

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

PGV

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is PGV, although I used the surname PGV for a number of years as a child. My date of birth is 1965. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. My mother was and she died about twenty-two years ago when she was forty-eight. When I was born my mother was unmarried, but one of my aunties later told me that my dad was a guy called . My grandfather was a Catholic and a serious bigot and apparently he told to leave because he was a Protestant.
3. In 1966, just after I was born, my mother married . He was born in 1940 and I think he might be dead now as well, although I don't know for sure. They went on to have my half-brother about eighteen months later and about five years after that they had my half-sister .
4. As far back as I can remember, we were always moving from place to place. We might stay somewhere for three or four months and then we'd go somewhere else. I think my step-father was a bad debtor and I think he never got on with my mother's family, who lived in Castlemilk.

5. My step-father worked as a [REDACTED] for the Territorial Army, but he was a drinker and every weekend he used to batter my mother. After he did we'd go and stay with somebody, then he'd come and say it wouldn't happen again and we'd go back to wherever it was we were living at the time. I remember I felt like a gypsy, we were always on the move.
6. At first we stayed in Pollock before we moved to Partick and then to the Gorbals. After that we moved to Castlemilk and then back to the Gorbals again. There were lots of moves, mostly around the Gorbals area.
7. My step-father's violence was regular and was directed at both my mother and me. I was in and out of hospitals regularly and we would often end up in women's refuges. I remember always associating women with black eyes, because so many of the other women in the refuges were there after getting beaten up as well.
8. We were in one refuge for about six months, which was called Abbotsford Place in Glasgow. The building had five or six houses all crammed together and the people upstairs obviously didn't like the refuge being below them. They used to throw petrol bombs at the door and I can remember the police being there regularly.
9. If I was to summarise my childhood at that time, a word I would use would be unloved. I vividly remember when I was probably three years old that I got drunk and was found lying in a drawer. At that time we were living in what was called a 'single-end', which was just one big room and me and my brother slept in an alcove. Someone had left a bottle of sherry on the table and I picked it up and drunk it. I remember being taken to hospital and singing and people giving me money because they thought I was funny. I made six or seven pounds.
10. I was registered at St Bonaventure's primary school in the Gorbals in 1970 as [REDACTED] [REDACTED] PGV. Although I was never adopted by my step-father, [REDACTED] PGV was the name I was given. Years later, when I got my National Insurance card it was addressed to [REDACTED] PGV. I had no idea who that was because I'd always thought my name was [REDACTED] PGV.

11. I thought school was okay, but I've since got my social work records and I'm described as an 'unruly child' and 'hyperactive'. I think now I would be classed as having Attention Deficit Hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).
12. Although I don't have a recollection of social work being involved with me and I don't remember going to any children's panels, apparently I was known to social services as early as 1970.
13. I also used to go to child psychologists, but I've no idea why. I remember going to see a woman and playing with sand in a room for what seemed like an hour. She would be asking me questions and I would be answering, but all I was really interested in was playing with the sand.
14. The police were involved to a certain degree. I can always remember police being at the house, talking to my mother and taking her away to safety. I remember the police taking us to a women's refuge a couple of times and I remember a policeman trying to stop my step-father from [REDACTED] one time. I don't think he was arrested, but I can remember the police officer pulling him back.
15. I think my step-father was charged a few times, he certainly went to jail a couple of times for assaulting my mother. I think when I was about nine he was in prison for six weeks or so.
16. Eventually, when I was twelve years old, my mother and step-father separated and she moved in with another man. She took my brother and sister with her, but my step-father kept me. All he wanted was the money from the child benefit. I wonder now how he had a legal right to do so, because he didn't have custody of me and he hadn't adopted me.
17. I didn't know it at the time, but the man my mother set up home with didn't want me. He wanted the other two because they were younger and could still be manipulated,

but I was hot-headed. He used to try and talk to me, but I wasn't interested in him and he wasn't interested in me. It was that feeling of being unwanted and unloved again.

18. My step-father's dad, my grandad [REDACTED], lived very close to us and I used to spend time with him. I never had anything to do with my grandad [REDACTED], my mother's dad. All he was interested in was women.
19. I started secondary school at St John Bosco and there were a lot of truancies from there. There was no structure in my life and if I didn't get up in time for school my step-father just used to let me lie in bed.
20. Living with my step-father, all I can remember were empty wine bottles lying about everywhere. Every weekend he would get drunk and hit me, until one weekend in 1978, just before I turned thirteen years old, he gave me such a severe beating that I knew I had to get away.
21. I didn't know what to do or where to go so, being a Catholic, I went to the priest. The priest told me 'God will find a way for you, you'll be alright' and that was it. I was just a wee boy, I didn't know what he was talking about, so I went back to my step-father and got another beating.
22. The following night, while my step-father was lying sleeping, I kicked him a couple of times, ran out of the house and went to Craigie Street police station in the Gorbals. I told the police sergeant that I couldn't live there anymore because of the beatings. He could see I was covered in bruises so I was put into Haggbaws Children's Home in Glasgow for about three days. I think now that I should probably have been put into care earlier.
23. The family were known to the police and I've since found out that there had been social workers at the house while I had been staying there, although I didn't know it at the time. They must have seen the wine bottles and they must have realised it was not the sort of place that a child could thrive, but I think now that they must have given him chance after chance.

24. I was taken to Haggbaws Children's Home by some social worker, but I don't know who. I'd never heard of the place I was going before. I'd told the police quite a lot of what had been happening and the social worker told me I shouldn't be in that environment.
25. I can't remember anything about Haggbaws Children's Home. Sometimes my memory is pretty poor, other things I remember vividly. After I'd been there for a few days I was taken to Gryffe Children's Home in Bridge of Weir.

