nigel Lloyd excessively disciplining or abusing any child.
320. Nigel Lloyd was also one of the people who was charged alongside me, but all the charges against him were dismissed before it went to court.

*Mrs FIP [REDACTED]*

321. FIP [REDACTED] was originally a night care worker before she then became a member of the care team. I'm sure she was at Starley Hall when I arrived and she continued working there until, perhaps, the mid-1990s. She was one of the older members of the team, a good member of the team and a very caring person.
322. She was what you would expect a care worker in the past to be. We had an old pulley system to take food from the kitchen up one level to the dining room and, at one time,

two youngsters decided it would be good fun to jump in it. They took turns jumping through the hatch and pulling each other up and down it. FIP came into the room and saw what they were doing and one of the children swore at her. The matter did get dealt with, but FIP ignored the fact that they were going up and down in this dumbwaiter and instead took exception to them swearing at her.

323. I think the children got on well with her and, not to be disrespectful, I think she was a 'granny-type' figure to them. I definitely did not see or hear of FIP excessively disciplining or abusing any child.

FXB

324. FXB came to Starley Hall as a social worker. His wife, , also came to us and in fact, had possibly started first. Both of them had previously been involved with Harmeny School in Edinburgh and they were at Starley Hall some time in the 1990s, but I don't remember the dates. FXE

FXE

325. My recollection of one of the reasons FXB's employment didn't work out was that he wasn't as prepared to be involved in the residential side. He saw his role as a social worker and more like a nine-to-five job.

326. I did not see or hear of FXB using excessive discipline or abusing any child.

*Robert Jennings*

327. Robert Jennings, who was known as Bertie, was one of the teaching staff. Maths and science were his main subjects. He was at Starley Hall when FXE was still there and a few years later went to work in Fife special education services. I think he was at Starley Hall from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s.



328. He was a good teacher. He got on well with children and they liked his classes. Almost all the teachers, as part of their contracts, had a responsibility to do some extraneous duties on the care side and he was involved in that.

329. I did not see or hear of Bertie Jennings using excessive discipline or abusing any child, although I am aware that sometime between 2018 and 2020 there was a trial and he was convicted of a sexual assault. I believe the conviction was concerning a historical incident and involved touching under a dining room table in Starley Hall. I was not involved in the trial, although I was aware of the trial taking place and I was aware of the outcome. We lived in the same village at the time and I happened to speak to him.

*Robert DeKoning*

330. Robert DeKoning started at Starley Hall in the late-1990s and left in the mid-2000s. He was a very fit guy, who came to us on the recommendation of Claire Robinson who was the senior social worker and head of care at Starley Hall at the time. She knew him from work and other activities that they'd both been involved in, near where they both lived. At first Robert DeKoning came to us as a volunteer because some of the girls wanted to get involved in horse riding and Claire knew that Robert had some horses.

331. Robert then applied for a job, went through training and was a care worker. He was very popular with young people and got on well with them. I did have cause to discipline him on one occasion because he said he was somewhere looking after a group of boys when he wasn't and had sneaked off somewhere. He was also disciplined on another occasion for smoking in a vehicle when he shouldn't have done so.

332. I did not see or hear of Robert DeKoning using excessive discipline or abusing any child.

333. Robert DeKoning was involved in the trial alongside me in 2022. He was also acquitted of all the charges against him.



*Robert Taylor*

334. Robert Taylor, known as Bob, was a teacher at Starley Hall. I think he was primary-trained and had worked at Harmeny School before he came to us. [REDACTED] sometime in the 1990s and he was with us for a few years. He may have left when we made the decision to appoint PNC [REDACTED], who had also come from Harmeny. Bob wasn't around for long after PNC [REDACTED] came, although I don't think that was the reason he left.
335. I am led to believe that the Inquiry has information to the effect that Bob Taylor was dismissed from his previous employment. If that was the case, we would have checked that out, but I can't remember now.
336. I don't know whether Bob responded to an advert or if he had heard there was a post. We would have known of him through our links with Harmeny School, which were there over the years. Like all job applicants, we would have gone through a process of checking references after he applied. I can't specifically remember Bob Taylor's application, but we endeavoured to always check references. I don't remember Bob Taylor making any comment about his dismissal or there being any issue with his previous employment.
337. I think he had a more senior role in his previous employment than he had with us, but he was a good teacher and a good member of the team. I did not see or hear of him using excessive discipline or abusing any young person.
338. I do know that after Bob Taylor left Starley Hall, an allegation was made and he was acquitted of the charge. I don't remember the details, but I believe a girl, now an adult, had alleged that he had touched her inappropriately in a classroom at Starley Hall. I remember that Bob didn't attempt to make any contact with the school when the allegation was made, which I thought was significant. We endeavoured to contact him to ask if he was okay, but he blocked all contact with us. I understand that he didn't even tell his family that he was in court until the day of the verdict.

*Angus Munn*

339. Angus Munn, known as Gus, was also involved in the trial with me and was also acquitted. He was a member of the care staff during the 1980s, right through to the trial. He had been suspended prior to that at the same time I was, sometime after 2016. I understand that after the trial, Gus was involved in a discussion with the management of Starley and he informed them that he couldn't go back to work and he was dismissed on medical grounds.
340. I worked with Gus for a good twenty years or so and he was an extremely competent, talented worker with children. He worked hard on his training, got good qualifications and was one of the CALM instructors. I had no cause for concern in relation to his use of discipline and I did not see or hear of him abusing children.
341. He had to deal with some situations and I am aware that one of the charges in the trial alleged that Gus had held onto a youngster against the boy's will. The situation was that the youngster had set a member of staff's hair alight and Gus dealt with that situation appropriately. I have no doubt that it was not an absolutely perfect CALM hold, but he had to get this youngster away from setting light to somebody else's hair. Sometimes there were difficult situations to deal with and Gus always dealt with those situations in an appropriate way.
342. At one time, there was an allegation that Gus Munn was drunk on duty, but he wasn't, he was off duty. As Starley Hall was close to Burntisland, youngsters came across him when he was off duty. My understanding is that he was on a local committee, there was a bonfire, and they were drinking after the event. Young people from Starley Hall were there and when they came back, they said Gus was drinking and we followed that up. He had not, however, been in charge of children at the bonfire and was off-duty.
343. There was another occasion in the days before disclosure that Gus Munn was cautioned by the police for drug misuse while he was off-duty. We were not concerned that it had affected his work and there were no charges, but he hadn't told us. Afterwards, we made it clear in our policies that staff had to pass on such information,

even if it had happened outside work. At that time, there was no legal obligation on staff to make such a disclosure, but we made sure it was in our policies.

Mr FXC

344. FXC or FXC was a member of the care staff as well, who was possibly at Starley Hall between the mid-1980s and the early-1990s. He wasn't a tall man and had dark hair and a beard. He was a fit, athletic guy who had been in the army.
345. He was good with the children and someone who the young people got on well with. He was one of the people who had difficulties with the increased smoking rules for staff, but I had no concerns about him. He thought he should have been able to smoke in the grounds outside and when he was told he couldn't, he didn't like it. He wasn't the only one and I told him that if he wanted a cigarette, he had to go off the grounds. It was a problem that was so difficult to deal with because the youngsters knew where the staff went to smoke and we were really just ticking a box.
346. I never saw or heard of him using excessive discipline or abusing a child.
347. I would say that if ever I did have concerns about any member of staff, or if it had been brought to my attention that someone was excessive in their use of discipline, they would have been spoken to. If someone had broken the law or done something they shouldn't, it would have been dealt with. That did not happen.

KPG

348. KPG was an exceptionally talented science and maths teacher who is now SNR SNR at Starley Hall. He probably also did some care duties in his early days there, until 2005 when teachers no longer did extraneous duties. While I was at Starley Hall, there was a period of time when he was one of three teachers who had a shared responsibility for the education programme. As I have previously said, that didn't work out as planned, however KPG continued as a senior teacher. It wasn't a criticism or a reflection on him, you just can't have three people trying to run things.

