

1 Thursday, 21 August 2025

2 (10.00 am)

3 (Proceedings delayed)

4 (10.15 am)

5 LADY SMITH: Good morning. I'm sorry for the slight delay  
6 there's been in us getting started this morning, but we  
7 are ready to go now.

8 We know that giving evidence isn't easy and it can  
9 be distressing, so we do our best to afford all  
10 witnesses an opportunity to give their evidence as  
11 comfortably as they can. That means that we make  
12 appropriate adjustments wherever that's possible.

13 We've made such adjustments to support communication  
14 with and by deaf witnesses to help them give the best  
15 evidence they can to the Inquiry. For example, as you  
16 may notice, the layout of the room has been slightly  
17 adjusted.

18 Proceedings will be interpreted in British Sign  
19 Language for deaf witnesses, but also for any members of  
20 the public who are deaf.

21 There may be some pauses at times, which are  
22 necessary to allow for interpretation.

23 We have two experienced British Sign Language  
24 interpreters who will at any time be interpreting the  
25 evidence given by the witness and they'll swap over

1 every 20 minutes or so. They're seated beside senior  
2 counsel. You may have noticed there are some new faces  
3 there.

4 When giving their evidence, witnesses who are deaf  
5 will also have the assistance of a deaf intermediary,  
6 who is here today, and a separate interpreter, who is  
7 just here, will assist the intermediary.

8 The deaf intermediary is an independent specialist  
9 in deaf communication and that intermediary will help  
10 the witness to understand what's happening at the  
11 hearing and to help them understand and be understood  
12 when they're giving evidence and, as you can see at the  
13 moment, the deaf intermediary's interpreter will also  
14 assist the deaf intermediary to understand what's being  
15 said by me even if a witness is not here or what's being  
16 said by counsel in the absence of a witness as well.

17 We will also routinely have a British Sign Language  
18 interpreter available in the public gallery, in case  
19 anybody attending in the public gallery needs to speak  
20 to a member of the Inquiry team.

21 Now, I'm going to start by next swearing in the  
22 interpreters who are here today and that means I have  
23 Brenda Mackay, Jill Gallacher and Steven Paterson.  
24 I think Steven's not in the room at the moment but  
25 maybe -- oh, sorry, Steven, you are here, I had

1           forgotten, my apologies. And they should all, one by  
2           one, take an oath.

3                   Brenda Mackay, BSL Interpreter (sworn)  
4                   Jill Gallacher, BSL Interpreter (sworn)  
5           Steven Paterson, Deaf Intermediary Interpreter (sworn)

6   LADY SMITH: And finally I am going to turn to our  
7           intermediary today whose name is Chris.

8                   Chris Bojas, Deaf Intermediary (affirmed)

9   LADY SMITH: I'm now going to invite Ms Innes to tell us  
10          what's going to happen next and introduce this morning's  
11          witness. Ms Innes.

12   MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady.

13                  The witness this morning has the pseudonym 'Allan'.  
14          'Allan' attended St Vincent's School between [REDACTED] 1966  
15          and 1976.

16   LADY SMITH: Thank you.

17                  'Allan' (sworn)

18   LADY SMITH: 'Allan', thank you for coming here today. You  
19          will remember providing a written statement, 'Allan'.  
20   A. Yes, that's correct.

21   LADY SMITH: Thank you for doing that.

22   A. Okay, no problem. Thanks, my Lady.

23   LADY SMITH: It's evidence that is already before me in the  
24          Inquiry and it's been really helpful to me to be able to  
25          study it in advance.

1           Now, we won't be going through every word in your  
2           statement or going through it line by line.  
3   A.   Okay.  
4   LADY SMITH:   But we'd like to focus on some particular parts  
5           of it, if that's okay with you?  
6   A.   No problem.  
7   LADY SMITH:   Now, as you know, we've got two British Sign  
8           Language interpreters here.  
9   A.   Yeah.  
10   LADY SMITH:   And we've also got a deaf registered  
11           intermediary today, who's sitting beside you.  
12   A.   Mm-hmm.  
13   LADY SMITH:   And I hope that between them and us, we'll be  
14           able to communicate well.  
15   A.   Yeah.  
16   LADY SMITH:   But please don't hesitate to say if you're  
17           having any difficulties.  
18   A.   I will.   Thank you.  
19   LADY SMITH:   Now, I'll rely on the intermediary, Chris, to  
20           check that you're being understood properly and that you  
21           understand what it is you're being asked about, and if  
22           you want to check anything with the intermediary at any  
23           time, please feel free to do so.  
24   A.   Okay.   Thank you.  
25   LADY SMITH:   Now, let me say a word about the timing.



1 I'm going to take a break about every 45 minutes.

2 A. Mm-hmm.

3 LADY SMITH: But I know that giving evidence is stressful

4 and tiring and if you need a break sooner, just tell me.

5 A. Okay. Thank you.

6 LADY SMITH: And let me reassure you, breaks are helpful not

7 just to you or me, but also to the interpreters and to

8 the stenographers --

9 A. Yeah, no problem.

10 LADY SMITH: -- and you'll see to your left we've got two

11 stenographers and they're recording your evidence.

12 A. Okay.

13 LADY SMITH: Tell us if you don't understand anything at any

14 time or you want us to repeat anything.

15 A. I will. I will. Absolutely.

16 LADY SMITH: The key for me is I want to make it as

17 comfortable as I can for you, but I know that giving

18 evidence isn't easy and it can feel very difficult at

19 times.

20 A. Yeah.

21 LADY SMITH: Take your time to answer our questions.

22 There's no rush at all. It's important that you take

23 whatever time you feel you need; is that all right?

24 A. Yes, thank you.

25 LADY SMITH: Now, what I'm going to do now is pass over to

1 Ms Innes and she's sitting over to my left and to the  
2 right of your interpreter there and she's going to start  
3 asking you some questions, if you're ready; is that  
4 okay?

5 A. Yes, absolutely.

6 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

7 Questions by Ms Innes

8 MS INNES: 'Allan', I'm going to take you to your statement,  
9 first of all, and do something formal to begin with,  
10 which is first of all to give the reference --

11 A. I do apologise, can I just see this? The light on the  
12 screen is not -- okay, sorry, carry on, carry on, carry  
13 on. Could you start again? Apologies.

14 Q. So I'm going to start with something formal in relation  
15 to your statement and it has the reference  
16 WIT.001.001.2595.

17 And if we look at the last page of your statement,  
18 we see that you say there:

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

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. And we can see that you signed your statement on  
25 14 November 2017?

1 A. That's correct.

2 Q. And I understand that when you gave your statement to  
3 the Inquiry, one British Sign Language interpreter  
4 interpreted for you on both occasions when you met with  
5 the Inquiry; is that right?

6 A. That's correct.

7 Q. And on the date you signed your statement, I think that  
8 the statement was read out and interpreted for you,  
9 after which you signed it?

10 A. That's correct.

11 Q. And more recently I think you've gone through your  
12 statement again with the assistance of an interpreter  
13 and an intermediary?

14 A. That's correct.

15 Q. And I know that there are some corrections and  
16 clarifications, which we'll cover as we go through your  
17 evidence --

18 A. There were a few -- a few clarifications. When I went  
19 home things started to come back a little bit. So it  
20 was just a couple of amendments to what's said, but  
21 I'm hoping today, yeah, that'll be clearer. That'll be  
22 clearer, because it was quite some time ago.

23 Q. Going back to the beginning of your statement, you tell  
24 us that you were born in 1960; is that right?

25 A. Yeah, that's correct.

1 Q. You tell us a little about your early life and when you  
2 started going to school and you say that when you began  
3 primary school, you went first of all to a school where  
4 there were three or four other deaf children and then to  
5 a hearing school?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. How did you find that school?

8 A. Which one, the hearing school --

9 Q. Yes.

10 A. -- or the original school? Oh, I was wild. I was  
11 a wild boy. I think as a deaf child at that time we had  
12 to have the big -- the hearing systems. It was oral, so  
13 we were taught in the oral method. There was no  
14 punishment there. There was no abuse there, certainly,  
15 but it was an oral method of teaching and so I was just  
16 in the class with the other children and to be honest  
17 had no idea what was happening. I was very happy, but  
18 I was just -- you know, I didn't know what was going on,  
19 so my teachers said they couldn't control me. But I had  
20 an older brother. He was 7 and I was 5 and so they  
21 would get my older brother to come into the class and  
22 calm me down and then once I was calm, he would leave.

23 I think that happened for about six or seven months  
24 and then they thought, right, we need to think of  
25 something different.

1 Q. And then we know that you went to St Vincent's School.  
2 Who decided that you should go to St Vincent's?

3 A. I would believe it would be my mum and my dad with the  
4 doctors but prior to that, I do have a deaf sister, who  
5 was at St Vincent's. I really probably don't know. It  
6 was maybe the doctor that decided, you know, I was  
7 profoundly deaf and there was just a decision made that  
8 I would go.

9 Q. Do you know why they made that decision?

10 A. I suppose they felt the teaching -- I mean, for the  
11 teaching, I guess.

12 Q. Then you tell us about going to St Vincent's. What was  
13 your first memory of going to the school?

14 A. Right, okay. Oh, my goodness, not the best of times,  
15 but I do -- I'll never forget arriving with my mum. We  
16 got the bus and then we got the train and then we got  
17 another bus and we walked for a bit and we arrived at  
18 the school -- residential school, it was huge at the  
19 time and as a young boy it was an enormous building,  
20 quite imposing.

21 The door was huge. It was a great big kind of  
22 arched door, double doors. So I went in with my mum and  
23 I met the Sisters, Sister KTA originally was who  
24 I met. So I went in and we went to the left and there  
25 was a small room there. So I went in. I had no idea

1        what was going on. My mum was chatting to the staff.  
2        I just sat there.  
3        When we were finished, my mother signed some  
4        paperwork and at that point -- if you just give me two  
5        minutes.  
6        (Pause)  
7        I'm okay. I'm okay. Thank you very much.  
8        Thank you.  
9        It's always that moment. I know after this I'll be  
10       fine. So apologies.  
11    LADY SMITH: 'Allan' don't worry, I'm well used to people  
12       getting upset talking about things that happened a long  
13       time ago when they were children.  
14       Can I just ask you one thing before we go on to the  
15       next stage? You mentioned your sister was already at  
16       the school before you?  
17    A. Yes, that's correct, yeah.  
18    LADY SMITH: Had you visited her at the school or was that  
19       day when you went with your mum the first time you'd  
20       been there?  
21    A. Oh, what do you mean by that?  
22    LADY SMITH: What I mean is, was that day when you arrived  
23       with your mother to start the school yourself, was that  
24       the first time you'd been to St Vincent's?  
25    A. Yes, so yeah, my sister was in the school but I'd never

1 visited. So that was the first time I had ever been in  
2 that school.

3 LADY SMITH: And I don't suppose she was there to welcome  
4 you?

5 A. So when I was in the school and on Monday night I would  
6 cry a lot and my sister would come to me. So I met my  
7 sister in the school and that happened for quite some  
8 time, but I hadn't been to the school prior to that  
9 point. So the first time I was in St Vincent's School  
10 was with my mum on that day, that was the first time I'd  
11 been in.

12 LADY SMITH: Thank you, 'Allan'.

13 A. Okay. So, as I say, we turned to the left, went into  
14 that room. When that was finished, the Sister took my  
15 hand, well, grabbed my wrist, and I was like: oh, what's  
16 going on? I don't know what happened. My mum was  
17 behind us and I was being taken away from her.

18 Doors opened and I couldn't see her and they had my  
19 wrist and I couldn't see my mum. I was being dragged  
20 down that corridor and my mum left. The doors shut and  
21 that was it. My mum was gone.

22 Now, the Sister Mary statue was there, and it was  
23 huge, it was really big with a great big cross. I was  
24 taken down towards that and that was my first experience  
25 of arriving in the school.

1 MS INNES: You mentioned Sister KTA, what was her job at  
2 the school?  
3 A. At the time, SNR of the school, so SNR.  
4 Q. What sort of person was she?  
5 A. I didn't really see her a lot. I maybe only ever saw  
6 her three or four times. So I don't really know what  
7 she was like. I didn't have much to do with her.  
8 Q. In your statement, you've also mentioned  
9 a Sister Monica. What was her role at the school?  
10 A. Oh, right, okay. She was a very tough, hard person.  
11 She was the boss, the kind of senior within the school,  
12 and she was a very hard, hard person.  
13 Q. Did you come across her very much?  
14 A. Yes, often. She would be around. She would walk  
15 around. She was always checking in, seeing what was  
16 happening within the school.  
17 Q. And would she be in the school as well as in the  
18 residential part?  
19 A. That I don't know. I know Sister KTA was SNR  
20 for the school. Sister Paula was the residential --  
21 Monica, sorry, Sister Monica. Monica, sorry,  
22 Sister Monica was the residential.  
23 Q. Now, you have mentioned a little bit about the buildings  
24 and you've told us in your statement that there was  
25 an old building and a new building. What was in the old



1 building?

2 A. It was a huge, big building with the dining hall, there  
3 was the girls' dorms at the front, the boys' dorms at  
4 the back. There was the girls' changing areas at one  
5 side. Obviously we weren't part of that, we were always  
6 in the boys' side. We had an area to change.

7 There was a small -- like a babies' area, like  
8 babies up to like -- I think they kind of classed that  
9 as 0 to kind of 7, I guess, like an infants/baby kind of  
10 section.

11 They had like a sewing room to fix -- maybe if you  
12 had a hole in your uniform, or whatever. You would go  
13 upstairs, it was quite an elaborate staircase that you  
14 went up, to the bedrooms, to the dorms. It was  
15 a massive hall with lots and lots of beds, lots of dorm  
16 beds.

17 The babies 0 to 7 were in one side, then there  
18 was the big boys' room, as we called it, and there were  
19 lots of statues within that as well.

20 As I say, the girls and the boys were two different  
21 sections of the upstairs and then you would go up again  
22 and that's where the church was, the chapel was, a small  
23 church chapel up the stairs.

24 I mean, I can see it in my mind, it's so clear in my  
25 mind even to this day.

1 Q. You've also mentioned a new building. What was in the  
2 new building?

3 A. That was the school. So you had like the PE block, the  
4 woodwork area, the cooking area, the kind of hall. And  
5 then you had class 1 to 8 and then upstairs 9 to 16.  
6 There was the headteacher's office within that building.  
7 That was about it.

8 Right in the middle, there was a library, but, yeah,  
9 that was the kind of layout of the school.

10 Q. Do you know roughly how many teachers there were?

11 A. I would imagine about 16. If I count the classrooms,  
12 I would imagine about 16.

13 Q. Were they nuns or were they other people?

14 A. Oh, right. So we had SNR [REDACTED], Sister KTA [REDACTED].  
15 There was Sister LXH [REDACTED]. She was a teacher and then she  
16 became SNR [REDACTED]. So she was a teacher within the  
17 school and then became SNR [REDACTED] at a later stage.

18 Q. Going back to the residential part, were the staff in  
19 the residential part nuns or other people?

20 A. There was one Sister, two or three staff -- oh, maybe  
21 not actually. Let me think. Two Sisters. And two or  
22 three staff, for the boys. With the girls, I'm not so  
23 sure. I don't know what the staffing arrangements were  
24 there.

25 Q. You mentioned the boys' accommodation. How many boys

1           were in a room with you?

2   A.   I know before my time the hall had lots of bunks, the  
3       dorm had lots of bunks. By the time I moved, it was --  
4       like, they'd boxed it off, if you like, so there were  
5       three beds within the rooms that they'd made.

6   Q.   Now, I'm going to ask you some questions about the  
7       routine at the school.

8   A.   Okay.

9   Q.   I think you stayed there during the week and went home  
10       at the weekends?

11  A.   That's correct.

12  Q.   Did you go home on a Friday night?

13  A.   Friday afternoon, yeah. It was after 3 o'clock.

14  Q.   And when did you go back to the school?

15  A.   Monday, Monday.

16  Q.   Now, you've told us a little bit in your statement about  
17       what you did after school. So I think when you were  
18       younger the bedtime was earlier; is that right?

19  A.   That's right.

20  Q.   And you told us that after school you would play for  
21       a bit and then have tea and then go to bed?

22  A.   Yeah.

23  Q.   And I think you clarified that between the ages of about  
24       6 and 8, bedtime was 7 pm; is that right?

25  A.   7 o'clock, yeah. It was still very bright, I remember,

1       and it was a bit odd going to your bed at 7 o'clock, you  
2       know. At home it was a bit different. You didn't have  
3       such an early bed, but there you were the early bed, 7.  
4   Q. And then when you were a bit older, the bedtime was  
5       a bit later and you've told us in your statement that  
6       you would go to a club after tea?  
7   A. That's right. Yes, that's right, yeah. Yes, uh-huh,  
8       yeah, that's correct.  
9   Q. And then go to bed later?  
10  A. Yes. I think we were allowed Bovril, a Bovril drink or  
11       something and then after that, that was your bedtime  
12       once you'd had your Bovril drink.  
13  Q. Did you have to do any chores or help out?  
14  A. Yeah, in the kitchen. You would help in the kitchen.  
15  Q. What sort of things would you do?  
16  A. So we always -- it was like a kind of a rota,  
17       a turn-taken-type scenario. So myself and another kid,  
18       I can't remember his name, would go in and you'd have to  
19       kind of touch the plates and cups. They were really,  
20       really hot, I remember it burning my hands, and if you  
21       didn't, you would be slapped. If you didn't lift it,  
22       you'd be slapped and be told to not be such a baby. So  
23       you were trying to lift the crockery and it was burning  
24       hot.  
25       When the Sisters had gone, we would use a towel. So

1 the forks and knives, we'd use a towel to lift them  
2 across and we'd give them a dry, but if we were caught,  
3 you'd get a slap and so you'd have to go back in to  
4 sticking your hands in the hot --

5 BSL INTERPRETER: I'm just going to clarify --

6 A. So the silver plates and knives, et cetera, were burning  
7 hot.

8 BSL INTERPRETER: I was just clarifying it wasn't hot water.

9 A. It was like you had to rinse them. You had to rinse  
10 them and it was very, very hot to touch. So it was  
11 painful as a kid. It was painful to touch that.

12 MS INNES: And you said that you would be slapped. Who  
13 slapped you?

14 A. I can remember the face, but the name I can't remember.  
15 It was the Sister that was in charge of the kitchen.  
16 I can't remember the Sister's name, to be honest, but  
17 the Sister in charge of kitchens.

18 Q. Now, you tell us in your statement that you went and --  
19 that you went home at the weekends, but you also say  
20 that there was a boy who didn't go home at the weekends?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. Do you know why it was that he stayed there?

23 A. I really don't know. It was a shame -- it was a real  
24 shame for him. I mean, he's passed away now  
25 unfortunately. I mean, it wasn't particularly nice.

1 I know his family were poverty-stricken. I think he  
2 ended up in there but it was really not nice for him.  
3 It was really not nice for him.

4 Q. Do you know if any other children stayed over the  
5 weekend?

6 A. Yes, there were others. There were others. I mean, not  
7 -- not lots, but there were some.

8 Q. In your statement, you tell us about some of the abuse  
9 that happened at the school and at paragraph 26 of your  
10 statement you say:

11 'School was awful, terrible. It was oppressive and  
12 abusive.'

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. Can you explain why you say that?

15 A. Do you want me to go into detail and give you the whole?

16 Q. Well, I think you go on to say that one of the issues  
17 was that it was an oral school?

18 A. Yes, it was an oral school, yeah. It was awful. Very  
19 oppressive. Very oppressive. Very oppressive. It  
20 was -- we were forced, forced to do that. It was  
21 extremely oppressive. Really -- it was very easy to --  
22 for us -- you know, we'd be slapped, punched. They'd  
23 pull at your throat, they'd pull at your nose, they'd  
24 poke at your face. I'm a profoundly deaf person.  
25 Hearing aids do not work for me. They would put them on

1 me and they would force me to try and speak. It was the  
2 same every day.

3 When I was 6, when I was 7, when I was 8, exactly  
4 the same thing. You would go in, they would have the  
5 blackboard and you'd have to go up and you'd have to say  
6 the words on the board and then it would be my turn,  
7 I'd have to go up and say the words. It was -- yeah,  
8 just ...

9 Q. You tell us in your statement that oralism is educating  
10 deaf students through oral language by using  
11 lip-reading, speech and mimicking the mouth shapes and  
12 breathing patterns of speech. Is that the method that  
13 was used?

14 A. Yes. An example of that is -- well, you would see the  
15 nuns -- the faces of the teachers going red as they  
16 forced you to speak and you would try your best. You  
17 would use bits of paper and you'd have to blow at these  
18 bits of paper and you would get slapped and punched and:  
19 'stop being silly, stop', you know -- I just don't  
20 understand and I didn't understand.

21 Q. And you say that -- in your statement that this approach  
22 is about trying to make a deaf person like a hearing  
23 person or trying to cure them?

24 A. Yes, that's right. I think so. I believe that's the  
25 idea behind it.

1 Q. And how did this approach affect your education?

2 A. If I can just maybe elaborate a little. For example, we  
3 may be in -- same age, all the children are the same  
4 age. The next again year you'd be split into groups.  
5 So those that were good at talking and those -- and the  
6 age ranges started to change as well and you would still  
7 be forced into this oral method despite the fact that  
8 you were in with different age groups, different -- it  
9 all became different in the next year and it felt like  
10 the ones that were in the class that could speak were  
11 the clever ones and we were not even though I am a smart  
12 man, I was made to feel that I wasn't.

13 Like, they would say to me, one add one is two.  
14 Yeah, one add one is two and that's absolutely fine and  
15 you'd get your ticks for your maths, one add one is two.  
16 In the next year, when we were moved into the groups,  
17 they would give me the same book, one add one is two and  
18 I would say: 'I've done this already', and they were  
19 like: nah, you need to go back to this, you're part of  
20 this group that need to go back, you're too slow. And  
21 it was just the same one add one is two, you know, two  
22 add two is four, and I was just put back into the same  
23 group to repeat the same -- so that's the type of  
24 education I was getting.

25 And my education was a failure. It was an absolute



1 failure.

2 Q. If we look at paragraph 31 of your statement, you refer  
3 to some of the teachers there and one of the people  
4 mentioned in your statement it says a Mr PYT [REDACTED], but  
5 I think that should be a Mrs PYT [REDACTED]?

6 A. Yes, it's Mrs PYT [REDACTED], yes, that's correct.

7 Q. And you say all of the teachers were hearing with one  
8 exception?

9 A. All were hearing. There was one deaf person,  
10 Mr LXG [REDACTED], and he wasn't actually a teacher. I have no  
11 idea what his role was, but he wasn't a teacher, but  
12 he'd always be with Sister Margaret.

13 Q. And you tell us, and you've mentioned in your evidence  
14 already, that you would be given headphones. What  
15 was the purpose of that?

16 A. I mean, it was to listen to their voice, I assume.  
17 I mean, I have no idea -- yeah, but we would put these  
18 headphones on, I assume, to listen to their voice. The  
19 headphones would go on and they would speak at you and  
20 then, when you took them off, you had to then clean out  
21 your ears. You had to put these ear things in and then  
22 you had to sit and you would get a slap. And I'd think:  
23 what have I been slapped for? And it was something to  
24 do with the system that was in front of us, the system  
25 that was in our ears. There was a whistling sound.

1           If you made any noise you were slapped. There was  
2           that whistling noise. If the whistling noise happened,  
3           you were slapped. If you forgot to put the hearing box  
4           on, you were slapped.

5   Q. You tell us that you would be forced to try to copy  
6           sounds by the teachers pulling your cheeks?

7   BSL INTERPRETER: Copy sounds, did you say?

8   MS INNES: Copy these sounds.

9   A. I mean, I don't know what it was, we just had these  
10          headphones on. To be honest, I have no idea what they  
11          were trying to get us to do. Whenever we had the  
12          headphones on, it just never worked for me. Even now,  
13          nothing -- it doesn't work for me. I'm profoundly deaf.

14   Q. Were you able to use sign language?

15   A. Oh, no, no, no, no, no. Absolutely not. You would be  
16          in big trouble. You would get a wallop if you tried to  
17          use any sign language. So you weren't allowed to sign.  
18          Fair enough, it's an oral school, but I -- that was  
19          called a bad boy. The Sisters would then say to me:  
20          'you're a bad boy', and sign to me: 'you're a bad boy'.  
21          So they could use sign language and this is the sign  
22          they used: bad boy. And I thought they're using signs  
23          to tell me I'm a bad boy, but they don't actually use  
24          signs to communicate with us in the education or any  
25          other part of the school. So, yeah, that was odd.

1 I mean, it was oral behaviour. You had to sit, you  
2 had to -- oral, you had to learn, you had to speak, you  
3 had to -- and then the next thing, you know, you're  
4 being told you're a bad boy via sign language, but all  
5 you were ever told was you were a bad boy. Does that  
6 make sense? Is that clear?

7 LADY SMITH: Yes, it does. I'm following this very clearly.  
8 It must have been horrible.

9 A. Yeah.

10 MS INNES: And what would happen if you used sign language  
11 even at break time or at dinner time?

12 A. I mean, we all did it. We all did it. We all signed.  
13 The staff were fine. The Sisters weren't there, the  
14 staff were there and that would be fine, they would  
15 allow us to sign.

16 Q. What if the Sisters were there?

17 A. It never happened to me, so I don't know necessarily.  
18 You know, when we were finished school, within the  
19 residential school, the residential part, we used signs.  
20 When we were in school, we were not allowed to sign, so  
21 during the school day we were not allowed to sign. When  
22 you were in the residential you could sign and that was  
23 fine.

24 LADY SMITH: 'Allan', how did you learn to sign?

25 A. From the big boys. The big boys taught us, the older

1       children. It would pass down and then when I left  
2       school -- I mean, the older kids that had taught us --  
3       I'm not -- when I -- compared to what I know now, it was  
4       more -- so what I was taught by the older boys, I'm  
5       going to use the term they weren't clever, I don't mean  
6       it that they weren't clever, but what they taught us  
7       maybe wasn't completely accurate, and then when I left  
8       school, I met other kids that could sign and that's  
9       where I got more of my education from. So, yeah, it was  
10      a bit of mix, but it was the older boys in St Vincent's  
11      that taught us to sign and I'm obviously a very strong,  
12      proficient signer.

13   MS INNES: In your statement, 'Allan', you tell us about  
14      bath time on a Monday night and can you tell us what  
15      happened?

16   A. (Pause).

17           So the first time, I was 6. It was a Monday. I had  
18      no idea. It was the first time -- the children -- there  
19      was a bench we all sat on and it was a very  
20      old-fashioned bath, the old-fashioned bath with the kind  
21      of taps, if you like, and they all wanted to be first  
22      and I saw this and then I realised what was going on.

23           So you were sitting naked and then we used this sign  
24      here for the person. I think it was LXF, the lady's  
25      name was LXF, but we used this sign name for her, it

1        was [REDACTED], so I believe her name was LXF  
2        that dealt with the baths.

3        So if you were first in the bath, that was great.  
4        You had a bath and that was lovely. I know different  
5        days, different people had bath times, but when it came  
6        back round to the Monday again for our bath, again  
7        everybody running to be first. I'm thinking to myself,  
8        I'm maybe sixth or seventh by that point and  
9        I'm thinking what's this, why? And I saw the kids  
10       coming out that weren't first crying and they were  
11       getting slapped for crying: 'stop being a baby, you're  
12       just being a baby' and it got to my turn and I saw the  
13       steam rising from the bath and I thought to myself that  
14       looks pretty hot.