349. I never saw or heard of KPG using excessive discipline or abusing any young person.

KUZ

350. KUZ joined Starley Hall as the gardener but then expressed an interest in becoming a care worker so, after training, he moved into the care worker programme. One of the advantages of bringing someone like him in, with previous skills, was that he always encouraged young people to be outside in the garden. He was a good worker.

351. I know that KUZ was spoken to by the police in relation to something that was alleged to have happened at Starley Hall. No charges were ever made. It wasn't a sexual allegation, I think it was about a physical restraint. His wife also worked in the school and, if I remember correctly, the allegation related to how he reacted after someone had said something to his wife. He was suspended for a period of time because that was the appropriate action to take, but I think the whole thing was difficult for him to cope with and he didn't go back to work at Starley Hall. That would have been sometime after 2016, but I don't know when.

352. The world would be a better place if there were more people like KUZ. I had no concerns about his behaviour and I never saw or heard of him using excessive discipline or abusing any child.

PUU

353. The only I remember was PUU, who was a social worker. He was already employed FXE at Starley Hall when I arrived and he left around 1986 dismissed him.

354. PUU was a really good social worker. He would work all the hours he could and when you're establishing an organisation, that is a good person to have. dismissed him because he was drunk at work and had been driving a school car, albeit there was nobody else in the car at the time. I suspect FXE might have given him a final written



warning, [REDACTED] insisted his employment be terminated. That was the first time I really [REDACTED] FXE [REDACTED]

*Adrian Snowball*

355. I met Adrian Snowball at a couple of social occasions, but I never worked with him, although I am aware that he had been a care worker at Starley Hall. He might have used the title of residential social worker. I was employed in 198[REDACTED] and my understanding is that he left with the person who had been [REDACTED] the care programme previously, KNU [REDACTED]. Seemingly, KNU [REDACTED] didn't like the fact that a young person such as me was coming to SNR [REDACTED] and he went to work at the Aberlour Trust in Kirkcaldy.

356. I was aware that Adrian Snowball was convicted of the abuse of a child. I don't know the circumstances, other than it was not to do with Starley Hall. I have been advised that this conviction was around 1972, but I was not previously aware of that. I find it very concerning that he would have had this conviction before working in Starley Hall, but I don't believe FXE [REDACTED] would have been aware of that either. I don't know whether that sort of information was as available, when Adrian Snowball was employed at Starley Hall, as it is now.

*Colin Edwards*

357. Colin Edwards was employed as a care worker at Starley Hall, possibly around 2012 or 2013. I remember him a wee bit, but he wasn't there for very long. I was probably not directly involved in his interview for the post but, as SNR [REDACTED] the organisation, I would have known that he was being employed. I know that he was dismissed during the time I was suspended but I don't know the circumstances.

358. I was only aware of Colin Edwards being removed from the SSSC (Scottish Social Services Council) register, as a result of him assaulting a child, because I read it. I was not involved. I believe his dismissal from Starley Hall was as a consequence of his removal from the SSSC register.

359. He was a younger member of the staff and I did not have any concerns about his behaviour. If I had, they would have been addressed. I did not see or hear of him using excessive discipline or abusing any child.

FKK

360. I cannot think of any particular teacher who would have taught Scottish country dancing. There would have been teachers who might have done dancing with the children, but I don't know who they might have been.

PNC

361. PNC was SNR who came to Starley Hall from Harmeny School around 2000. He left around 2004 and Alison Middleton I knew PNC prior to him starting at Starley Hall, however there was a bit more rigour in his recruitment. He was coming to school programme. We would have obtained references from Harmeny School and those references would have been spoken to. I knew the head there from working together at meetings outside our schools.

362. PNC was a good SNR and it was clear that young people and their families liked him. We parted ways because he decided it wasn't necessary for young people to sit exams, which defeated the whole purpose of their education as far as we were concerned. He watered the curriculum down so that it became more of a social experience for the young people. He had a great affinity with organisations such as Raddery School in the Black Isle, which used to take children on camping experiences. PNC moved towards that way of thinking, which was not in accordance with ours and, although it wasn't acrimonious, it led to his departure.

363. I had no concerns about PNC's behaviour with children. I did not see or hear of him using excessive discipline or abusing any child.

RWZ

364. RWZ, known as RWZ, was a care worker, who became a senior care worker. I don't think she's still at Starley Hall, but she was certainly there in 2016 and I would think she was employed at the school for close to forty years. She joined as a member of the domestic team and then got training and became a night care worker and then a care worker.

365. She was a fine worker who got on well with people. The fact that she was there so long demonstrates that. I had no concerns about RWZ and I never saw or heard of her excessively disciplining or abusing any young person.

PEQ

366. PEQ was employed as a care worker at Starley Hall sometime between 2007 and 2010 for a few years.

367. At one point we became aware of a complaint, against PEQ from a parent. It was to do with a relationship with a girl who lived in the house in which PEQ worked and what had been said or not said. We followed it up and contacted the police. We were told by the police that they were not taking any further action. We took it that there had not been a criminal act, but rather a misjudgement on his part. It was felt, from the information that we had, that nothing improper had happened. Accordingly, we considered that we should move him away from working in that house and he was moved to a different part of the organisation and given some further training.

368. Some months later there was a care inspection and the inspectors commented that we were employing a person who we shouldn't be employing, because he was being investigated by the police. I don't know why the police contacted the Care Commission. We had not known that an investigation was ongoing because the police had not given us that information all those months before. The first we knew of a police investigation was when the Care Commission told us.

369. We established that the allegation was considerably more serious than we had been led to believe and involved sexual activity between PEQ and this girl. Accordingly, Sarah Butters phoned him at home, told him not to come back on site



and he was suspended straight away. He didn't turn up to the disciplinary hearing that was held very quickly thereafter and he was dismissed.

370. We were quite unhappy with the response of the police. They told us that the reason nothing had been said earlier was that they were still carrying out their investigations, despite the fact that the level of concern involved the safety of a young person. We could not be expected to act if we were not provided with information. However, as a result, we were downgraded on our inspection because it was considered that we had failed to act properly. We were incensed and infuriated by the whole situation.

PPU

371. PPU was a care worker who was employed at Starley Hall in 2001, for around three years or so. I remember him saying he was looking for a more senior post and, after a period of time, he went to work at Hillside, which is another residential school nearby. I am aware he is no longer involved in care work, so perhaps that didn't turn out as he'd planned.

372. He was one of the younger members of staff and got on well with the children. He was a good worker and very enthusiastic. He trained really hard and he wanted to get on in his career. I had no concerns about him and did not ever see or hear of him excessively disciplining or abusing any child.

PPW

373. I do not know PPW very well because he came to work as a care worker in one of our houses off-site, sometime between 2010 and 2012. I don't know whether he might still be working at Starley.

374. I had no concerns about his behaviour and certainly nothing was brought to my attention by any of the managers off-site. I did not see or hear of PPW using excessive discipline or abusing any child.

PPY



375. PPY [REDACTED] was a night care worker. I know that he left our employment because he was dying of cancer. I remember having to deal with things when he got the diagnosis.

376. A night care worker had a very clear responsibility. Their work was supervised and there were always two on duty, working side-by-side. I certainly never had any cause for concern over how he dealt with children and I never saw or heard of him using excessive discipline or abusing any child.

PPZ [REDACTED]

377. PPZ [REDACTED] was a teacher who came to Starley Hall around 2005 and was at the school for a few years. She was a small, enthusiastic person, whose primary role was to teach children with special needs on an individual basis, to really drill down into issues such as dyslexia. PPZ [REDACTED] did not work in the residential programme, she was solely a teacher.