15       Anyway, in I got and oh, my goodness, it was  
16       scalding, scalding and you were pushed in. So if you  
17       tried to stand up to get out the scalding water you were  
18       pushed into it. It was really hot.

19       As time went on -- if I can go back a little bit  
20       actually. Yeah, so first of all they would say: 'stop  
21       being a baby, stop being a baby.' So you were pushed  
22       into the bath and you were bright red when you came out.  
23       Your skin was bright red. Every Monday, you would try  
24       and get first because you knew the bath wouldn't be as  
25       hot. The bath would be warm.

1           Now, looking back, I realise what was happening.

2           LXF would keep the taps running and she would be  
3           checking with her own hand whether it was -- if it  
4           was -- the water was cooling down, she would stick more  
5           hot water in.

6           But I guess she didn't maybe realise, you know, the  
7           temperature she's feeling will be different from the  
8           temperature we feel as children. She's used to that  
9           temperature and so sometimes -- and also just to add to  
10          that, sometimes there were three or four young girls  
11          that came from [REDACTED] School and they would watch  
12          you.

13          Now, I think when I was about 8 or 9, before I moved  
14          to the big boys', you know, section, I was growing up  
15          and I'm sitting there naked and these older girls are  
16          looking at me sitting there naked. I don't understand  
17          it. I don't understand it.

18   Q.   You understand that this lady, LXF, was sacked. Do  
19          you know why?

20   A.   I was told she was sacked and it was to do with having  
21          sex with a schoolboy.

22   LADY SMITH: We've been taking evidence for just over  
23          45 minutes now. So I think it might be a good idea to  
24          have a break for everybody. Would that work for you  
25          'Allan'?

1 A. That would be great, yes. Thank you so much, my Lady.

2 LADY SMITH: Let's do that. I'll go off the bench so you  
3 can get a breather. You don't need to feel intimidated  
4 by me still being here and you can go away to the  
5 witness room for a short break.

6 (11.05 am)

7 (A short break)

8 (11.22 am)

9 LADY SMITH: 'Allan', welcome back.

10 A. Thank you.

11 LADY SMITH: I hope the break helped. Are you okay for us  
12 to carry on with your evidence now?

13 A. Yes, I am. Thank you, my Lady.

14 LADY SMITH: Thank you. Ms Innes.

15 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady.

16 I'm going to move to paragraph 44 of your statement,  
17 where you tell us that when you were about 9, you were  
18 with Sister Margaret and a Mr LXG and you say that  
19 Mr LXG was a cruel man. What sort of things did he  
20 do?

21 A. I don't know what Mr LXG's role was. He definitely  
22 wasn't a teacher. So I'm not sure why he was there in  
23 the school. I don't know what his role was.

24 He had . He always had  
25 . And he would love to hit the children

1 with [REDACTED], poke you and hit you. He always  
2 targeted one boy called [REDACTED]. I think I'd mentioned  
3 [REDACTED] before. He was the young boy that stayed in the  
4 school all the time and he was constantly hit with [REDACTED]  
5 [REDACTED].

6 [REDACTED], wasn't really part of the, kind of, group.  
7 He didn't really come to play when we were out. He  
8 liked being on his own. He loved just to [REDACTED]  
9 [REDACTED] be himself. We all played, you know, football and  
10 played about and things, but he preferred being on his  
11 own [REDACTED].

12 I don't know Mr LXG [REDACTED] -- I don't know why  
13 Mr LXG [REDACTED] would be so cruel to him and why he targeted  
14 [REDACTED], but he did. He really did with this. It was  
15 quite frightening, it was really quite frightening, and  
16 I don't know why he particularly targeted [REDACTED].

17 Q. Did Mr LXG [REDACTED] do this when any of the Sisters were  
18 present?

19 A. No, no, no. Sister Margaret was always away. Whenever  
20 there was something, she would go away and that's when  
21 he would do it.

22 So he was never caught doing that.

23 Q. What was Sister Margaret's job?

24 A. She was a teacher.

25 Q. Then you tell us about a person who was Sister LXH [REDACTED].



1        You say that she changed her name from Sister LXH to  
2        Sister LXH ?

3    A.   Yeah, that's right, that's right, yeah, changed her  
4        name.

5    Q.   What sort of person was she?

6    A.   So cruel, so, so cruel. I could give you a list as long  
7        as my arm. So she was a teacher -- Sister KTA -- at  
8        the time she was a teacher and Sister KTA was SNR  
9        SNR . Sister KTA then left and Sister LXH  
10       became SNR . She was a very cruel person.

11   Q.   Are you able to give us an example of the sort of things  
12       that she would do?

13   A.   Punish you, hit you, hit your head off walls, punch you,  
14       I mean, you name it. There was an example of -- oh,  
15       there's just so much. There was just so, so much.

16        When I became a day school pupil, I was kind of big  
17        and I wanted to stop residential and travel and my mum  
18        said yes, I was so happy, so relieved.

19        So I, at that time, stayed in . I had to get  
20        the bus and then -- to the train station and the  
21        train to Glasgow and then Glasgow bus out to  
22        St Vincent's, but I was happy about that.

23        I would always get called a stupid boy. I'd always  
24        be called a bad boy. I would be told I would be going  
25        to hell; I was going to the fire forever. You'll be in

1 hell forever. You'll be in the fire forever. I mean,  
2 it sticks in my mind, it's something that will never  
3 leave me. About 14 or 15, I started to rebel.

4 I started to -- you know, whenever I was told that  
5 I was a bad boy, I would rebel to that. Once I had left  
6 school -- I was ready for leaving, there was a young  
7 girl, I would say maybe about 4 or 5 years old, called  
8 --

9 BSL INTERPRETER: [REDACTED]?

10 A. -- [REDACTED], and we were in the library for something and  
11 she was just a tiny wee girl, a beautiful little girl  
12 and she was walking and I knew she was lost because  
13 I could see her looking around as if: I don't know where  
14 I am, and the nun came running up, grabbed her and  
15 started beating her. So I went straight across, pushed  
16 the nun away. The Sister was quite shocked by that.  
17 I pushed her away and I got the little girl and the  
18 Sister left at that point, this little girl was so  
19 upset, floods of tears.

20 Q. And which Sister was this -- sorry.

21 A. And then I had to comfort her. I said, you know: 'come  
22 on, it's fine, you're okay.' I took her back and the  
23 teacher was like: 'what's she crying for?' But, you  
24 know, the teachers -- yeah, they didn't understand.

25 Q. Which Sister was this that you've been speaking about?

1 A. Sister LXH . It was Sister LXH .

2 Q. You tell us in your statement at paragraph 47 about one  
3 time when you were struggling to say the word 'step' in  
4 class and you then said it and then I think  
5 Sister LXH came into the classroom. What was her  
6 reaction?

7 A. I think that was the point of my downfall. So it was --

8 BSL INTERPRETER: Mrs LXM -- LXM , sorry.

9 A. -- Mrs LXM had said -- the oral teacher, yeah. So  
10 I was about 12 or 13 at the time and you all took your  
11 turn to say it. So it got to the point where I was  
12 saying the word 'step' and they were saying: oh, you've  
13 got such a wonderful voice, that's amazing, you're  
14 saying the word 'step', that's fantastic, what  
15 a wonderful voice. But I didn't want to use my voice.

16 Anyway, I said the word 'step' and the teacher was  
17 shocked by this and said: 'oh, do it again, do it  
18 again.' So I said the word 'step' again and the teacher  
19 was saying: oh, that was beautiful, that was -- and  
20 I was kind of a bit unsure about what was going on.

21 Anyway Sister LXH was passing and Mrs LXM called  
22 Sister LXH in and said: 'listen, listen, listen', and  
23 so I said 'step' and Sister LXH looked at me and  
24 obviously I'm a visual person -- can I show you this, is  
25 it okay to show you this?

1 LADY SMITH: Please do. It's very helpful.

2 A. Okay, so if you imagine that I'm where Chris is right  
3 now, so the two teachers, Sister LXH and the teacher,  
4 are talking and she came in and just nodded her head and  
5 walked off in a really dismissive manner and I --  
6 honestly that was my downfall at that point, I just felt  
7 awful. That was the damage done at that point. That  
8 was me finished.

9 LADY SMITH: And was that because you had done so well and  
10 she didn't even notice?

11 A. Yeah, absolutely. Confidence gone. I just refused at  
12 that point everything, refused -- I didn't want to do  
13 oral method, anything, and I wouldn't wear the hearing  
14 aids, I wouldn't wear any of the equipment and obviously  
15 was punished for that, but that was the point I just  
16 stopped.

17 MS INNES: I wonder if I can ask you some questions about  
18 a teacher called Mr KXX, who you tell us about in  
19 your statement.

20 You describe him at paragraph 49 of your statement  
21 as a horrible, sick man. What sort of things did he do?

22 A. Okay, so we were in class with Sister Margaret. We were  
23 going through -- you know, you had to go through your  
24 turn, if you like, so you had C1, C2, depending on how  
25 many children were there -- so who was absent, who was

1 in, who was -- so it's a register, yeah, so it's the  
2 list of -- register, yeah.

3 So you had to go round all the classes with the  
4 register. So, as I say, it was class 1 to 8 downstairs  
5 and then upstairs to class 9. Now, I was fine, right,  
6 until I knew I had to go upstairs to class 9, because in  
7 class 9, as I say, 1 to 8 you would go in, you'd open  
8 the door or you'd have the glass and you would see the  
9 teacher. Right. So you know the teacher was there,  
10 they were sitting in the class because there was always  
11 a window that you could see through as you were going  
12 past the classrooms.

13 So 16 to 10 downstairs was the same, right, but  
14 number 9 was different. It was a different space. When  
15 you looked in the window you could see the children but  
16 you could not see the teacher. So classroom 9 was  
17 a different set-up. You could see the children but you  
18 couldn't see the teacher.

19 If you wanted to go in a classroom, you must knock  
20 before you go in. So I went through all the classes,  
21 taking the register of who was there, who was absent,  
22 you would get to classroom 9 and I was -- so imagine  
23 this is Mr KXX, if I can show you this, he would  
24 signal to me to walk in by moving his hand. I would  
25 give him the register, he would put it on the desk and

1       then he would call you across and start kind of cuddling  
2       you, touching you, feeling your body. You would try and  
3       get away from that.

4           I realise now, you know, he would rub himself -- his  
5       bottom parts, he would rub against you. He would be  
6       touching you. And all the boys in the class were  
7       watching this and they all knew what was happening  
8       because they -- he would take his turn on which boy that  
9       was going to happen to. So they'd all been there  
10      before. They all knew this was going to happen.

11           So when you knocked on the door, Mr KXX -- you  
12      would go in, Mr KXX would say -- so somebody else  
13      would then come and I would leave and so you'd get  
14      pushed off and, you know, nobody would see this  
15      happening and then he would sign the register and say:  
16      right, right, that's you, on you go. So he would push  
17      you off. Somebody would come into the room and he would  
18      instantly push you away and then he would finish marking  
19      the register and that would be you, you would go.

20           And that happened for a year, for one year, and then  
21      once you left -- that was for Sister Margaret's class,  
22      you were given the job of doing the register and  
23      obviously when I left that class the next boy coming up  
24      into that class was going to go through the same. So it  
25      was just a repeating cycle of this happening.

1           So Mr KXX, I believe, was suspended for sexual  
2           abuse of a young girl. So I believe he was suspended or  
3           sacked, but then he ended up coming back, but then he  
4           was only ever allowed to be with the boys. He wasn't  
5           allowed to be with the girls when he came back to the  
6           school.

7           But he was doing this to the boys and, as I say, it  
8           would be your turn depending on, like, the kids coming  
9           up and you knew this was going to happen; if you were  
10          taking the register to his class this is what was going  
11          to happen to you.

12   Q.   You go on in your statement to talk about a Mr LXJ,  
13          who I think ran gym after school, and you tell us a bit  
14          about him and you say that everybody would have to line  
15          up in the gym, and what would he do once you'd lined up?

16   A.   So the first time -- so this -- so in the residential,  
17          just to maybe explain this a little bit, you would move  
18          to the big boys' section, okay, and then that's when the  
19          youth club would start.

20          So at nighttime, the boys were not allowed to -- he  
21          didn't like boys that bit their nails and the boys would  
22          all say to us: don't bite your nails, don't bite your  
23          nails, make sure you don't bite your nails. Of course  
24          I had no idea why I was being told not to bite my nails.  
25          So we went into the gym and the kind of youngest of the

1 big boys, if you like, and they all put you in height  
2 order, so you're standing in your line, height order,  
3 and Mr LXJ would come in and he would say: 'put your  
4 hands out', and you would get a skelp across the head  
5 and it was really sore, it would make you cry and he's  
6 saying: 'don't bite your nails.'

7 And -- I mean, it really -- I was really upset and  
8 they'd be like: we told you not bite your nails. And  
9 I'm like: I'm just biting my nails, what's the problem  
10 with that? I didn't understand it. So when I went home  
11 at the weekends and my mum wanted to cut my nails  
12 I didn't let her cut my nails. So that was on a Friday.  
13 So you'd go home on a Friday, Saturday, Sunday -- and  
14 Sunday you would have your bath at home ready for going  
15 back to school. So you get your bath and mum would want  
16 to cut my nails and I would be really panicked: 'please  
17 don't cut my nails, don't cut my nails', and she was  
18 like: 'don't be silly, I need to cut your nails.' But  
19 I wouldn't let her because I knew what would happen.