378. I never had any concerns about her and I never saw or heard of her using excessive discipline or abusing any child.

PPR [REDACTED]

379. PPR [REDACTED] was a teacher at Starley Hall through the 1990s. I'm not sure if he was there when FXE [REDACTED] was there.

380. He was dismissed for assaulting a youngster, although I don't remember the date. There had been an incident in the playground and he had struck a child. I didn't witness what happened, but other staff and children did. He didn't come back onto the grounds of the school after that. He was suspended and thereafter dismissed. His wife also worked at the school and continued to do so after he was dismissed, which made things difficult.

PPX [REDACTED]

381. PPX [REDACTED] had worked with Fife community services and came to us as a care worker in the 2000s. His partner [REDACTED] also worked at Starley Hall. She was one of the managers of the houses and she was great. It was a real disappointment when they decided to retire to go travelling.

382. I had no reason to be concerned about PPX [REDACTED]'s manner with children and I never saw or heard of him using excessive discipline or abusing any child.

PRM [REDACTED]

383. I don't recall the name PRM [REDACTED].

PSG [REDACTED]

384. I don't recall the name PSG [REDACTED].

PRT [REDACTED]

385. PRT [REDACTED] was employed at Starley Hall as a care worker from the mid-1990s for 10 years. PRT [REDACTED] was involved in the school football team. We came across him because he was originally the manager of another school team.

386. He was a soft spoken guy and got on well with the children. I did not have any concerns about him or his engagement with children. I did not see or hear of him using excessive discipline or abusing any child.

### **Leaving Starley Hall**

387. In 201 [REDACTED] the first serious allegations were made against me and I was suspended. Other than being told there had been allegations made against me, I had no further contact from the authorities for seventeen months.

388. I've not been back to Starley Hall since February 2016. I was only involved, from a distance, as [REDACTED].

389. [REDACTED]

### **Companies House**

390. Starley Hall School Limited was set up in August 1998. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] was [REDACTED].

391. [REDACTED] decided to incorporate because it was another way to put some rigour into the business. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]. That's why [REDACTED] became a company, rather than remaining a sole proprietor.

392. [REDACTED] did own Starley Hall but there was a different edge to it. Sometimes local authorities, or people looking in, would see us as [REDACTED] private [REDACTED] and think we were ripping people off because we were making money. I did earn a decent salary but not a massive amount. As a company, it helped us go to a different footing and, with the bank, we had a clearer line of managing things. It was a nice step forward in the service we were developing.

393. There was also registration with the social work department where the advice was that it would look better if we were a company [REDACTED].

394. I was told that in the company's first set of accounts from 1999 there is a sum of £535,079 owing to [REDACTED] of the company. [REDACTED] didn't put that sum of money into the business so I don't understand that. [REDACTED] did put [REDACTED] house up as collateral and the

business was probably in debt for around that amount of money, but that wasn't a debt to [REDACTED]. That might be how they record it on paper at Company's House, I don't know. I've never thought the company owed [REDACTED] that sum of money. The company did have a debt of around that amount, in total, [REDACTED] got out of that by having to sell [REDACTED] and changing the way that [REDACTED] worked.

395. There were paper shares to the value of around £500,000, but that wasn't actual money. [REDACTED] purchased [REDACTED] so we could have more bedrooms and less young people in each bedroom. The 52 week programme grew out of that and that was when [REDACTED] felt [REDACTED] had to then get rid of [REDACTED]. Converting [REDACTED] was an okay task but converting Starley Hall, the original building, was a task that sent [REDACTED] spiralling into massive debt.

396. On [REDACTED] additional shares were allotted [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] had 99.99% of the shares in the company. On [REDACTED] shares were transferred to [REDACTED] so [REDACTED] respective shareholdings in the company were 51%:49%. That was done because [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

397. Later on, in 2016, [REDACTED] got some shares as well. New articles were adopted and the shares reclassified. [REDACTED] shareholding became 'A' share, [REDACTED] became 'B' share and [REDACTED] became 'C', 'D' and 'E' shares. [REDACTED] also resigned as [REDACTED] and became [REDACTED] around that time.

398.

[REDACTED]

399. From around 2008 or 2009, [REDACTED] numerous approaches from some of the bigger independent providers to buy Starley Hall as a business. [REDACTED] blocked that every single time which eventually, after [REDACTED] advice, led to Starley Hall becoming an Employee



Ownership Trust now. It was most important [REDACTED] that Starley Hall could continue to operate and build on the same ethos.

400. I knew all of the allegations made against me were not true, but had I been convicted of any one of them, it would have immediately threatened [REDACTED] of Starley Hall. It was therefore very important to work towards a model that protected Starley Hall.
401. I understand there are comments made about balance and integrity when it comes to independent providers but I stayed at Starley Hall because I knew I could change things. The independent sector could create and develop services that local authorities didn't want to or couldn't. We were taking youngsters and matching needs from across the whole country rather than one local authority having to provide a service matching the needs of a much smaller core group. What has also been very clear, throughout the whole period of time I was at Starley Hall, is that the cost of providing a residential placement at Starley Hall was less than the local authority providing a similar placement.
402. When FXE [REDACTED] offered [REDACTED] the [REDACTED] agreement, [REDACTED] found that very difficult because [REDACTED] didn't look at how much money was in the bank every month. The first thing [REDACTED] looked at was how things had been going over that last month at Starley Hall. [REDACTED] didn't pay enough attention to the financial side of things, which is probably why [REDACTED] had to get advice from the bank ten years later.
403. [REDACTED] company is still owed money by the Employee Ownership Trust. I don't feel I need to disclose the amount. I would need to know why the Inquiry wants that information, before disclosing it. [REDACTED] have a repayment plan in place, which is consistently changed to make it easy for Starley Hall to continue to develop and thrive. The rate of that debt continues to reduce so that Starley Hall can survive.
404. Starley Hall Properties Limited now owns the land and buildings at Starley Hall and leases it to the Employee Ownership Trust.

405. My title changed from SNR [REDACTED] to SNR [REDACTED] in 200 [REDACTED], when FXE [REDACTED] left. I then became [REDACTED] in 200 [REDACTED], when PNC [REDACTED] came to be SNR [REDACTED]. I took on the role of [REDACTED] as having two SNR [REDACTED] was confusing.
406. I'm not sure quite how all these financial questions fit within a child abuse inquiry. If this becomes the focus or there's some notion in place that abuse in residential homes is something to do with whether or not they're privately owned, that would be wrong. Abuse is to do with the quality of staff and culture of organisations. Cultures that couldn't be switched off when the inspectors walked in, then switched on again.

### **Allegations that have been made to the Inquiry about me**

FIY [REDACTED]

407. I remember FIY [REDACTED] and I remember him being at Starley Hall. I am aware that he has given a statement to the Inquiry. In response, I would like to say that this is one of the cases that came up in court in terms of my indictment. FIY [REDACTED] started making things up while he was giving his evidence and eventually Lord Arthurson said nothing FIY [REDACTED] was saying was credible, and he instructed the jury to dismiss his evidence. I was acquitted of all allegations. All I can say, is that all the allegations surrounding Starley Hall are not true. They were dealt with in court and that was the end of that. I don't think it's reasonable that this is being raised again and I don't want to say any more about it.
408. I was not expecting the allegations to be put to me in the way they have been. They have all been dealt with in a court of law and I was acquitted. I don't think it's fair that it's being raised again in this way.
409. On pages 11 and 12 at paragraph 48 of his statement, FIY [REDACTED] has said, *"Sometimes children were force fed. When I say force fed I mean the staff would hold your nose and force the food into your mouth. They would literally force it down my throat"*.

410. That is something that never happened.
411. On page 15 at paragraph 62, **FIY** says, *"I was expected to go to church every Sunday whilst I was at Starley Hall. I think the church was in Aberdour. I would hide to avoid going to church and show up later on. Not going to church was seen as being "unholy." I remember being punched, kicked and knee'd for refusing to go to church. When I was knee'd it was in the guts. I remember quite a few members of staff doing that. I especially remember Nigel Lloyd, **KYU**, ..... and another staff member I don't remember the name of doing that. Your punishment might not necessarily be on the morning that you refused to go to church. It might come later on. Nobody should be punished for not going to, or not wanting to go to, church."*
412. Again that was dealt with in court and I would agree that nobody should be punished for not going to church. He was not assaulted.
413. On page 20 at paragraph 82, **FIY** says, *"What happened after you got taken back to Starley Hall after running away depended on who you got. Sometimes I was beaten by staff. All the staff members would do that from time to time. If you got Nigel Lloyd or **KYU** you would get skelped then get restrained for being violent. How could a wee boy taking on someone that big be violent? I was tiny."*
414. I would ask you to read the court transcript. I spent six years waiting to deal with this in court, then had it dealt with in court, and find it very difficult to have to answer all these questions again. I am doing the best I can to answer them.
415. On page 20 at paragraph 84, **FIY** says, *"I wet the bed a couple of times whilst I was at Starley Hall. I was made to feel bad after that happened. There was a physical punishment for wetting the bed. You were beaten by staff if you were found to have wet the bed. If you pissed yourself you were seen as being "unholy." I remember all the people I am taking to court doing that. Those people included Nigel Lloyd and **KYU**. I would then be made to take the wet sheets down to the laundry. It was like a walk of shame. I remember the staff ridiculing me when I brought those sheets down. They would say "how dare you" and make it known that they now*



*had to clean my sheets. I remember seeing other children being treated in exactly the same way as me."*

416. On page 21 at paragraph 85, **FIY** says, *"The reason I was pissing the bed was because I was terrified. The bed-wetting was linked to the abuse I was suffering. Why else would I randomly start pissing the bed? I had no other reason to be doing that. Maybe if the staff hadn't been battering the shit out of me, or other staff members were trying to do other things to me, I wouldn't have been wetting my bed."*
417. On page 22 at paragraph 91 and 92, **FIY** says, *"The way they disciplined you was mostly in the form of physical assaults. All the staff were physically abusive. They used that as a means of discipline in the school and in the main house. The only one who wasn't was Mr **PPR**. It was brutal. If you didn't make your bed in the morning you would get skelped with an open hand over the back of your hand. They would do a lot of "restraining" in Starley Hall. Why does an eight year old boy need restraining by a forty year old man? Even if you need to do that, there are ways of doing that. You don't need to twist the boys arm right up their back. There's no need to have you permanently terrified by the prospect of that. There were times when my shoulder was dislocated during the times that I was restrained at Starley Hall. I remember not being able to reattach it as the staff had my arm halfway up behind my back. There were times when I was restrained purely for asking a question. There was no reason why they needed to do that."*
418. On pages 25 at paragraph 103 and 104, **FIY** says, *"**KYU** was another staff member I remember as being physically abusive. He would pull me out of bed by the mattress or by my legs. I remember that he would take me down into the kitchens before or after I went to scouts to give me some food. It was horrifying what happened when he took me into those kitchens. I wasn't the only one who was physically assaulted by **KYU**. I remember seeing him battering other boys including . He once went mental at me because I didn't have all my clothes ready for a camping trip I was going on. He was about to drive me to go to scouts in Aberdour. He kicked my bags around and demanded that I go down to see the dressmaker. He got my arm up my back and marched me around to get things. I couldn't understand how this guy could be bad to me when he had got me into scouts."*



419. On page 25 and 26 at paragraph 106 and 107, **FIY** says, *"On one occasion we went to a place called Beecraigs in West Lothian. I remember that there were lots of deer there. I remember that myself and a boy called ..... got separated from everybody else during a walk around this place. We didn't get separated intentionally. Because the staff couldn't find us we were just left there. We were two young boys left out in the wild. We looked to get some shelter and found some. I remember that the shelter was right next to a road and sleeping out curled and huddled up into one another. During that time we didn't hear anyone out looking for us. It wasn't until after midnight that we eventually got picked up by the staff. It was the bus driver and someone else. I think it was **KYU**. They found us in the shelter. When we got picked up they both kicked the shit out of us. .... and I were kicked and punched. They did this because we were seen to have been the ones who had done something wrong. We were told that we should have handed ourselves in. Looking back it was all because the teachers weren't bothered looking out for us that we got separated."*
420. I'm not happy about the way all these accusations are being read over to me, as if they are fact. I know what is in the statements that are being read over to me. It has been dealt with in court and it doesn't feel fair having to go through it all again.
421. None of it is true and if it's being investigated properly, where is the evidence? In the six years the police investigated these allegations, they didn't find any evidence.

**KPT**

422. **KPT** has given a statement to the Inquiry. On page 16 at paragraph 87, 88 and 89 of his statement, he has said. *"One time I was late to go back to Starley Hall after visiting my mum at the weekend. She had kept me back for a few days because I had been ill. I remember being in Mr **KYU**'s office with my mum when I got back. I don't know what the chat was about. I was sitting in a metal chair with a padded seat and wooded arm rests. Mr **KYU** told my mum to leave. I asked her not to go and leave me because I didn't want to stay there. He told my mum to leave again so she did. As soon as my mum left and turned a corner, Mr **KYU** came across the room towards me in a flash. He was standing over me and he had pinned my wrists down*

*on the arm rests holding my down. I lost it and started screaming and called him every name under the sun. I was struggling to get free but he was a big rugby player and it felt like I was in a vice because he was so strong. I kept fighting because I am stubborn but I had to stop because I felt like my wrists would snap and he'd break my bones. He wasn't arguing with me or anything. For weeks after that, my wrists were black and blue but nobody saw them because I wore long sleeves."*

423. I do remember [KPT]. I have now seen his statement and there are some points I would like to make.
424. There is reference in his statement to the decision of [KPT] being placed at Starley Hall and how that decision was made. That process could take several months from beginning to end. [KPT] had a school placement at Starley Hall in the '80s. He would have seen a psychologist as part of that process. Before we met [KPT] or his mother, they would have known about Starley Hall. They may have been told about it and they may have visited the school. The parent and child involvement was really important and the placement couldn't be offered without the full support of the local authority,, the parent and the child.
425. [KPT] is now in adulthood and perhaps thinks he had no choice and was railroaded into that placement. I know I can't speak to him taking that view. [KPT] would have had several reviews, always with psychologists and social workers involved.
426. I remember [KPT] coming to the school. [FXE] was [SNR] at the time. I don't remember all the detail, but there was an issue with how he dressed and how he looked. [KPT] identified as female. If you look at [KPT]'s life story, and the issues of gender identity, from the perspective and understanding that has developed since the '80s, the experiences he would have faced would have been very different, anywhere. I don't recall any of the discussions, but I'm sure that it would not have been considered appropriate or even acceptable, at that time, that [KPT] could live his life as a girl.
427. In his statement, [KPT] also refers to an incident in the showers. It wasn't voyeurism, it was supervision. I remember [FXE] made efforts to allow [KPT] to wear or use an item that was a little different. I think it was a scarf or a bracelet. There was



some attempt to allow him some individuality, but not to the point of how he probably now looks.