20 So you would either get a slap or you would get  
21 a punch. It was terrifying. And of course again [REDACTED],  
22 that I've mentioned previously, as I say, [REDACTED]  
23 [REDACTED] he was expert at -- you know when  
24 you're doing gym you have like the ropes and you can  
25 climb up the ropes using, like, your legs, if you like,



1       you use your legs to kind of climb up the rope. He  
2       climbed up and he got to the top and Mr KXX grabbed  
3       the rope and started swinging it and he fell off that  
4       rope and fell to the ground.

5       Now, at that time, Mrs LXM, the teacher, was there  
6       at the evening club and I think the reason they were  
7       there for was to kind of keep an eye on what was  
8       happening with Mr KXX, but Mr KXX then  
9       justified that by saying: he's a bad boy. And he fell  
10      off that rope, obviously was injured but was just told:  
11      away you go to your bed, you're a bad boy, get to your  
12      bed. And 's just standing there thinking: what  
13      have I done?

14   Q. Can I just clarify, please, you -- I think I heard the  
15      word Mr KXX was annoyed about what did. Is  
16      that right? Was it Mr KXX or was it Mr LXJ?

17   A. Apologies, it was Mr LXJ. Apologies. Yes, you're  
18      right, it was Mr LXJ that was in with zLXM. I do  
19      apologise, that was me, I'm sorry about that. It wasn't  
20      Mr KXX. I just -- yeah, I will rephrase that, it  
21      wasn't Mr KXX, it was Mr LXJ. He was in the  
22      evenings and it was zLXM that was in at that time.

23   LADY SMITH: So it was Mr LXJ that had up the rope  
24      and then shook it so he fell off?

25   A. Yeah, that's correct.

1 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

2 A. That's correct.

3 MS INNES: And just another thing that I think that you

4 wanted to clarify in your statement, when you were

5 saying in your statement at paragraph 52 that when the

6 boys were in the line and being hit for biting their

7 nails, you say at the end of that paragraph in your

8 statement:

9 'This happened to everybody in the line.'

10 And I think you wanted to clarify that it happened

11 to most people in the line; is that right?

12 A. Yeah, that's correct. It wasn't all of them. The boys

13 that knew not to bite their nails were fine, because

14 they'd been through it, they'd been hit and they knew

15 don't bite your nails. You know, I would have been hit

16 but then the next time I knew not to bite my nails so

17 I didn't.

18 But say, for example, you know sometimes you get

19 a wee catch on your nail and your nail comes off because

20 you maybe caught it in something, that was you, you knew

21 you were going to get a slap, even though you hadn't bit

22 your nails, it'd just been, like, maybe you'd caught

23 a nail and it kind of pulled off. So, yeah, that

24 happened to anybody that had that and then obviously the

25 next again year you know what's going to happen so you

1       would then say to the newer kids: don't bite your nails.  
2       Do not bite your nails. Keep your nails okay, because  
3       you knew what was going to happen. So you tried to pass  
4       that information then to the younger boys coming up.  
5   LADY SMITH: But, 'Allan', there are grown-ups who have  
6       still not stopped biting their nails because they can't  
7       help it; isn't that right?  
8   A. Yeah, absolutely. I don't know what the problem was  
9       with Mr LXJ, but he was just a cruel -- cruel man.  
10      You know, if you were kind of doing the long jump or  
11      whatever, you would be forced to do it, you knew if you  
12      fell, it just -- you just -- he was just a cruel, cruel  
13      man. Lots of children would be very upset and he would  
14      just say: ah, you're just a baby, you're nothing but  
15      a baby. And it wasn't just me that happened to, it was  
16      a lot of the boys.  
17   MS INNES: In your statement, at paragraph 55, you say that  
18      Mr LXJ used to slaughter live rabbits in front of  
19      you.  
20   A. That's correct, yeah. That was outside. Yeah, that  
21      happened outside.  
22   Q. So he brought them into the school?  
23   A. He didn't bring them into the school. He would catch  
24      them -- it was after school, in the after-school time.  
25      Now, obviously, St Vincent's is an old school, beautiful

1 gardens, really big space and we had lots of rabbits  
2 within the school grounds and he would grab -- catch  
3 a rabbit within the school grounds. It was after  
4 schooltime, outside in the gardens and he would let the  
5 boys come round and he would slaughter the rabbit and  
6 then he would gut the rabbit, open it up and -- for us  
7 to see and it was -- yeah, it was not a very pleasant  
8 thing to have to watch.

9 LADY SMITH: 'Allan', I think you were showing us that he  
10 caught the rabbits with his hands; is that right?

11 A. I actually don't know how he caught the rabbits. He  
12 just arrived with the rabbit in his hand and the rabbit  
13 was still alive.

14 LADY SMITH: Okay. Thank you.

15 A. And then obviously the rabbit's moving and then he would  
16 slaughter the rabbit, but how he caught it I'm not  
17 entirely sure. I don't know what methods he used.

18 MS INNES: At paragraph 59 of your statement, and you've  
19 already mentioned this in your evidence, that  
20 a Mrs LXM would be at the club with Mr LXJ. How  
21 would she behave towards you at the youth club?

22 A. So obviously we had Mrs LXM in class and Mrs LXM in  
23 the evening -- are you meaning in the evening?

24 Q. In the evening.

25 A. If there was anybody that was classed as a bad boy,

1 Mrs LXM would send them off to bed. Compared to when  
2 I was a day school resident, you know, when I went home  
3 I would play, I'd have a great time, but when I was at  
4 school, residential, I was always sent -- and it wasn't  
5 just me, other boys as well were always sent to bed and  
6 called bad boys and getting sent to bed early. So if  
7 I compare that to my home life, it's very different.  
8 I was never a bad boy at home, but I was always a bad  
9 boy in school.

10 So when you went into the residential, the nuns  
11 would instantly come up and just start calling you a bad  
12 boy, but for what reason, I have no idea. You know, you  
13 would just be walking -- I mean, it was a huge building,  
14 it was a huge, huge building. You'd be walking around,  
15 you had the statue of St Mary, you'd have to kind of go  
16 past St Mary and you were just walking. You weren't  
17 doing anything wrong, but you were called a bad boy.

18 Q. Now, you go on in your statement to tell us about  
19 a woodwork teacher, Mr LXL. What sort of person was  
20 he?

21 A. It depended on his moods.

22 So on a Wednesday he did a night class but he was  
23 also a teacher in the school. So during school he was  
24 okay, but it was the night class that was very  
25 different.

1           He was really hard. How do I explain it? You  
2           weren't taught anything. You -- you just were in the  
3           class sawing bits of wood and then you would get hit.  
4           So we were using plywood and he would come over and he  
5           would hit you with bits of plywood and he thought it  
6           was -- I don't know if he thought he was playing or  
7           being silly, I don't know, but it was sore, it was  
8           really sore. I've tried to work it out. I've tried to  
9           figure out what was going on, but I just can't make head  
10          or tail. I can't make any sense out of his behaviour.  
11          I don't know why he was doing that.

12          You expect a youth club to be, like, fun, exciting,  
13          somewhere nice to go, but it was the same as school, you  
14          were just punished, beaten. It was exactly the same as  
15          being in school.

16          (Pause).

17          So I don't know why that was the way he behaved.

18   Q. Now, I'm going to ask you a couple of things about  
19          Colin MacDonald. Now, the Inquiry knows that he was  
20          convicted of a charge of sexually abusing you and I am  
21          not going to ask you about the detail of what he did.

22   A. Okay, thank you.

23   Q. I just, first of all, want to know, if you know, what  
24          was his connection with the school? You say he wasn't  
25          a teacher? But what did he do?

1 A. I've no idea. Before that statement, I did try and  
2 think -- obviously two weeks ago we kind of went back  
3 through the statement again, at home, I was thinking and  
4 thinking and thinking and eventually I think I got it.  
5 So the youth club Tuesday to Thursday, after school,  
6 but on Monday night it was swimming. Out of the blue,  
7 Colin MacDonald came in on a Monday night and was like:  
8 who would like to go camping? And of course we were all  
9 really excited about this. Camping sounds great fun.  
10 But who he worked for and why he was there, I have  
11 absolutely no idea. He just came in on a Monday night  
12 and said: who would like to do camping?  
13 So it was just those two times that that happened,  
14 the camping happened, and then he was gone again.  
15 Q. When you say he came in, where did he come in to, to  
16 have that conversation?  
17 A. So it was after school on the Monday and always after  
18 school at 3 o'clock you'd go into the boys' changing  
19 rooms, okay. So the Sister was there. It was  
20 Sister PUC. So you'd get yourself changed and  
21 you'd go out to play, which was quite usual.  
22 And we did have swimming on the Monday as well.  
23 Yeah, so we'd been swimming and that was now finished  
24 and there was a man, I can't remember the man's name, he  
25 took us for swimming, absolutely no problem with him at



1 all. He was a decent gentleman. Never any issues with  
2 that man at all. He was a good man. He taught me how  
3 to swim. So we had the swimming on the Monday and we  
4 loved it. We loved going out. He would always -- he  
5 would never hit you, but he would always kind of be,  
6 like: get in your line, do you know, if you were lining  
7 up. He'd be, like: get in your line. We would always  
8 want to go to the shops and buy sweets. So you'd be in  
9 your line walking to the pool and he would always be  
10 like: no, no, no, in your line. But he would never hit  
11 you. It wasn't like that. He would just kind of tap  
12 you into your line and keep you on the right tracks.

13 We got back to school after swimming and it was  
14 before dinner, so it was before 6, and Colin came at  
15 that point with one of the Sisters. I can't remember  
16 who the Sister was at that time. At that point there  
17 was no touching, no nothing. He just was there. He  
18 asked us what size boots we were, what clothes we might  
19 need and obviously we were really excited to go camping.

20 So we got ourselves ready for camping. It was  
21 a couple of Mondays later that we did this. So we were  
22 getting ourselves ready for going off on the camping.

23 There was a five-day holiday at that point, so  
24 that's the point we were going to be -- so it was  
25 a five-day holiday and we went camping. So the school



1           was -- we were on holiday from school Monday to Friday.

2           It was the Isle of Rhum that we went to for that  
3           five-day period.

4   Q.   And at the time that he came to speak to you in the  
5        changing rooms, can you remember if you were staying  
6        overnight at the school at that point or not?

7   A.   I was residential.

8   Q.   And did other boys from the school go on the  
9        residential -- on the trip with Colin MacDonald too?

10  A.   Oh, I think there was around nine or ten of us.  He  
11       was the -- with the headteacher of the [REDACTED] Deaf  
12       School.  There was the headteacher of the [REDACTED] School  
13       for the Deaf with his wife as well.  I don't want to go  
14       into any detail about it, but, yeah, that's ...

15  Q.   I have just one other question about Colin MacDonald and  
16        this is about the trial.

17           You describe giving evidence as a horrible  
18        experience.  What was it that made giving evidence at  
19        the trial a horrible experience for you?

20  A.   It was, you know, you're talking about things and people  
21        are accessing that, that you've never spoken to about it  
22        before.  Colin MacDonald sat right there and I can see  
23        him.  I mean, the judge was excellent, proceedings were  
24        great, but it's just that, the publicly talking about  
25        this.  I mean, he got -- he was imprisoned for 12 years

1 and that was that. He's gone. He's passed away now, so  
2 that's now -- there's a full stop after that. But it  
3 was just the publicness of having to talk about it.

4 Yeah, it was really -- a really, really horrible  
5 experience and I would prefer if we could move on from  
6 that, if that's okay. I hope you don't mind. I hope  
7 that's okay.

8 Q. That's okay. That's fine.

9 And you've told us already that there was a time  
10 that you stopped staying at the school. How old were  
11 you when you stopped staying overnight at the school?

12 A. I was 14 in the [REDACTED], so that would have been in 1974.  
13 [REDACTED]. So I would have been  
14 14.

15 Q. You tell us in your statement about something else that  
16 happened in Mr KXX [REDACTED]'s classroom where you had been  
17 asked to draw a line on the map. Are you able to tell  
18 us what happened when --

19 A. It was so cruel. So, so cruel. So it was the  
20 blackboard and there was a drawing on the blackboard,  
21 a really good drawing on the blackboard, of the world.  
22 It was full of colour. It was amazing, the drawing on  
23 the blackboard, it was amazing.

24 I was there with another chap called [REDACTED], another  
25 boy called [REDACTED], and there was a kind of a U-shaped

1       bench, if you like, so we were sitting and we were given  
2       paper, each of us were given paper. It's kind of hard  
3       to explain this, so I'm hoping that I explain it  
4       clearly, but if not, please let me know.

5               So we were to do the same -- I think we had the same  
6       on the paper as was on the blackboard, but we had it in  
7       black and white, the blackboard was colour. So we had  
8       the map in front of us in black and white with the  
9       paper.

10              I'm going to take this paper out just to kind of  
11       show visually what happened. So I had the paper in  
12       front of me and it had lines all down the paper, so the  
13       paper was lined. It was actually graphed, so lines  
14       horizontally and vertically across the map. I think it  
15       was linked to latitude and longitude, I think that  
16       was the point of it, but at that time I didn't know  
17       that, but looking back, it was probably that. So I had  
18       the lines on it, on the world map.

19              So Mr KXX then said -- if you imagine this is  
20       a ruler that I've got, so I've got this piece of paper,  
21       imagine that was the ruler, so we had a ruler beside us  
22       and our map and Mr KXX said: you must use the  
23       ruler, and, as I say, there were the lines, you were to  
24       use the lines on the paper -- I mean, I still don't  
25       understand what I was being asked, but I was told to use

1 the ruler. So I got the ruler and I put it diagonally  
2 and I drew a line diagonally down the map and then I had  
3 to move it and draw another diagonal line. And so we  
4 did that and we did what we were told and we copied what  
5 we were asked to copy.

6 Mr KXX came round and skelped me on the back of  
7 my head, scrumpled up my paper and threw it away. And  
8 exactly the same happened to and he said: use the  
9 ruler, use the ruler, and we're thinking: we did use the  
10 ruler. We don't know what we're supposed to do with  
11 this ruler. So we did it again and he's shouting at us:  
12 use the ruler, use the ruler, straight, I don't want to  
13 see a curve. It's straight. And I'm like -- and  
14 I'm thinking to myself: I don't know what he's asking  
15 for. At that point he then started shaking me, grabbing  
16 my arms and shaking me. was crying. He was also  
17 getting this. Again the paper got scrumpled up. He was  
18 a really strong man, Mr KXX. But I still didn't  
19 understand what he was wanting.

20 So then got it and Mr KXX says: yes,  
21 that's it, but I still didn't know what he was looking  
22 for and he -- and said to me: use the ruler, use  
23 the ruler, and I'm thinking: I don't know what it is.  
24 But because was telling me what to do, he got  
25 walloped and had to move. So then again I was sitting

1 with this and I'm getting shaken and shaken and hit and  
2 punched. At that time I had hearing aids in. I get  
3 punched in my ear and my ear started bleeding.

4 And obviously I was crying and then the bell went.  
5 I went out and I ran. Mr LXG was there at the  
6 time -- oh, no, Mr LXG had passed away. There was  
7 a new deaf person had came in at that point, it was  
8 a person called Alex, Alex Connolly, and he come over,  
9 he could sign, and he come across and he said: what's  
10 wrong? And I grabbed him. Mr KXX ran and said:  
11 no, you get back. You get back in that class. And Alex  
12 said: no, absolutely not, he's not going back, because  
13 obviously he could see that I was bleeding. So he took  
14 me in and he helped clean up my ear, et cetera.

15 Now, that was on the Friday and I was going to be  
16 going home. Now, I was still residential at that point  
17 and when I got home on the Friday, my mum blew her lid  
18 when she realised what had happened.

19 So on the Monday, my mum came with me to the school.  
20 Sister LXH, SNR, I don't think was --  
21 yeah, she was there actually. She was there.  
22 Sister LXH was there, and my mum and Sister LXH  
23 were having arguments and then just came to me and said:  
24 you be a good boy, you be a good boy. So just thumbs  
25 up, thumbs up, because we didn't have good

1 communication, my mum and I.

2 So then Sister LXH asked me to come in and said:

3 that's you finished with Mr KXX. You won't be back

4 with Mr KXX, and I was delighted. But instead of

5 being with Mr KXX, I had to go every Friday to

6 Sister LXH and I had to write lines: 'I must obey,

7 I must obey, I must obey.' So I had to sit and write

8 lines every Friday saying: 'I must obey, I must obey',

9 with Sister LXH. Again, that was the time that

10 I started to just rebel.

11 LADY SMITH: Ms Innes, we've been running for another

12 40/45 minutes. 'Allan', we could take a short break

13 now; would that be helpful?

14 A. I'm actually fine.

15 LADY SMITH: You're fine?

16 A. I'm happy to carry on.

17 LADY SMITH: Well, I'm happy to be guided by you, but you

18 must say if you need a break.

19 A. I will. I absolutely will. That's no problem.

20 LADY SMITH: It's just 12.05 now. We'll certainly take

21 another break before 1 o'clock, but we can carry on as

22 long as you feel comfortable.

23 A. Okay. Thank you.

24 MS INNES: Now, in your statement, 'Allan', you tell us at

25 paragraph 84 about something that you heard about what

1        had happened at the school and you understand that  
2        a girl died at the school. Can you tell us about that?  
3    A. That's right. It's been taken out. I can't remember.  
4        Oh, yeah, it's blanked, isn't it? I can't remember the  
5        girl's name. Am I allowed to say the name? No. Should  
6        I say the name?  
7    LADY SMITH: We don't need the name. It's okay.  
8    A. Okay, I'll just -- [REDACTED] was the girl's name.  
9    LADY SMITH: Thank you.  
10   A. I think we were told they were in an accident at home.  
11        Something to do with -- there was a tube in her head or  
12        something, but then somebody told me -- somebody said --  
13        they were not allowed to hit her on the head because she  
14        had this tube in her head, but actually I found out that  
15        last year that one witness said to me actually what had  
16        happened was they knew not to hit [REDACTED] on the head,  
17        because of this tube that she had, but also there was  
18        a problem with eating. She didn't want to eat, but the  
19        Sisters were forcing her to eat the food and she was  
20        trying not to eat the food and they had a wooden spoon,  
21        you know, like a kind of regular wooden spoon, and this  
22        girl was then hit on the head with the wooden spoon and  
23        I think she fell or something. I'm not 100 per cent  
24        sure, but I think she then fell, got up again, walked  
25        a bit, fell and died and then the Sisters were all in a



1 panic, telling everybody to get out the space and the  
2 girl passed away.

3 Now, obviously we didn't know, we were in the boys'  
4 side. That was in the girls' side, so there was a wall  
5 between us in the dining hall. I think by the time  
6 I got there the wall was down, but there was the wall  
7 there, but I believe the girls saw this happening.  
8 I'm in contact with somebody who's -- a [REDACTED] who's in  
9 [REDACTED] and she told me very clearly what had happened  
10 then, again last year she repeated that to me and said:  
11 yeah, this is what had happened.

12 Q. Did she tell you who had hit the girl?

13 A. Let me get this right. Sister KUA [REDACTED] I think -- KUA [REDACTED]  
14 or KUA [REDACTED] maybe. I don't know exactly. KUA [REDACTED].  
15 We used this sign name for her, Sister, and then it's  
16 [REDACTED]. Maybe Sister KUA [REDACTED] or  
17 something like that, [REDACTED], anyway is as good as I can  
18 get from that.

19 Q. If we look on to paragraph 87 of your statement, you say  
20 that two of your friends disappeared one day and it  
21 turned out that they had been restrained and sent to  
22 a mental hospital?

23 A. Yeah. Now, I wonder whether it's something to do with  
24 communication, as an adult looking back, but back then  
25 who knows. So these two [REDACTED] and -- [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].



1       [REDACTED] -- it was after school in residential and I don't  
2       know how -- I was young at the time, but I did see it.

3           It was completely out of control. I don't know  
4       whether he -- I don't know what had caused him to get  
5       out of control but he was out of control, whether it's  
6       something had happened to him and he'd lost it, all the  
7       staff came running in. They all grabbed him. He was  
8       really fighting, kicking, trying to get away from them.  
9       They grabbed him and they took him away. I don't  
10      know -- yeah, they did. Yeah, they took him away.

11          So that was just [REDACTED] at that point. So first it  
12      was [REDACTED] that was taken away. And we didn't know -- let  
13      me just get that right. So we were saying, you know,  
14      what's happened to [REDACTED]? What's happened to [REDACTED]? He  
15      then came back and he changed. He was a totally  
16      different boy. Before he would sign, he was great. Now  
17      he just seemed like he would just give people the thumbs  
18      up and that was it. He was just totally different,  
19      a totally different boy when he came back and we --  
20      I mean, I guess now -- I know back then you would maybe  
21      go to an asylum, right, that was before it would be  
22      called an asylum. I don't know if they gave him  
23      medication or what they did to him, but he was a very  
24      different boy when he came back.

25          Now, [REDACTED] was my pal, [REDACTED] not so much, but [REDACTED] was

1 my pal. We were the same age. Well, there was one year  
2 between us. He was [REDACTED]. And again out of the  
3 blue, I don't what happened to him, he was taken away.  
4 When he came back, again, was really kind of --  
5 BSL INTERPRETER: The interpreter is going to use the word  
6 vacant because that's what I'm seeing from the  
7 explanation in the face.  
8 A. -- like just putting the thumbs up, no kind of  
9 engagement, just sitting -- just again,  
10 a totally different person when he came back, totally  
11 different, and it was terrifying, terrifying to think  
12 you're taken away and you come back completely  
13 different.  
14 Q. Now, I'm going to move on to your life after  
15 St Vincent's and some reflections that you have.  
16 So you tell us at paragraph 89 that you left school  
17 as soon as you were 16. Did you leave with any  
18 qualifications?  
19 A. So that would have been 1976, I think that was.  
20 Q. Did you leave school with any qualifications?  
21 A. No, none at all. None at all. I mean, I can still  
22 visualise that door, the very first day I arrived, being  
23 taken by the wrists and taken away, and actually when  
24 I was 16, I remember being thrown out of the school.  
25 I can't explain, from age of 16 to [REDACTED], I have memory

1       loss of that time really. My sister was very good at  
2       helping me and teaching me and to the young people that  
3       I met and I got lots of learning and I became better and  
4       stronger and more assertive through the years after  
5       school and I knew then how to manage. But from the age  
6       of 16 to 35 it was not a good -- really a terrible time.  
7       I was a really selfish man at the time. I have since  
8       met people and apologised for maybe the way I behaved at  
9       that period of time.

10       I mean, there are probably more people that I do  
11       still need to meet to make up for maybe some of the  
12       behaviours I had during that period of 16 to ■■■, but  
13       I don't have much memory of that period of time.

14   Q. Then you talk from paragraph 94 onwards about the impact  
15       that your experiences at St Vincent's had on you. What  
16       would you say the impact of your experiences at  
17       St Vincent's have been on your life?

18   A. So now I think, even now, it's difficult to recall.  
19       I see young deaf people now, the access they have, going  
20       to university, it's great, it's brilliant to see,  
21       I'm really proud of them. It's wonderful. But for me,  
22       the teachers, the Sisters, I wish I could meet them.  
23       I would -- and say: you know, why did you -- why?

24       It's not in the statement, but if I can just mention  
25       this. When I was 13, as I say, you know, you took your

1       turn, the older boys had been through it, it was my  
2       turn, Sister LXH would call you in and you would go  
3       in not knowing what for and they would ask us: do you  
4       want to move to a school in England? And I was like:  
5       oh, yeah, uh-huh, yeah, straightaway that was my instant  
6       answer, and every boy in there had said the same: yes,  
7       uh-huh.

8               Now, it seemed that my parents had rejected that.  
9       So there was of us at that time. We went away for  
10      holidays. We came back to school after the school  
11      holidays. There were of us and one had left,  
12      a called was gone. So of the that  
13      had been in before the holidays, only returned.  
14      Didn't really know why.

15             When I eventually left school, you know, you meet  
16      people in your life after school. I met somebody, not  
17      , but somebody else, and he said: I remember you,  
18      I remember you from school. And: you were so clever,  
19      you were great, you know, your signing's great, you're  
20      wonderful, why did you not move down to that school in  
21      England?

22             Anyway, I then met , the boy that never came  
23      back, and he -- his English was great, his signing was  
24      amazing, he worked for . He'd moved school and  
25      I realised that when he moved school he had a great

1 school experience. We didn't because we stayed.

2 There was also a Glasgow School for the Deaf, which  
3 was the Protestant school, if you like, and there was  
4 also Donaldson's School for the Deaf and St Vincent's,  
5 which was the Catholic school.

6 The English schools seemed to be better at educating  
7 deaf children and I wonder why the teachers down there  
8 never came to Scotland to influence what was happening  
9 up here? I wonder why, because our educational  
10 experience was significantly different from those that  
11 were in England. You know, now that St Vincent's is  
12 shut, it's changed to St Roch's School, that's where  
13 they go now. And what I've heard is that the education  
14 is great. There are three deaf teachers that teach  
15 within the school, but I've also heard that there's  
16 another school, Hamilton School for the Deaf, that's not  
17 so great.

18 And when you think about the education, one deaf  
19 person that's an assessor had said to parents of a deaf  
20 child, I think the child was about 10 then, and they'd  
21 said: this child who's 10 actually is displaying as  
22 a child who's 5. So if we think back to my experience  
23 and the education I got, I hate to think this is  
24 repeating, but potentially that's what's happening  
25 because of what's happening right now.

1 I visit lots of friends in England and, I mean,  
2 they're so smart, they're so, so smart, their signing is  
3 amazing, they've got so much access. I just wonder why  
4 St Vincent's left us the way we were.

5 Q. Just finally, 'Allan', if we go to page 23 of your  
6 statement and paragraph 105, you say there that the most  
7 important lesson to be learned from your experience is  
8 that oralism simply doesn't work for the profoundly deaf  
9 and that people who are profoundly deaf must be taught  
10 with BSL.

11 A. Absolutely. I'm not -- I mean, you think of young  
12 people now who have been cochlear implanted and they're  
13 learning to speak, I think that's great, but I think if  
14 they're profoundly deaf and that's not an option for  
15 them, stop putting them down a path that doesn't suit --  
16 allow them to sign. You know, sign language is so  
17 beautiful. It's such a wonderful language.

18 I mean, deaf people can become lawyers, businessmen.  
19 I mean, like Chris here, the intermediary, does  
20 assessments. It's amazing to see what our deaf  
21 community can do. It's the opportunity. If you can't  
22 speak, if you're not able to go down the oral path, then  
23 stop forcing them to go down that path. And I know it's  
24 up to parents and it's much more complex than just that,  
25 but if you are profoundly deaf, you should be getting

1 full access in British Sign Language.

2 Now, my sister was part hearing, so she could speak  
3 very well. I think something happened at 5 or 6 with  
4 her and she lost her hearing, I don't really fully know,  
5 but I was born profoundly deaf. My sister's a fluent  
6 signer. She also went to St Vincent's but she's very,  
7 very clever. [REDACTED] -- sorry,  
8 she's not very clever, she's not very clever, my sister,  
9 [REDACTED], she went to [REDACTED]. She  
10 didn't do so well. She worked as a [REDACTED]  
11 [REDACTED]. So that was her job, she worked as  
12 [REDACTED]  
13 [REDACTED], working in the  
14 offices. They did say -- they're all obviously  
15 academic, but she's got a very strong religious faith,  
16 my sister. [REDACTED]. She's  
17 an amazing lady, but the same as me, didn't get any form  
18 of education from St Vincent's.