428. KPT also talks about having his hair cut short, but I remember he always had pretty long hair, relative to everybody else. There was no expectation at Starley Hall regarding hair length, which is what is implied in his statement.
429. KPT came to Starley Hall as a day pupil. A decision was made that a day placement wasn't sufficient and he became residential. I can't recall the reason that decision was made. Pretty soon after he became residential, he was moved to The Lodge which means he was then going home every weekend. That would indicate he was doing okay.
430. KPT also refers to letter writing and implies contact was denied but there was never any contact denied at Starley Hall. He was going home every weekend, so I'm not quite sure what that is about.
431. Regarding the allegations, I think it's fair to say there was an expectation from KPT's mother that he should have been back at school, because she brought him back. I don't recall the specific incident and I don't ever remember having to hold KPT down while his mother left. However, there were occasions when a child would make it hard for the parent to leave. It could be a pretty traumatic experience for parents and holding a child whilst a parent left was an important responsibility to keep the child safe. We understood that and the staff talked about holding children down by the arms.
432. The chairs that we had in the office were soft, squashy chairs. They weren't metal. They were wooden and they had very cushioned arms. It made it very easy to hold on to them, but if it had been a difficult situation, which we might not have anticipated, there was always another person next door. Another colleague or a social worker could come in to help hold the young person down so the parent could leave. KPT's mother certainly wanted him to stay, that was important to her.
433. I can't remember that specific incident, but I do remember what those incidents could be like. I recall youngsters running out of the room after their parents and hanging on

to them saying, "*don't go, don't go*". We had a shared responsibility with the local authority to manage those kind of situations. We were near a busy main road and train line. The last thing we wanted, if a young person was in a state of alarm, frustration or anger, was having them running onto the road.

434. As to him saying he was injured and had bruises, I would say that didn't happen. There was never excessive force used and never such force that would cause any bruising. If there were bruises, over a period of several weeks, at some point, somebody would have noticed that. If it had been noticed, it would have been dealt with, and there would have been an appropriate follow up.
435. If a child had an unexplained injury there would have been a conversation with the child. The parents might have been called and asked about it. The nurse may have been involved, if there was a health issue, and there may have been contact with the social work and psychologists.
436. If an injury took place when the young person was at Starley Hall, then it was our responsibility to make sure the person got first aid. If they had to go to the hospital, the parents or guardians had to be informed.
437. The situation that's implied by KPT is something that would have been talked about with the parents. Some parents were more prepared to have a dialogue and try to work out what was happening. All of our youngsters came with a set of emotional difficulties from relationships and we most certainly would have spoken about that with the psychologist.
438. If such an incident had occurred, it would have been recorded in the daily log or the case notes and review notes. I don't have access to them now, but they should be held at Starley Hall.
439. I'm not dismissing the negative view KPT has now formed about many of his early life experiences at Starley Hall. We were an organisation that tried our best to make a child's time at Starley Hall rewarding and therapeutic. I can see some will not look



back at their time as a positive experience, but their life wasn't positive when they came to the school.

440. I don't want to be controversial, but it does appear, from my side, the Starley Hall side, that some people may have been encouraged to paint their memories in a negative way with a view to claiming compensation. I'm not saying KPT is in that situation at all, but I do think that is an issue for people sitting on my side.

PLX

441. PLX has given a statement to the Inquiry. On page 20 at paragraphs 104 and 105 of her statement, she has said, 'RGK sustained a severe head injury in Starley Hall. That was in one of the restraint incidents. In whatever way that restraint was carried out, RGK banged his head on one of the wash hand basins and was concussed. He said Mr KYU said to him that he was meant to be a toughie from Aberdeen. Imagine a man exercising that level of control over a slightly built boy. He was never taken to the hospital. RGK told me about that sometime later. He also said he saw another boy having his head banged against a basin. RGK told me that whilst being restrained he had become unconscious because of the way Mr KYU held him, with his arm across his neck. According to what RGK had seen I think Mr KYU's modus operandi was to place an arm lock in children's necks. I don't know an exact number of times RGK was restrained but it happened more than once.'

442. I don't remember much about RGK but I do remember events around his time at Starley Hall. I wouldn't be able to describe him.

443. There's an allegation that he had a serious head injury and there was no hospital visit. Care Commission inspections and all records at Starley Hall evidence the high level of medical care and due diligence with any accident or injury. This was well demonstrated throughout all the police investigations and in the trial at the High Court in Edinburgh. No record was found of that injury which, to me, means there was no injury as described.

444. I don't agree with the description of the restraint. At no time was any CALM hold designed with an arm lock to the neck. I was acquitted of this charge and all other charges at the High Court in Edinburgh.
445. I don't recall any individual incident where I had cause to restrain RGK. I may have been involved, at some stage, in restraining him because RGK was one of the most difficult, violent youngsters at the school. Prior to coming to Starley Hall, RGK had at least seven school placements, including Harmeny School. References are made to him doing very well at Harmeny and his mother being very satisfied with that school. She refers to PNC who was at Harmeny. He was also SNR SNR at Starley Hall when RGK was at the school. PNC's view on RGK RGK was that he was one of the most difficult and emotionally damaged children at Harmeny School. There are many factors which indicate the difficulties RGK had in engaging with people.
446. PLX makes reference, in her statement to the Inquiry, to RGK being in class with severely autistic children. This demonstrates one of the most difficult issues we had to deal with; when a parent, or indeed a child, fail to understand or accept that every young person placed at Starley Hall, as with all similar services, had their own individual needs and prior experiences. RGK and his mother had strong negative prejudices and views of other children, and their circumstances, which actually mirrored the very issues that RGK himself was dealing with.
447. On page 21 at paragraph 106, PLX goes on to say, *"One other incident that distressed RGK was when they rubbed his face in vomit on the carpet. He had carpet burns down his face. What brings this back to RGK is that he can't stand the smell of burgers. That association of cheap burgers. I don't know if he got sick or somebody else got sick and they just rubbed his face in the vomit. I don't know if that was Mr KYU or another staff member. RGK has told me who it was but I can't remember."*
448. I have no knowledge of this allegation. I guess it's just another statement by PLX PLX questioning the care and welfare of the young people.



449. On page 21 at paragraph 108, PLX goes on to say, "RGK also told me that Mr KYU was listening in on his phone calls to me. That he would be standing there with his finger on the receiver, telling RGK he would disconnect if he said anything bad about the school."
450. I will respond to paragraph 108, but I believe paragraph 107 of her statement also has some relevance. The two paragraphs refer to the police and myself denying contact with PLX as a parent. That wasn't and isn't a practice at Starley Hall. Although he says I was responsible for stopping phone calls, there would have been many other opportunities for him to make phone calls. I wasn't there 24/7. I would have had minimal contact with him at that time as PNC was SNR and the key person for that.
451. I cannot recall any occasion when I was present with RGK when he was making a telephone call to his mother and I made any comment about disconnecting the call, should he say anything bad about the school.
452. On page 33 at paragraph 171 of her statement, PLX goes on to say, "Over the years, when RGK has become upset, it has always led back to Starley Hall and what Mr KYU did to him".
453. I think the significant incident that happened that led to the breakdown of the placement was when RGK put a young person's head under water and held them underwater until he couldn't breathe. That was an allegation that was made and it was described as capering or horseplay. I don't have access to all the relevant documentation but I recall that to maintain his placement, at the authorities request, we had to arrange for RGK to be in a separate building for sleeping. At that point, we recognised that we weren't going to be able to meet his needs as young people weren't going to be safe if he was prepared to do that to another young person. Local authorities didn't automatically have a placement on hand, that took time, so we found him another house on a neighbouring property. It was agreed with the local authorities that he could stay in that accommodation with one-to-one supervision, until an alternative was found.