19 She passed away unfortunately [REDACTED], sadly.

20 MS INNES: Thank you, 'Allan'. I have no more questions for  
21 you.

22 LADY SMITH: 'Allan', I want to say thank you as well.

23 There's actually two things I want to say.

24 One is thank you for adding so richly to your  
25 written evidence and, secondly, thank you for showing me

1 just how beautiful sign language is. I can understand  
2 why you say that.

3 A. Thank you, my Lady.

4 LADY SMITH: And now feel free to go and please relax for  
5 the rest of the day.

6 A. Thank you. I'm glad it's over with.

7 (The witness withdrew)

8 LADY SMITH: Now, I'll sort out what we're doing next in  
9 a moment, but before I do that, there are quite a number  
10 of names of people I need to mention, because their  
11 identities are protected by my General Restriction  
12 Order, and they're not to be identified as referred to  
13 in our evidence outside this room.

14 And they are Sister KTA, Sister KUA, LXF,  
15 Sister LXH, Mr LXG, Mrs PYT, Mr KXX,  
16 Sister LXH, Mrs LXM, LXL or Mr LXL,  
17 Mr LXJ, a child called, a child called,  
18 a child called, a child called, one called  
19 and a child called. I think that's the full  
20 list of everybody that's been mentioned that has to be  
21 mentioned at this stage.

22 Ms Innes, what's the plan?

23 MS INNES: The further evidence for today is read-in  
24 evidence, which we could perhaps do a read-in straight  
25 away or it might be better to break and to do the



1 read-in evidence in the afternoon.

2 LADY SMITH: I think we should do that. We'll break now and

3 I'll sit again at 2 o'clock.

4 Thank you very much.

5 (12.26 pm)

6 (The luncheon adjournment)

7 (2.00 pm)

8 LADY SMITH: Good afternoon and welcome back.

9 We're going to move now to doing a couple of

10 read-ins as promised so I'll invite Ms McMillan to

11 begin.

12 MS MCMILLAN: Thank you, my Lady. The first read-in that we

13 intend to start with is a read-in for Anne Harkins.

14 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

15 MS MCMILLAN: The reference for her statement is

16 WIT-1-000001547.

17 Anne Harkins (read)

18 Anne was born in 1956 in Glasgow. She was not in

19 care herself, but her father lived within the grounds of

20 St Vincent's and she often mixed with the children

21 there.

22 In her statement she says that she was 3 years old

23 when she moved onto the grounds at St Vincent's in 1959.

24 So beginning from paragraph 4 of her statement on

25 page 1, she says:

1           'St Vincent's Convent was situated at 4 Easter Hill  
2           Street, Tollcross, Glasgow. The convent was run by the  
3           Daughters of Charity.

4           'In 1959, when I was 3 years old, my family and  
5           I moved to [REDACTED] which was in the grounds of  
6           St Vincent's School for the Deaf, Blind and Deaf-Blind.  
7           This was because my father got a post as -- a post at  
8           the school. My mum didn't work as she looked after us.

9           'Directly opposite our house and outwith the grounds  
10          was St Joseph's Primary School. I was educated there  
11          and then went to Elmwood Convent School for Girls in  
12          Bothwell, Lanarkshire before I went to  
13          Glasgow University. Our chapel was part of the  
14          primary school and was in the upper level, so growing up  
15          we were quite isolated to that one area as we didn't  
16          have neighbours per se.

17          'We had the whole run of the convent grounds to play  
18          in. The grounds and gardens were beautiful and had  
19          separate buildings for the convent and the school within  
20          the grounds. The whole place was spotless. We knew the  
21          convent like it was part of our house. We played in the  
22          swing parks, the football pitches, the gardens.

23          'The sleeping quarters were all upstairs in the  
24          convent. The children's dormitories were separated into  
25          boys and girls and both were separate from the staff

1 sleeping quarters.

2 'I stayed in the staff quarters once for a fortnight  
3 when my mum and dad went on holiday. I was about  
4 14 years old at the time. I had a Saturday job and was  
5 going to be working there through the summer so didn't  
6 want to go with them.

7 'I was only in the children's sleeping area once,  
8 when I went with my sister when she was volunteering to  
9 look after the baby girls.

10 'During the summer, when the majority of the  
11 children were away home for the holidays, sometimes the  
12 Sisters would hold a big retreat at St Vincent's. They  
13 would get Daughters of Charity from all over, maybe from  
14 England and Ireland, all congregating. I remember  
15 seeing them all walking about the gardens in their long  
16 robes and butterfly hats.

17 'Over the years, we got to know the Sisters and some  
18 of the children as well. When we moved there at first,  
19 the Sister in charge was called Sister Anthony. As  
20 children we didn't really know her very well as she  
21 either moved or died whilst we were still quite young.

22 'The main Sister was the Mother Superior, that we  
23 knew as Sister Monica. Sister Monica was wonderful,  
24 warm and loving, like the majority of the Sisters were.  
25 I cannot really remember Sister Monica's surname as we

1        didn't really know the Sisters' surnames. I think her  
2        surname began with a C and it might have been Connelly  
3        or something like that.

4        'The school and the convent were staffed mainly by  
5        women. There was one male teacher, Mr LXL . In fact  
6        I can think only of my dad and Charlie Malloy, a deaf  
7        man, who helped my dad, as the only other men that  
8        worked there. There was one other disabled man who  
9        helped my dad for a short period of time as well.

10       'There is a whole list of Sisters that I can  
11       remember, but there's only one Sister's surname that  
12       I remember, Sister KUA and she is the one  
13       responsible for the abuse.

14       'Sister KTA was SNR of the new school  
15       that was built in the grounds separate to the convent.

16       'In the kitchen was Sister Agnes, who was fantastic.  
17       There was a staff dining room off the kitchen but that  
18       was mainly for the kitchen staff and the nuns that  
19       worked in the kitchen. There was also another staffroom  
20       along the corridor for the staff that looked after the  
21       children, where they would eat their meals. There was  
22       a big communal sitting room with a television in it.

23       'There was a big laundry that was run by  
24       Sister Catherine, who wasn't a very pleasant person. It  
25       dealt with everything that needed washed or laundered

1 from sheets to the children's clothing, the nuns' habits  
2 and the cloths for the chapel.

3 'Margaret Walker, who we all called Auntie Margaret,  
4 was like a second mother and we all adored her. She was  
5 a very intelligent, lovely woman. She worked hand in  
6 glove with Sister KUA, who looked after  
7 the boys' side and was also in charge of the sewing  
8 room. Auntie Margaret was a wonderful seamstress and  
9 knitter and she used to knit for the children.

10 'The Sister that was in charge of the girls was  
11 Sister PBF and she was quite crabbit.  
12 Marie Stenson was one of the main ones that looked after  
13 the girls and Rosemary Gillan worked along with Marie  
14 looking after the baby girls.

15 'Margaret Walker, Marie Stenson and Rosemary Gillan  
16 were very close to our family, particularly my  
17 Auntie Margaret, who was like part of our family. She  
18 had been looked after by the Sisters because her father  
19 had been badly injured in the war and her mother died  
20 when she was quite young. They had about six or seven  
21 children and he couldn't cope. We would always have  
22 them to our house for Christmas and if we were going for  
23 a run on a Sunday, we would take them with us. Sadly,  
24 they are all deceased now.

25 'Looking back as an adult, and even at the time,

1 I remember my mum saying these girls worked really hard.  
2 They worked long hours and probably weren't paid that  
3 well but they got their board and food.

4 'Later on, there were one or two people that were  
5 brought in from outside to work in the convent that  
6 didn't live here, but mainly the bulk of these women  
7 were employed from either Rosewell or Smyllum homes for  
8 children. Some of the girls that came from there had  
9 very mild learning disabilities and some didn't.  
10 Rosemary had a very mild learning disability and  
11 a hearing problem. Marie Stenson and my Auntie Margaret  
12 didn't.

13 'There were other staff that worked in the kitchen  
14 and cleaned the place, including the chapel which they  
15 had in the convent.

16 'There were no resident priests but the priest from  
17 our parish and a number of curates would go and take  
18 6 am Mass at St Vincent's. I don't think the priests  
19 were down at the convent very often. There was nothing  
20 hooky going on with them. My brothers were altar boys.  
21 If there was anything untoward, my brothers would have  
22 told me and I have asked them.

23 'The majority of the Sisters were lovely. They all  
24 had certain jobs they did. Sister Patrick played the  
25 organ and also played the organ in our chapel.

1           'The atmosphere between the staff and the nuns was  
2           good. The staff looked up to the nuns. A lot of the  
3           staff had been brought up by nuns and the nuns had  
4           taught them fantastic skills. They had taught them  
5           cooking, sewing, knitting and how to look after  
6           themselves.

7           'The atmosphere between the children and staff was  
8           also good. I never saw any children upset.

9           'There weren't any staff that I can think of that  
10          were cruel or anything like that. Marie Stenson could  
11          be a bit sharp with the girls but probably rightly so.  
12          My Auntie Margaret was like putty, that woman was  
13          a saint and she would never say anything bad about  
14          anybody.

15          'I really don't know how many children were at  
16          St Vincent's. I have spoken to my brother and we reckon  
17          there were possibly around anything from 150 to 200  
18          children. I am basing that on thinking back to the  
19          Christmas parties I went to there. There were no day  
20          pupils at this time. The boys and girls were all  
21          residential, even the wee tots, because back in these  
22          days, blind and deaf children weren't integrated into  
23          mainstream education. The boys and girls were separated  
24          in the convent, had separate playgrounds and separate  
25          dormitories. I'm not sure if it was mixed classes in

1       the school as I never spent much time in the actual  
2       school.

3           'I think the youngest children there were 3 years  
4       old, toddlers, primary school aged, right up to teenage  
5       years. I think the oldest was about 15 years but when  
6       I was 9 or 10 it was hard to know what age the teenagers  
7       were.

8           'There is only one girl that really stands out in my  
9       mind. She was full of vim, fiery and was a lot of fun.

10          'The majority of children went home at the weekends,  
11       but some of them didn't because it was also like they  
12       were in care, because they either didn't have parents or  
13       their parents weren't able to look after them properly.  
14       I think a lot of the children were from Glasgow or  
15       Greater Glasgow, so if the parents were willing to take  
16       them at the weekend they would get to go home as it was  
17       a reasonable distance. The children that didn't go home  
18       would have a fuss made of them at the weekend.

19          'I wasn't aware of parents coming to or being around  
20       the school, but I presume there would have been parents'  
21       nights.

22          'Some of the children had some hearing and had  
23       hearing aids but some of them were profoundly deaf.  
24       Some of the blind children had partial sight. There  
25       were also some children who were profoundly deaf-blind



1 and could only be communicated by using sign language on  
2 their hands.

3 'Communication between the children was always done  
4 by sign language and the women who worked there were  
5 very fluent in it. The children who were blind and  
6 deaf-blind were taught braille and were also taught sign  
7 language on their hands. If a child who had previously  
8 had sight or hearing but had developed either blindness  
9 or deafness and then became a pupil at the school, they  
10 were taught sign language as well. The parents then  
11 picked it up from their own children.

12 'The children wore a bottle green uniform. Boys  
13 wore shorts when young and trousers when older. They  
14 wore a shirt and tie and wore bottle green jumpers that  
15 my Auntie Margaret knitted them. I think the girls  
16 probably had dresses in the summer and probably a skirt  
17 and a kimono-type top in the winter.

18 'All the children got a primary school education,  
19 the same as mainstream primary school but obviously they  
20 used sign language that was adapted to meet their needs.

21 'I would suggest they got a good education. The  
22 school was very well run. The reason I am saying that  
23 is that there was one girl she was born deaf-blind. We  
24 used to communicate with her through hands and that girl  
25 passed several O-Level exams and learned French.

1           'They used to have activities at night. My sisters,  
2           brother and I were invited to join in, which we did.  
3           There was PE, football and a beautiful gymnasium for the  
4           boys. We used to do Scottish country dancing and  
5           ballet. For the country dancing, the children that were  
6           deaf could feel the rhythm of the music through the  
7           floor. We would also get invited to Christmas parties,  
8           so all in all it was a good experience.

9           'As well as being employed, my father was a keep-fit  
10          fanatic and had been a very competent gymnast and had  
11          previously taught swimming. He used to play football  
12          with the boys at night. He taught them gymnastics in  
13          the gym on a Tuesday night and my brothers also  
14          participated in that. I remember my dad getting this  
15          ball that had a bell in it so that the boys that were  
16          blind could follow and trace the ball.

17          'I don't know what happened about healthcare for the  
18          children at St Vincent's. I have nothing to suggest  
19          they weren't treated properly if they were ill or had  
20          anything wrong with them.

21          'I don't think the children had to do any chores or  
22          work other than looking after their own things, like you  
23          would expect any child to do. I never saw any of them  
24          working in the kitchen or elsewhere.

25          'I don't know how discipline was dealt with in the

1 school, but I don't ever remember witnessing any of the  
2 staff lifting their hands to any children.

3 'Auntie Margaret worked in this big sewing room that  
4 had a big, beautiful oak table where they used to make  
5 uniforms. That was Sister KUA's domain and her  
6 and Auntie Margaret spent a lot of time together.  
7 Having been brought up by the Sisters, Auntie Margaret  
8 was very sort of deferential to them. She thought they  
9 could do no wrong and would never in a million years  
10 challenge anything.

11 'When I was about 9 or 10 years old, I had to run  
12 down the drive to see Auntie Margaret at the sewing room  
13 and outside the room in the corridor there were a couple  
14 of boys, who were about 7 or 8 years old, dressed in day  
15 clothes and had cardboard notices with string holding  
16 them around their necks that had handwritten words,  
17 "I wet the bed." I didn't know the boys, as my sisters  
18 and I didn't really play with the boys, but my brothers  
19 did and they might have known them.

20 'I don't know how long they had been standing there,  
21 but I remember feeling bad at the time and that it was  
22 terrible. It was awful and upsetting as a child to see  
23 that.

24 'I never said anything but within about a minute or  
25 so my father came striding down the corridor and saw

1       them. He sent me out of the sewing room and I could  
2       hear him laying into Sister KUA about it. I could  
3       hear my father's raised voice telling her that it was  
4       terrible and to get those notices off of these children  
5       now. He told her he better never ever see her treating  
6       a child like that again.

7       'I remember him telling my mother about it and  
8       saying that he had told Sister KUA that he would  
9       get her in court if he ever saw it again. He told her  
10      that it was no way to handle a problem like that and  
11      asked her if she thought humiliating them was going to  
12      stop them wetting the bed.

13      'Sister KUA actually acknowledged to my dad  
14      that what she had done to the boys was wrong. The  
15      excuse she gave was that that was the way that they  
16      handled.

17      'That was humiliation and that was the only incident  
18      I ever saw.

19      'When I saw the news item on STV about St Vincent's  
20      being investigated by the Inquiry, I immediately thought  
21      about that incident.

22      'My brothers both became altar boys but weren't  
23      allowed to become altar boys until they had made their  
24      first holy communion. Sister KUA taught my  
25      brothers Latin, the Latin responses to the Mass so that

1       they could become altar boys. My brother told me that  
2       if he and my other brother got any of the Latin or  
3       responses wrong when she was teaching them, that she  
4       would rap them over the knuckles with a ruler. The  
5       brother that told me this was only 6 or 7 years old at  
6       the time.

7       'Sister KUA was tall, probably about 5 foot 9  
8       inches or 5 foot 10 inches and robustly built.

9       'I wasn't aware of anything else on the level of  
10      physical or sexual abuse ever happening at St Vincent's.  
11      However, if what I saw was happening in public, it begs  
12      the question about what was happening behind closed  
13      doors.

14      'I left St Vincent's in 1974 or 1975. I worked in  
15      social work all my life with families and then as  
16      a manager, so if there was anything else, I would tell  
17      you.

18      'Sister Monica, the Mother Superior, was in charge  
19      at the time and should have known what was happening.  
20      I think, but I'm not sure, she died a number of years  
21      ago.

22      'When the convent closed down, sometime in the late  
23      1970s, the Sisters helped my Auntie Margaret,  
24      Marie Stenson and Rosemary Gillan get a flat in  
25      Tollcross. My mum helped the Sisters to set it up.

1           'Some of the Sisters opened a place at Barrowfield,  
2           which is out Bridgeton way in Glasgow. Some of the  
3           other Sisters, including Sister KUA and I think  
4           Sister KTA, were sent down to Mill Hill, another  
5           Daughters of Charity place in London. They were  
6           involved in The Passage, which was a charity helping  
7           homeless people.

8           'I have spoken to the police who called me shortly  
9           after I had spoken to the Inquiry. I had a long  
10          conversation with an officer, who was based at  
11          Livingston, and he said it wasn't the first time that  
12          Sister KUA's name had come up. I said I thought  
13          she was dead and he agreed she probably was. He was  
14          going to contact Mill Hill and The Passage.

15          And then says:

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

20          And she has signed her statement and it's dated  
21          16 December 2024.

22   LADY SMITH: Thank you very much. And then?

23   MS MCMILLAN: My Lady, the next read-in then will be for the  
24          witness who wishes to remain anonymous and she will be  
25          known as 'Ella'.

1 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

2 MS MCMILLAN: And the reference for 'Ella's' statement is  
3 WIT-1-000001519.

4 'Ella' (read)

5 'Ella' was born in 1987 and she is providing  
6 a statement on behalf of her grandmother and  
7 grandfather, who both attended St Vincent's School.

8 She tells us in her statement that her grandmother  
9 attended from 1942 to 1951, from age 6 until aged 15.

10 Her grandfather attended slightly earlier, from 1926  
11 until 1937, when he was between the ages of 4 and 15.

12 So beginning at paragraph 2 of her statement, 'Ella'  
13 says:

14 'I am providing a statement to the Scottish Child  
15 Abuse Inquiry on behalf of my nana who was born in 1936  
16 and my papa who was born in 1922. My nana died in 2017  
17 and my papa died in 1981.

18 'Some of the information I have learned has come  
19 from family research we have carried out over recent  
20 years but a significant amount has come from my nana and  
21 what she has told me or what I have learned from  
22 conversations she has had with me and her friends at the  
23 St Vincent's Deaf Club in Glasgow.

24 'St Vincent's Deaf Club has been going for a long  
25 time and serves the deaf community that were at

1 St Vincent's School. The club is still going. When  
2 I was growing up, I would go there with my nana and  
3 papa. It was all my nana and papa's generation that  
4 would be at the club. It was great. They held events  
5 that we would go to and we always went there to see  
6 Santa. It was all just part of that deaf community and  
7 I know a lot of that community because of my nana and  
8 papa. There was a big crowd of friends and they've all  
9 stayed friends.

10 'Both my grandparents were deaf and attended  
11 St Vincent's School for the Deaf in Tollcross, Glasgow.  
12 My papa was 14 years older than my nana so he was at  
13 St Vincent's a good bit before my nana. He left  
14 St Vincent's when my nana went there. He was there from  
15 age 4 until 15, which was from 1926 to 1937. My nana  
16 attended St Vincent's from the age of 6 until the age of  
17 15, so 1942 until 1951.

18 'My nana was very ladylike. She could hear when she  
19 wore a hearing aid and she could speak as well, but  
20 a lot of the time she would just say she couldn't hear  
21 what people were saying. I think she was in her 20s  
22 when she first started wearing a hearing aid. She was  
23 a lovely signer and she could subtle sign really well  
24 too. She was also very good at lip-reading.

25 'My papa was always of the belief that he was



1       dropped at the door of St Vincent's anonymously in  
2       a basket and then raised by the nuns of St Vincent's all  
3       his life. That's what he was told by the nuns and is  
4       what he always believed. He believed his family wanted  
5       nothing to do with him. However, through our own family  
6       research, which we started in 2014, we have obtained and  
7       checked records and established that he was actually  
8       taken to the nuns when he was 4 and then raised by them  
9       at St Vincent's.

10       'Our research also showed that my papa had four or  
11       five brothers and one of them was also taken to  
12       St Vincent's, aged 2. My papa was never aware of that  
13       brother. No one ever told him he had any brothers. My  
14       papa's brother died at St Vincent's when he was only 2.  
15       That's actually on his death certificate, that he died  
16       at St Vincent's under their care. I think it was  
17       something to do with a respiratory condition, but  
18       I don't really know much about the circumstances of his  
19       death.

20       'It was actually archdiocese records that we found  
21       out about my papa's family. They were about my great  
22       grandmother, my papa's mother. We established she was  
23       very poor and had borrowed money from the archdiocese,  
24       but there was no proof, nothing evident to say why it  
25       was my papa was taken to St Vincent's. The conclusion

1       we came to was that it was because she was poor, she had  
2       quite a few children and my papa was deaf. There was  
3       nothing in any of those records about anybody else in  
4       the family being deaf other than my papa and his  
5       brother, who also went to St Vincent's.

6       'My nana was 6 when she went to St Vincent's. Her  
7       mother came from quite an affluent background and none  
8       of her family were deaf. The story we heard at first  
9       was that my great grandmother told people that my nana  
10      had been stung in the ear by a bee or wasp and had  
11      become deaf. We discovered from family that that was  
12      not the case and that my nana was actually profoundly  
13      deaf. We think that because of the affluent background,  
14      our great grandmother just couldn't face that my nana  
15      was deaf. It was something that was kind of frowned  
16      upon back then and I just don't think my nana's mum  
17      could bear the embarrassment. So when she was 6, my  
18      nana was taken to St Vincent's.

19      'My nana had been in a hearing school at first but  
20      she wasn't taking anything in and wasn't learning  
21      anything because she was deaf.

22      'My papa didn't share much with me about his time at  
23      St Vincent's. He could only ever go on what the nuns  
24      communicated with him. He didn't know much about his  
25      life or his family. He didn't ever know he had any

1       brothers and thought he was an only child.

2       'Nuns predominantly ran St Vincent's. The nuns all  
3       wore uniform and big hats with what looked like horns.  
4       I have seen them in photographs my nana has shown me of  
5       her and the nuns when she was at St Vincent's.

6       'I think most, if not all, of the children who  
7       attended St Vincent's resided there. It was boys and  
8       girls but I don't know how many. My nana described it  
9       as an old, dark building, but it was more the culture  
10      and the abuse that I spoke about with my nana than the  
11      layout of the building or anything like that, but I do  
12      know a bit about the old building from my nana.

13      'I know that there was a bit for boys and a bit for  
14      girls and that the boys and girls were segregated other  
15      than when they were in school. I think they might have  
16      had some mixed classes at the school but most of the  
17      time I think they were segregated. My nana did say the  
18      boys and girls weren't allowed to play together in the  
19      playground at all.

20      'I also know there wasn't really any learning, not  
21      like maths and English and things like that.

22      'My nana did say the nuns were very strict about  
23      what time the children all got up in the morning. They  
24      would then have to make their beds. My nana carried  
25      that with her all through her life. She always made her

1       bed as soon as she got up in the morning.

2       'My nana said everything was always very strict at  
3       St Vincent's, especially when they were having meals and  
4       when they were doing all their cleaning duties. They  
5       had duties in the kitchen when they did cooking and  
6       cleaning and sometimes they were on their hands and  
7       knees scrubbing the floor. My nana was always cleaning  
8       and polishing as an adult. She really knew how to get  
9       a home clean. I think we've all ended up having a bit  
10      of OCD about cleaning. I've seen my mum and myself  
11      cleaning non-stop for hours on end.

12      'The girls were taught how to clean so they were on  
13      the floor scrubbing a lot of the time. They were also  
14      taught how to sew, so they didn't get normal educational  
15      classes, it was more about learning the skills to be  
16      a good housewife. The boys might have had a bit more of  
17      an education than the girls but they were also given  
18      labour skills and things like that. It was instilled in  
19      all the deaf children from a very young age that those  
20      were their capabilities because they were deaf. They  
21      were never going to get a better education or become  
22      educated so they could have skilled jobs like other  
23      people.

24      'I was actually in St Vincent's when I was younger,  
25      sometime in the late 90s when I was about 8 or 9. It

1       was a summer holiday kind of class and we took part in  
2       a lot of activities.

3           I believe some of the nuns at St Vincent's picked up  
4       some signing when they had been on their travels, but it  
5       was a whole range of different signing. They knew some  
6       American, some French and some British Sign Language.  
7       What is kind of difficult to explain is that there is  
8       a full deaf community from St Vincent's who have their  
9       own sign language. Understanding that gives people  
10      a better idea or understanding of how much the children  
11      that were there were affected by the abuse.

12          'You have British Sign Language, which is a kind of  
13      universal signing across Britain. You then have  
14      different signing for different areas within Britain.  
15      It's just like people from different areas of Britain  
16      have different accents. So you will have Dundee  
17      signing, Glasgow signing, Aberdeen signing, that kind of  
18      thing. You can also get family signing as well and then  
19      there's a whole community of generations that went  
20      through St Vincent's that all have St Vincent's signing.  
21      St Vincent's signing is very much one of a kind and you  
22      know when you see someone signing that they have been to  
23      St Vincent's. There's a lovely flow to it but there's  
24      also a subtleness to it because they weren't allowed to  
25      sign at St Vincent's. The nuns didn't allow it.

1           'The children were constantly beaten up by the nuns  
2           for signing. It was frowned upon that the children used  
3           sign language to communicate with one another. It's  
4           because of that that the pupils had to learn and use  
5           very subtle signing and a lot of the signing they used  
6           was actually made up by the pupils for their own  
7           communication.

8           'There's a whole generation of this subtle signing  
9           which was developed at St Vincent's. Sometimes it can  
10          be so subtle you could literally blink and miss the  
11          signing. It had to be that way so they didn't get  
12          caught communicating because if they did there would be  
13          serious consequences.

14          'I don't think my nana's mum ever visited her when  
15          she was in St Vincent's. It was always her brothers and  
16          my nana's uncles that visited her. My nana's mum just  
17          couldn't handle the shame. My nana had that shame of  
18          being deaf from her mum and from the school she went to.

19          'All of the women who were at St Vincent's were  
20          life-long friends and went to St Vincent's Deaf Club.  
21          When they all got together at the club they loved a good  
22          drink. It was once the drink started to hit them that  
23          you would hear about the abuse they all went through.  
24          My nana was very protective of us, her grandchildren,  
25          and she didn't really like us knowing anything, but they

1       would take us to the Christmas nights and other events  
2       at the club and we would hear things once they all had  
3       a drink.

4       'My nana would often sign to me that the nuns were  
5       wicked. That was something she would always say. They  
6       even looked evil with their big hats with horns.

7       'I know there are a few nuns, and I don't know any  
8       of their names, who were particularly bad. From some of  
9       the conversations between my nana and her friends,  
10      I think the nuns didn't actually believe that all of the  
11      children were fully deaf. Some of the nuns thought the  
12      children could still hear and communicate in a hearing  
13      way. It was like being deaf was a taboo, it was frowned  
14      upon, there was no understanding at all by the nuns.

15      'As a result of that, the nuns would just beat the  
16      children who communicated with one another using sign.  
17      I actually got the impression that the children were  
18      beaten or punished just for existing, for being there,  
19      for the least wee thing. From what my nana and her  
20      friends have told me, I think that there was a lot of  
21      things going on at St Vincent's, but beating the  
22      children seemed to be the main thing.