454. When [RGK] was at Starley Hall, I had moved on to being [ ] and [PNC] was [SNR] and [ ] of the daily operations.
455. On page 35 at paragraph 182 of her statement, [PLX] goes on to say, *"The time was as it was. The legislation wasn't there. I'm sure [KYU] [SNR] [SNR] Starley Hall as a business. As long as he was getting money in from children who were not going to complain. Starley Hall exploited the system but didn't help the children. [RGK] described one boy being locked in a cottage with his face pressed up against the window. He said he was locked in there all the time."*
456. The implication of what she's saying isn't true. I'm not quite sure what she understands as '[ ] as a business', because Harmeny, which gets great praise, even though it's a charity, had to [ ] as a business. That's how you need to operate.
457. [ ] Starley Hall as an efficient business, one where we could continue to develop and build facilities, is something I'm proud of. To say it was only about making a profit isn't necessarily true. That was one of the areas where we could demonstrate that, we balanced our books. That was important and we invested in the development of the service.
458. I think that if inspection services felt that, at any point, young people were being disadvantaged, something would have been said. Inspections were frequent and unannounced. As time went on, local authorities became increasingly involved in the cost of a placement and they were making comparisons with their own services. Local authorities didn't have these services and couldn't develop them because of the cost. It was something that independent providers could do. In the end, if the local authority or Care Commission weren't satisfied with the service, it was their responsibility, and at times they would make it known they weren't happy with something, and we had to respond.
459. It's not the first time that a parent, or the press, or somebody else, has made this allegation. In ensuring Starley Hall continued to operate, it was very important to us that we didn't get bought out or sell out to a major company.



460. I appreciate that's her statement but it's not true. She obviously believes that and I can't question why she's said that.
461. In relation to the second part of paragraph 182, no one was ever locked in a cottage and if someone had their face pressed up against a window, that would be assault, so no, that did not happen.
462. On page 37 at paragraph 193 of her statement, **PLX** goes on to say, *"All the questions I have raised in my witness statement, is borne out by the lack of robust inspections of Starley Hall. They should not have been approved as a school to operate, which left vulnerable children at risk to abuse and in an environment which was clearly unsafe. Starley Hall and Mr **KYU** operated with impunity and were able to get away with this shocking standard of care, education and poor calibre of staff fitness to practice with vulnerable children."*
463. The school was actively and fully inspected at regular intervals, both announced and unannounced. We met all the criteria set and made changes and developments as suggested or required. Staff were fully qualified. We had training and development plans with active support and supervision.
464. I doubt that one parents' speculation about the lack of rigour or professionalism of Her Majesty's inspectors holds water.

**RGK**

465. **RGK** gave a statement to the police. On page 3, at paragraph 6 of his statement, he has said, *"I was constantly being told that any day someone was coming to get me and take me to another secure unit, and then fired into other secure units and my mum wouldn't have a clue where I was. I was in real fear of where I would end up. They were constantly playing mind games. It was Mr **KYU** who would be telling me these things about being moved to other units. He would come into the cottage to speak to me and say these things to me."*

466. The incident that led to this situation was RGK holding another youngster's head underwater until he stopped breathing. He and his mother belittled it and, I guess one of the greatest challenges in our work was managing the views of parents about the behaviour of their child. This wasn't horseplay. It was a deliberate attempt to inflict harm. Various options were considered for RGK such as secure provision and PNC would have been the key link. The police were also involved and were considering serious charges and, from my experience with them, they made it clear that RGK was misplaced and required secure accommodation. I can't recall if the charges were held, but that all led to the end of his placement at Starley Hall.
467. There is no truth in what he said about being told he'd be moved around until his mum didn't know where he was. His mother would have been involved. Under those circumstances, there wouldn't have been pretty regular intense communications with his mother about what was happening. Not necessarily directly with Starley Hall, but certainly with the local authority and the combined group of people involved.
468. On page 4 at paragraph 7 of his statement to the police, RGK goes on to say, *"Something happened between me and another pupil which resulted in me being restrained on the floor by the members of staff. It was all 4 members of staff that restrained me. It was two males and two females. I couldn't give you their names as I can't remember what they looked like. I actually think PRT is one of them, he was a member of staff at Starley Hall. He was in Mr KYU's pocket. I don't even think I could describe the other staff members. PRT was little and fat with a baldy head. There was a member of staff each holding my arms and one staff member holding my legs and one controlling my head. I could see Mr KYU leaning against a wall watching everything that was happening. At no point did he say anything. One of the members of staff kneed me in the ribs and it made me physically vomit on the floor. My head was forced down into my vomit which meant I was struggling to breathe as the vomit was getting breathed up my nose which was bubbling and I was choking on vomit still in my mouth. Every time I breathed sick was going back in my mouth. I was struggling to get away, up until the point I was kneed in the ribs. They were pushing on pressure points and it twisted my hand up my wrist. They continued to apply pressure until I stopped struggling."*



469. I think if an incident happened as described then that would be an assault and improper, so I don't believe that happened at all.
470. The hold that is described is an approved level 4 hold within the CALM technique. It requires four people to be involved and is used in a situation where a young person is being extremely aggressive and continues to be aggressive. There's no indication as to what happened before the described hold. The records at Starley Hall might give a clue. Whatever the situation was, it would have been recorded.
471. If there had been vomiting and so on, the hold wouldn't have continued and certainly not in the way he is describing. It would not surprise me that RGK [REDACTED] at some point, did need a figure of four hold, but that's as far as it would have gone.
472. There is reference to me watching. I don't recall any such incident. However, in a situation like the one that has been described, it wasn't unusual for the word to get out that there was a situation and one of the CALM instructors would come along. It could also have been another member of staff. That would be to observe and ensure people are doing it properly. The important thing was that only one person spoke to the youngster when in a hold. That should always be someone who is involved in the hold, not someone who is observing.
473. If a member of staff knee'd a young person in the ribs, the restraint would have ended and the member of staff would have been on a very difficult path to stay in a job. That's an example of horrible practice.
474. Continuing on page 4 of RGK [REDACTED]'s police statement, at paragraph 13, he goes on to say, *"The second major incident I remember was about a couple of weeks or a month after that initial incident and it happened in the Education Block this time. I think it was right outside Mr KYU [REDACTED]'s office. As you entered the prefab education block on the left there was offices and to the right was Mr KYU [REDACTED]'s office. The classrooms were further along the hallway on the left. I think I wrote on the wall or something and was sent to Mr KYU [REDACTED]'s office and whilst outside in the hall I was in the corner and Mr KYU [REDACTED] came right up to me and pushed his head right into the side of my neck. It was like he was trying to install fear into me by getting into my face. I think I said something*

*cheeky to him resulting in him putting his forehead right into my neck which obviously cut off my oxygen or blood supply briefly as I fell to the ground and blacked out but I don't know how long for. I was really dizzy. There was only Mr KYU there when this happened. He just said, "right are you going to listen now." He then tried to sit me up on a chair and said walk it off, you're meant to be a rough Aberdonian. I'm not sure if a teacher came along or not. I'm not sure what happened next but I was sent to my room afterwards."*

475. I was charged with an assault on RGK. The details of it don't quite fit what has just been described. They don't fit anything because that didn't happen. It was dealt with in court and I was acquitted.
476. In his statement to the police, RGK has got some details wrong in terms of the description of the building and how he has described what would have happened. Had someone been sent along to the office, it wouldn't have been to see me, it would have been PNC who was SNR. Also, had a youngster been sent to the office because they had done something wrong, or because there was an issue of concern, it wouldn't have been unexpected.
477. I don't recall any incident like that. If it had happened in the way he has described, it would have been an assault.
478. On page 5, at paragraphs 7 and 8 of his statement to the police, RGK goes on to say, *"The third assault on me happened in the same cottage I was first assaulted in. There was one time I witnessed a small young boy being restrained by Mr KYU outside the classrooms in the Education Block. I can't remember the boy's name but he flung his head back and hit Mr KYU on his temple and was knocked out. Mr KYU blacked out and ended up on the ground. I believe the child was charged with assault on Mr KYU. I knew from what Mr KYU was like he would catch up with the boy and he eventually did but I didn't witness it. The boy told me Mr KYU throttled him by grabbing him around the neck with his hands. I could see the boy had red marks around his neck which looked like thumb marks."*



479. There was one incident when I was assaulted by a young person head butting me. The young person was at least as tall as myself and not small as described. I did fall to the floor as I was stunned. The police were called by my colleagues and I was removed from the scene and medically examined by our duty nurse. I didn't go to hospital. The allegation that's been made did not take place.
480. RGK [REDACTED] has had a very troubled, difficult life, all the way from the beginning right through to adulthood. That's who he is.