23      'My nana did describe the beating as being hit by  
24      the nuns with their hands but they used to hit the  
25      children quite a lot with a belt as well. They would

1 hit them on the hands with a belt if they were caught  
2 signing. That happened to them all, getting severely  
3 beaten with a belt for signing. The beatings weren't  
4 any secret. The nuns did it all the time and quite  
5 openly in front of other children. Children went to  
6 that school through no choice of their own and were  
7 basically abused on a daily basis.

8 'My nana did tell me about an incident when she was  
9 14 and she and a couple of friends had gone into the  
10 boys' playground. There was segregation but they were  
11 all young and just having a bit of fun, interacting and  
12 playing around. The nuns caught them, beat them and  
13 gave them all punishment. Then a priest actually sent  
14 my nana and the other girls for internal examinations to  
15 confirm whether or not they'd had sex with the boys.  
16 Nothing like that had been going on at all, they'd just  
17 been playing in the playground.

18 'If my memory serves me right the examinations were  
19 an in-house arrangement, so a local doctor was called in  
20 to do the examinations and they all took place at  
21 St Vincent's. I only know that all those girls were  
22 subjected to an internal examination as a result of  
23 that. That's what my nana and her friends said.

24 'Another story my nana told me was when all the  
25 children were sitting in class and a wee boy was really



1       needing the toilet. The nuns wouldn't let him go to the  
2       toilet and eventually he just got up and ran out. He  
3       wet himself when he was running out the class and he  
4       slid in the wet urine and banged his head, cracking his  
5       skull. He ended up dying as a result of that. He was  
6       a very young, wee boy. The whole class, including my  
7       nana, all saw that.

8       'There was also a good friend of my nana's who would  
9       make these wee comments about my nana when they were all  
10      telling their stories at St Vincent's. She would  
11      mention my nana being [given a role], which was a holy  
12      Catholic thing, where they were all made up and kind of  
13      looked like a bride. [My nana's friend] would say my  
14      nana was a favourite of the priests. She would say it  
15      wasn't fair that my nana was [given the role] when she  
16      didn't believe in God.

17      'Another friend of my nana's made a comment just  
18      after my papa died in 2014 about my nana being sexually  
19      abused by a priest. My nana got very upset and pointed  
20      out that I was there, her granddaughter, and that she  
21      shouldn't be talking about those things. I would have  
22      been 27 then. My nana didn't want any of her  
23      grandchildren to be exposed to that at all, but I could  
24      tell from my nana's reaction, and the way that they were  
25      talking about it, that they probably all experienced

1       some kind of sexual abuse by a priest. I believe it  
2       was the same priest that sent my nana and two of her  
3       friends for the internal examination I told you about.

4       'I know my nana and [her friend] and some others had  
5       been witness to an incident where [another friend] was  
6       beaten by the nuns and taken into a cupboard with  
7       a priest. She was forced to give oral sex to the priest  
8       in that cupboard. Those girls all knew about that.  
9       They all knew about the sexual abuse that was going  
10      on at St Vincent's and I'm sure they were all subjected  
11      to very similar things. From the way they were talking  
12      about it, I feel [my nana and her friend] were both  
13      taken into the same cupboard after [her other friend]  
14      had been in it.

15      'Being put in this cupboard seemed to be a thing at  
16      St Vincent's. They mentioned that happening a lot.  
17      I don't know the layout of where this cupboard is but  
18      they described a specific cupboard that they would be  
19      taken into and a lot seemed to take place in it,  
20      involving a priest. As far as I know, there were  
21      several priests involved in that kind of abuse, but the  
22      one that sent the girls for the internal examinations  
23      was the most prolific.

24      'It wasn't just the priests who were sexually  
25      abusive. [Our friend] made comments that the nuns

1 sexually abused the girls as well. I know my nana  
2 suffered sexual abuse from the nuns. She was beaten but  
3 the nuns sometimes went on to sexually abuse her with  
4 instruments. That happened to her and to other girls.  
5 I know it was sexually abusive. I don't know any more  
6 than that.

7 '[This friend] was profoundly deaf and wouldn't wear  
8 a hearing aid but she could still speak, which a lot of  
9 deaf people do, especially if they've been to  
10 St Vincent's, because it was something that was  
11 instilled in them from a young age. We call it "speaky  
12 deaf", where they speak but they are deaf.

13 'I learned from listening to that group of my nana's  
14 friends that a lot of them had experienced physical,  
15 emotional and sexual abuse, some more than others.  
16 I know [my nana's friend] had all her hair shaved off,  
17 was badly beaten and badly sexually abused. I heard of  
18 a lot of disturbing things that happened to her from my  
19 nana and others in the group. She had additional  
20 learning needs and was very small and I think that  
21 because of that, the nuns treated her worse. I do feel  
22 it's not my place to speak about any of that though.  
23 That's her story to tell.

24 'A lot of what my nana and the group said was about  
25 how wicked the nuns were and how the children never had

1 any education. They just had to survive and none of the  
2 women had anything good to say about St Vincent's School  
3 at all. My nana never told me anything positive that  
4 happened at St Vincent's.

5 'Basically all those women were abused as children  
6 at St Vincent's School. They all went through many  
7 different things at the hands of the nuns and priests  
8 and they all witnessed each other being abused in  
9 different ways. I think that's why they have the trauma  
10 bonding thing they now have at St Vincent's Deaf Club.

11 'I don't know so much about my papa's experiences at  
12 St Vincent's but I would say he was probably quite  
13 gaslighted quite a lot of the time. He was a very -- he  
14 was very devout and had a big belief in God. He says  
15 the nuns looked after him but from our own research  
16 I wouldn't say that was strictly correct. He wasn't  
17 told about his family and he wasn't told about a brother  
18 that he had who was in the school at the same time as  
19 him. He was a lot less forthcoming than my nana but he  
20 would say there was abuse and there were beatings by the  
21 nuns and things like that. He just never spoke much  
22 about it.

23 'I do think that with my papa it was more about the  
24 nuns not communicating with him properly, not giving him  
25 truthful information and not giving him a proper

1 education. He grew up, had his own children and passed  
2 away thinking his mother didn't want him and he had no  
3 other family. I think he was made to feel that because  
4 he was deaf, that's the way he could be treated, that  
5 his family didn't want him and it was only the nuns who  
6 wanted him. Of course, we have since learned that  
7 wasn't true and he did have a mum who wanted him and he  
8 did have this whole other life that he never knew about.  
9 That's such a sad thing for my papa.

10 'If my mum gives a statement to the Inquiry, she  
11 will be able to talk more about my papa, her dad, as  
12 I only have wee snippets of information about him. My  
13 mum knows more details about my papa and his time at  
14 St Vincent's. I knew more about my nana.

15 'My nana and papa didn't report any of the abuse  
16 they suffered when they were at St Vincent's. None of  
17 the children ever did as far as I'm aware. They had no  
18 one to communicate it to other than the people who were  
19 abusing them.'

20 'Ella' then talks about her grandparents' life after  
21 their time at St Vincent's. Her grandmother went to  
22 live with her parents again after she left. Her  
23 grandfather went to live with another family who  
24 couldn't sign.

25 Her grandmother eventually went on to secure a job

1       and her grandparents met each other through the  
2       St Vincent's Deaf Club and ultimately married.

3             At paragraph 57, 'Ella' notes that her grandfather  
4       had great life skills but he was never going to go out  
5       and get a skilled job. She tells us that deaf people  
6       didn't get the education the other people would take for  
7       granted.

8             'Ella' then tells us about the impact of the abuse  
9       on her grandparents. She says that it affected them for  
10      the rest of their lives and it was always something they  
11      would speak about when they were having a drink.

12            At paragraph 61, on page 12, she says:

13            'The nuns just didn't like the children and they  
14      certainly didn't like them being deaf children, that's  
15      why they punished them, which is the worst thing. My  
16      nana was actually quite embarrassed about being deaf,  
17      that's why she became so good at lip-reading. One thing  
18      she would do when someone was speaking to her was nod  
19      along looking like she knew what was being said, then,  
20      when the person left, she would ask what they had been  
21      saying to her. She didn't want that person to think she  
22      couldn't hear them and would never let them know she was  
23      deaf and couldn't hear what they were saying. She was  
24      never upfront and forthcoming about it. I do think that  
25      was something that was instilled in her from the way she

1       was treated by the nuns at St Vincent's School.'

2       'Ella' then goes on to say that what happened to her  
3       grandmother changed her religious beliefs. She says at  
4       paragraph 65 that the children of St Vincent's School  
5       didn't leave with any qualifications other than knowing  
6       how to clean and were just abused for being deaf.

7       She tells us that her grandmother was not a very  
8       nurturing person and she says that her grandfather kept  
9       things very secretive, particularly in relation to  
10      St Vincent's.

11      'Ella' then talks about the treatment and support.  
12      At paragraph 74, on page 15, she says:

13      'If hearing children are abused, they can eventually  
14      vocalise that. It might take them many years but they  
15      can go -- but they can then go for counselling and speak  
16      about it. It will be just them and a counsellor and  
17      it's confidential.

18      'There's not really any support like that for the  
19      deaf because if they were to go for counselling,  
20      an interpreter would probably need to be there and most  
21      of the time interpreters are involved in the community.  
22      The deaf community is quite small in Glasgow and there's  
23      nothing in place that really allows deaf people to  
24      offload things confidentially.

25      'Within the hearing community there are CODAs, which

1 is a child of deaf adult; and GODAs, a grandchild of  
2 deaf adult. My mum was a CODA, a child of deaf adult,  
3 and I am a GODA. It's basically people who are brought  
4 up with all the adults who are part of the deaf  
5 community and it covers a lot of families and people.  
6 Many interpreters who work with the deaf communities are  
7 CODAs or GODAs, so it can make things very difficult,  
8 like getting counselling for example. Both the  
9 counsellor and the interpreter would get to find out all  
10 the information about the abuse. That alone makes it  
11 very difficult for deaf people.'

12 'Ella' then talks about the lessons to be learned  
13 from her grandparents' time at St Vincent's and her  
14 hopes for the Inquiry. She says at paragraph 84 on  
15 page 17:

16 'I think that the politics of deaf people and deaf  
17 communities makes it very difficult to get support as  
18 there are so many different things deaf people come up  
19 against. It's very difficult for deaf people to know  
20 where to go with the trauma they have to live through  
21 except for when they are in the club getting drunk and  
22 talking about it with one another.

23 'Sadly that abuse cycle just continues on though,  
24 because they are never getting out and they aren't  
25 getting any support. I think that is developed from



1 a very young age and it's created this trauma-bonding  
2 lifestyle that they just don't know how to get to grips  
3 with.

4 'My nana and papa were kicked out of St Vincent's  
5 aged 15 with no skills or education apart from cleaning,  
6 sewing and labour. They couldn't deal with even basic  
7 things that many of us take for granted.

8 'It's really important for the Inquiry to have that  
9 awareness as they might be able to give deaf people the  
10 chance to get things off their chest and give their own  
11 accounts. I think it will also help the next  
12 generation. When I went to St Vincent's in the late  
13 1990s, I met a girl there who showed me the holes that  
14 had been punched in the wall by children in sheer  
15 frustration, because they weren't allowed to sign. So  
16 it was still going on then and they were still  
17 experiencing it then. Hopefully the Inquiry can help  
18 change things for that generation.'

19 At paragraph 96, 'Ella' says:

20 'St Vincent's deaf community is a very close  
21 community, as I have described, with CODAs and GODAs.  
22 Everyone was brought up within that community and that  
23 makes it really difficult for deaf people to come  
24 forward and speak to the Inquiry.

25 'As interpreters are also part of the deaf

1 community, deaf people will find it very difficult to  
2 come forward and speak about their experiences.  
3 Establishing trust could be difficult and deaf people  
4 could be very nervous about that. It would need to be  
5 independent interpreters from England or outside  
6 Scotland that would need to sit through counselling.  
7 There's a lot of politics in it all. It's like living  
8 in a village where everybody knows what everyone else is  
9 up to. Deaf people won't listen to what doctors or  
10 nurses or experts say. They will only listen to what  
11 other deaf people have said at deaf club.

12 'I would say that the abuse all the deaf people  
13 suffered at St Vincent's was actually what created that  
14 full culture that now exists within the St Vincent's  
15 Deaf Club community. A lot have passed away now but the  
16 club still exists and there is still a whole community  
17 within that club.'

18 Then at paragraph 102, 'Ella' says that she has no  
19 objection to her witness statement being published as  
20 part of the evidence to the Inquiry and she believes  
21 that the facts stated in her witness statement are true.

22 And she has signed her statement and it is dated  
23 6 November 2024.

24 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

25 And that will complete the read-ins for this

1       afternoon, won't it?

2   MS MCMILLAN:  It does, my Lady, and I think that does  
3       complete all of the evidence for today.

4       I think next week we'll be turning our attention at  
5       the start of the week to the Royal Blind School and  
6       then, later in the week, returning to St Vincent's once  
7       again.

8   LADY SMITH:  Yes.  Thank you very much.

9       And before I rise, some names this afternoon, one of  
10      them's been mentioned before, I think, Sister KUA  
11      or rather, Sister KUA, and the other  
12      Sister, PBF.  Their identities are protected by my  
13      General Restriction Order and they're not to be referred  
14      to as mentioned in our evidence outside this room.

15      So thank you all very much and that's it until  
16      10 o'clock on Tuesday morning.

17   (2.45 pm)

18               (The Inquiry adjourned until 10.00 am  
19               on Tuesday, 26 August 2025)

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1	I N D E X	
2	Brenda Mackay, BSL Interpreter (sworn).....	3
3	Jill Gallacher, BSL Interpreter (sworn).....	3
4	Steven Paterson, Deaf Intermediary Interpreter (sworn).....	3
5	Chris Bojas, Deaf Intermediary (affirmed).....	3
6	'Allan' (sworn) .....	3
7	Questions by Ms Innes .....	6
8	Anne Harkins (read) .....	61
9	'Ella' (read) .....	75
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