### **Documentation**

481. I have been provided with several documents by the Inquiry. I've read them all but I don't remember everything.
482. I have been shown a memo regarding an allegation (CIS-000011165). I'm not sure if this is a Starley Hall log but it came back to us from the Care Commission. Morag Skinner is named on the document and she was an inspector with the Care Commission. The document describes an allegation made by [REDACTED]. He was one of the people who made allegations at the trial. With regard to the incident described in this document, a situation arose, physical intervention was used to deal with the situation and it would have been logged. The aunt then telephoned the school and said she was going to complain. She did make a complaint and it was dealt with. I don't remember if the complaint was upheld but I assume it wasn't because nothing went on after that. If the Care Commission were involved, they would have seen the information that was recorded and discussed it with whoever they needed to. I don't remember any particular incident like this.
483. I have been shown three documents; a letter from the registrar of Independent Schools to the Social Work Services regarding allegations (SGV-001032269), a memo (SGV-001033523: extract of SGV-000087051) and a response to the outcome of the [REDACTED] complaint (CIS-000011057). These documents all refer to a complaint that was made to the Registrar of Independent Schools that was then passed to the local authority to investigate. It relates to the incident with PPR [REDACTED] who was dismissed for hitting a

child. Mr [REDACTED] was fighting Dundee over the reasons why his daughter should be placed in care. He did not want that to happen and was looking for any reason to challenge the local authority. When he was visiting Starley Hall he heard that a member of staff had been suspended for hitting a youngster. He then contacted the education department alleging we hadn't reported it to the police and therefore hadn't followed due process. The letters clearly show that we did inform the local police and they didn't take any further action. Mr [REDACTED] was putting pressure on the local authority to try to prevent his daughter coming to Starley Hall.

484. I have been shown the Highlighting Positives Workshop Booklet 2003 (SHS-000000048). I was the lead person involved in this training. This training was provided because it was important to help staff understand that dealing with positives, rather than negatives, is a far better way of using your time. If you concentrate on giving negative messages, then you're more likely to get negative behaviour. If you deal in positives, every now and then some of those positives stick and can be developed. It was just a straightforward workshop building on the culture that we hoped we would have at Starley. I'd like to think it was positive training and it certainly wasn't objected to by any staff.
485. I have been shown the Starley Hall staff guidelines (SHS-000000128). There's no reference to restraint in those guidelines because there wasn't one at that time. The local authorities and all other bodies wouldn't 'nail their flag to a mast' and tell us what we should be doing. We did go on to use the management of violence and CALM methods.
486. I have been shown the Starley Hall care and control policy document (SHS-000000045). There is reference within this document to the Care, Intervention and Control training (CIC), which was management of violence. It came in around 1997 or 1998. There was no method of restraint prior to that, so we had to find one. The big reason we shifted from CIC to CALM was because PNC [REDACTED] had experience of working with CALM. That was the driving factor and he was very satisfied with his experiences of CALM and felt it was far better. CIC was developed from prison officer training. The techniques used on adults were modified to work with young people. CALM was also designed and developed with young people in mind and there was the

fact that we could train our own instructors in CALM and do the training for ourselves. CALM was definitely far better.

487. I have been shown the consistent care and control document (SHS-000000127). This was an internal document that I put together with colleagues. It was part of the management of violence Care Intervention and Control. The different levels helped staff understand what they were dealing with. Level one required close supervision and if the behaviour was acceptable, the young person moved on to the next level of response with a degree less supervision and so on. It was to help staff and give them a little bit of a framework on how to manage situations. It's actually putting down in writing some of the legitimate reactions you can have to difficult behaviour.
488. I have been shown the staff notes and guidelines 1996 (SHS-000000046). Liz Duff pulled that document together. It was all part of the development of ensuring high quality training for Investing in People. Investing in People could come in and confirm staff were getting this training.
489. I have been shown TES magazine report 1998 (INQ-0000001027). There are a number of outside local authority providers; the Catholic group of residential schools, Harmony, List D schools and others and they were the Special Independent Schools Group (SISG). The group was formed in my early days in Scotland. I wasn't involved at that time, but I did start to get more and more involved. We visited each other's organisations and there were two or three meetings every year to talk about practice and share information. Over time, we had discussions with the local authorities about physical intervention, Getting It Right For Every Child and Care Standards. I was one of the representatives from the group that was involved in writing the Care Standards. I was [REDACTED] the SISG from around 200[REDACTED] to about 201[REDACTED] or 201[REDACTED].
490. For me, there was one big issue with Scotland Excel. They, on behalf of the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), were trying to dictate what they wanted us to do regarding fees. If you signed up with them, there was a clause whereby, if at any point Scotland Excel said they were unhappy with your organisation, they could come in and take over the business. That literally meant they could come in, remove the management and take over the running of the school. That was so



unreasonable, which I told them. They said they would never use that clause, I said they should therefore take it out, but they didn't. So, we didn't sign up with them.

491. Prior to the SISG, there had been an organisation for all residential schools called the Association of Heads for Residential Schools in Scotland. As **SNR** of Starley Hall, I was involved with them prior to the SISG. That included the heads of local authority residential schools as well. They met a couple of times a year and had an annual conference. It was wide ranging but basically was about sharing and developing good practice.
492. The last paragraph of the document refers to an alleged assault by a pupil at Starley Hall. That was the youngster I had to restrain who was trying to smash a window. There was no assault and no charges preferred against me.
493. I have been shown two separate documents relating to allegations of abuse against Robert DeKoning (CIS-000011166 and CIS-000011156). We changed the way we responded once we had more information and he was suspended while it was dealt with. These documents don't bring anything back to me that we haven't already discussed about Robert.
494. I have been shown a document relating to complaints against two staff members at Starley Hall (CIS-000011056). The complaints alleged that Gus Munn and **RWZ** **RWZ** were frequently unfit for duty as they had drink and/or drug problems. We followed up the allegations and Gus just didn't tell us he got drunk at a fireworks display at the Glastonbury Festival. He was on holiday at the time. He was spoken to by the police. There was no evidence of any drug taking and no police charges.
495. **RWZ** was allegedly drink driving at work. We investigated that and spoke to her but found no evidence of her ever doing that. I don't know who the complainant was but as Gus and **RWZ** both worked in The Lodge, I would assume it was one of the young people placed in The Lodge. The Care Commission were involved because a formal complaint had been made. They advised to include a clause in our contracts that there was an obligation by staff to disclose any information on issues outside of



work that might affect their performance at work. When the Care Commission were involved with any complaints we always followed them up.

496. I have been shown an allegation of historical abuse (CIS-000011170). I'm not doubting that this incident took place, but I don't remember any details.
497. I have been shown two documents relating to strategy meetings regarding historical abuse allegations (CIS-000011142 and CIS-000011137). These are historical reviews of staff restraints when there was uncertainty about the best way of going about it. They are accurate responses from the local authority saying they were following up an issue. It's recorded that they are not child protection or physical abuse concerns and that Starley Hall acted responsibly and cooperated.
498. I have been shown a solicitor's letter relating to a historical abuse complaint (CIS-000011061) and a further document relating to a discussion about that complaint (CIS-000011128). These complaints were checked by the social work. It highlights the issues about referral agencies providing accurate information. One of the issues for us, at Starley Hall, was that [REDACTED] was placed with us and it became clear that we couldn't meet his needs. That was because the local authority didn't give us all the reports. This complaint was followed up by the social work department who were satisfied with the outcome of their investigation and Starley Hall took steps to minimise any further risks. We spoke to the local authority to discuss the lack of clarity in the initial referral papers.
499. I have been shown an accident notification report regarding [REDACTED] (CIS-000011133). I think this is quite a clear document from the Care Inspectorate describing how they managed the complaint. They didn't uphold everything and I would say, as a good professional, that we learnt something from that situation.
500. I have been shown a document relating to an allegation of excessive restraint involving [REDACTED] (CIS-000011072) and a letter relating to a complaint concerning Starley Hall (CIS-000011052). If someone had been found to use excessive force, that would have been a disciplinary issue and there would have

been more involvement from the Care Inspectorate. These allegations were dealt with properly.

501. I have been shown six documents that refer to the imposition of conditions on Starley Hall between 2007 – 2008. These include a letter referring to the placing of a condition on registration (SGV-001032116), a letter dated August 2007 asking for conditions to be lifted (SGV-001032470), a school improvement plan 2007 – 2008 (SGV-001032469), a report of a visit to Starley Hall in relation to conditions set on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2007 (SGV-001032162) and two letters from the Scottish Government regarding consideration of removal of conditions on registration (SGV-001032154 and SGV-001032144).
502. This was all regarding the school's policy on managing challenging behaviour by young people. Issues are discussed having been identified by an HMIE school inspection.
503. Alison Middleton had arrived at the school, as our new head teacher, and was wanting to move things forward with the school programme. She especially wanted to make sure that the care staff understood what their role was. It was about supporting the young people and I remember there were some inconsistencies at the time between what the care staff thought about education and how to manage difficult behaviour in school. If a youngster stormed out of class, the care team didn't always manage it in the way that Alison wanted them to. They would perhaps be allowed to go back to The Lodge House and sit out school. Alison didn't want that, she wanted a more proactive role with some dialogue about why they were missing school and so on. As it says in the documents, she wanted the care staff to be more engaged in learning.
504. Another thing that was noted by inspectors was with the assembly in the morning when everyone gathered to set up the school day. The setting could become a bit of a 'powder keg' with some youngsters really testing everybody's patience. So we moved away from full group settings and separated the youngsters into smaller groups.
505. The main issue was that the care team needed to understand that teachers were at Starley Hall to teach and that's why the children were there. Alison Middleton was the

head teacher and she dealt with all of these issues. The tactic of a senior person in such an organisation is to try and present the points to an inspector hoping that they will see that you're on top of things.

506. The conditions that were imposed were quite valid. The inspectors come in and see things differently. They might see flaws you haven't seen. That's why we have these services and the relationship we had with the HMIE group was very strong after that.
507. We obviously responded and the conditions were eventually removed. We had staff training, the teachers had to help the care staff understand and individual plans were identified for the youngsters. There was a lot of staff discussion but I don't remember any specifics.
508. I have been shown several documents all of which relate to **PEQ**. The documents include an allegation of misconduct (CIS-000011158), a memo regarding the lifting of his suspension (CIS-000011065), a memo regarding a meeting with the Care Commission (CIS-000011071), a letter regarding a complaint (CIS-000011055), a challenge to Care Commission grading (CIS-000011107), and a letter from the Care Commission (CIS-000011051).
509. The memo regarding the lifting of **PEQ**'s suspension (CIS-000011065) says  lifted the suspension before the conclusion of the police investigation. We were told they were not pressing charges so legally, under employment law, we would have had a bit of a problem dismissing him with the information we had been given.
510. The letter regarding the complaint (CIS-000011055) goes on to say the complaint was upheld. We accepted that but complained, as our inspection report was downgraded because of that complaint. We felt that was unfair under the circumstances. There's very little you can do and little point in continuing an aggravated dialogue with the Care Commission because they were correct. We just got it wrong in unfortunate circumstances.
511. I have been shown a document which refers to working with child sexual abusers in a residential setting (SHS-000000047). This is a summary of feedback provided by

the Halt Project, which was developed in Glasgow. We invited Stuart Mulholland, the author, to come and talk to us because we realised that we were working with a wider and wider group of children including; those who had been sexually abused, those who were abusers and those who had been both abused and were abusers. The Halt Project had worked with these children and were prepared to come out and talk to residential schools to help them understand the signs, how to deal with it and how to react. As we had an active staff training programme, it seemed an ideal opportunity. It was the right sort of project for us to be bringing in to Starley Hall. We didn't have to do it, there wasn't any Care Inspectorate direction or anything like that, it was a just positive plan to widen our staff training programme.

512. Sexual abuse wasn't unknown to us. There had been occasions when issues of sexual abuse affected the lives of our young people, but like all residential schools, we would deal with them in the best way we could. The Halt Project just helped us understand it better and that was important.
513. I have been shown two memos regarding a stabbing at Starley Hall (CIS-000011175 and CIS-000011174) and three memos regarding peer abuse at Starley Hall (CIS-000011153, CIS-000011157 and CIS-000011130).
514. Peer abuse wasn't a particular issue that we had to deal with frequently at Starley Hall, but it did happen. The incidents referred to in these memos are a snapshot of some of the things that happen in a residential school. Sometimes we alerted the Care Inspectorate, sometimes we were alerted by the authorities and we respond accordingly. I can say that at no point was I ever dissatisfied with our response, in the sense that we ignored it.

### **Helping the Inquiry**

515. The first time the police were alerted to the allegations, in 2016, the three complainants got together. I don't think I know who those individuals are. I just remember being told three people went into a police station and gave statements about Starley Hall. I believe they got together having seen a programme on TV saying that if you make a




complaint about residential schools you will get compensation. I believe that's what was recorded in their police statements.

516. The police then started to investigate other complaints or allegations. There are numerous examples where the police took multiple statements and the complaint moved and grew over time. Initially, Starley Hall was being described as a good place, then it wasn't the greatest place, then the police were asking people if anything bad ever happened at Starley Hall and finally, the police were asking specifically, what about Mr KYU.
517. The network and Facebook then started to get together and youngsters changed their stories from being supportive of Starley Hall to not being supportive of Starley Hall.
518. Not one complaint was ever backed up by anyone else. There was nobody else saying all these things were happening. FIY actually started making up new allegations when he was in court, as I described earlier.
519. The other obvious reason is that many of these young people have had really distressing lives.
520. My name also cropped up so much more than anyone else. That was because mine was a name that everybody could remember, as I was involved at Starley Hall for so long. I know I wasn't the only person named, but I was a connection between everybody because I was there for all those years.
521. Those are some of the reasons why I feel people are making these complaints. At no point have I ever been angry or annoyed about any of those young people making those complaints because I can see and understand, as best as one can, where they've got to.
522. I do feel the police didn't manage it as fairly as they could. COVID did delay the whole thing.

523. My lawyer had a meeting with the advocate who was dealing with the case in December 2020. She told him she thought the whole case would be dropped. It's almost as if there was a weakness about the case which was anticipated. There's a public view though, and if it all suddenly stopped, there would have been thirty parents bouncing around the press. No one ever talked about all the people that were interviewed that said Starley Hall was a good place.
524. I'm not sure how this Inquiry will end. I hope that there are some good recommendations but, like all historical inquiries, things have already moved on a whole lot, so what can be learned that we don't already know.
525. To protect children there needs to be thorough staff recruitment with all correct procedures in place and good staff training. Inspections from regulatory authorities should not be seen as being something you don't like, they should be welcomed, and there should be an open door for inspections. I think local authorities should develop services closer to home.
526. In residential schools, there needs to be good staff, good links with all local authorities and the whole range of people who are involved. There should be no one person taking the lead, that can be an issue sometimes. There needs to be good cultures within organisations and looking for and highlighting positives is a good start.
527. It would be great not to have to have such resources, I've always said it would be great if Starley Hall wasn't needed because there are no young people being referred.

#### **Other information**

528. 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...  KYU

Dated... 2nd July 2025