Gryffe Children's Home, Bridge of Weir

26. Gryffe Children's Home was run by Glasgow District Council. As you turned in the gate off Kilmacolm Road in Bridge of Weir there was a wee house, like a gardener's house or something, and a drive leading up through the grounds. Just outside the grounds were another two houses, one where the head of the home stayed with his family and another where another member of staff stayed.
27. As you went up the drive you came to a T-junction and if you went to the left, you came to the building itself. The building was like an old castle with massive bay windows to the front. The one on the left was one of the common rooms and the one on the right was a dormitory for children that were about eight or nine, I think. I remember there were about six beds in it, but only about two kids. Later on that dormitory became a staff room.
28. When you went in the front door there was a big reception hallway with doors leading to the common room and the dormitory at the front and stairs leading up to the other dormitories. There were also doors to the kitchen and another hallway that led to a wee room, which was always locked. The door to the kitchen was always locked as well because we weren't allowed to go in there either. Further down the hall was a staff room, which I think was the head's office, another room and a swing door that led to a set of stairs up to the adolescent unit.

29. In the adolescent unit there was one room with two beds in it, another room with four beds and another room with a single bed. There was also another hall that led to another swing door and into another dormitory, which was much bigger. There must have been about sixteen beds in this other dormitory. Further on there was another room with four beds in it and another dormitory with another bay window.
30. On the ground floor at the back was what they called a gymnasium, which was like a games hall. Off the corridor towards the gymnasium there was a laundry room and a shower room. I don't know who used to do the laundry, but our beds were changed once a week.
31. As well as the common room at the front there were other common rooms for different age groups. In each common room there was a TV and a couple of couches and a table where each group of kids ate their meals. The adolescent unit had its own wee kitchen as well as a common room and in that there was a kettle and a fridge.
32. When I first went to Gryffe I would say there were between forty and fifty beds there and a range of ages of children. I think the youngest would have been about three years old, but there were also adolescents who were aged from fifteen up. The younger ones and the adolescents were kept in different parts of the building and both groups had their own dormitories and common rooms.
33. There were some families at Gryffe, groups of four or five kids and although they were in the same home, they slept in different units depending on their age. Amongst them there were wee children and others who were sixteen. The age gaps were big. I don't remember all their names, but I do remember there was [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and the rest of their siblings and there was also the [REDACTED] family.
34. I think there would be around thirty boys and girls at Gryffe at any one time, but I don't think there was a high turnover of children, quite a lot of them stayed for years. Sometimes there would be new faces, but most kids stayed for years. Some that had been there when I arrived were still there when I left.

35. Children were allowed to mix freely. An adolescent could go into the younger ones part and younger children could go into the adolescent unit. Just because a child was a certain age didn't mean they were restricted to that part of the unit. Most kids seemed to keep to their own peer group though.
36. The person in charge of Gryffe when I got there was a guy called Hogarth. I think his first name was Adam. He was a decent guy. His office was off the corridor past the kitchen. Hogarth left after I'd been at Gryffe for about a year and a guy called Ralph Anderson took over. He was a decent guy as well and he was there for the rest of the time I was. I never saw much of either of them.
37. SNR was a guy called MWN, who had [REDACTED]. I don't know his first name, but we all used to take the mickey out of him. There was also an assistant head called Geoff Bamber.
38. Quite a lot of the staff were good and most of their positions were as houseparents in charge of the different age groups. RJG, for example, was the houseparent in charge of the adolescent unit when I was in there. She was an evil cow. Amongst the rest of houseparents was a guy called REU who was decent, Alex Campbell and PBS, who was also a decent guy. There was also a husband and wife called RKA and [REDACTED], but I can't remember their second name.
39. RKA was one of the designated minibus drivers and I didn't have much dealings with either of them, although RKA was a bit handy like Geoff Bamber and RJG. RKA always used to [REDACTED]. I don't know if he maybe had [REDACTED] Disease.
40. There were also a couple of night staff and a cook in the kitchen, but I don't remember their names. I always thought it was strange that the night staff were two old women, rather than a man and a woman.

Routine at Gryffe Children's Home

First day

41. I was taken to Gryffe in an old green and yellow minibus, that I think had Strathclyde District Council on the side. Nobody told me why I was going or where I was being taken. I'd never heard of the place before and as far as I was concerned it was like it was a thousand miles away from Glasgow. I remember there was a man driving the minibus and somebody else sitting up the front with me sitting on my own in the back. I don't know who they were.
42. I felt a bit apprehensive and unsafe because I didn't know where I was going. I didn't know if they were taking me back to my step-father's house or where we were going. It felt like I was in the bus for hours as we drove along the windy roads to Bridge of Weir.
43. It all felt a bit alien to me because I always felt that my grandad [REDACTED] loved me and I thought I'd be able to go and stay with him or with my aunties.
44. When I arrived I thought that the building was like Buckingham Palace. I don't remember what the welcome was like or getting shown around the place, but I do remember being in my bedroom and another boy being there, who I discovered was [REDACTED]. The first question he asked me was if I smoked and if I had any cigarettes. After that I was left to my own devices.

Mornings and bedtime

45. I was put in one of the rooms upstairs, above one of the bay windows when I arrived. There were four beds in it and my bed was the one next to the window. I was moved to other rooms during my time at Gryffe, including a room on my own for a while, before I was put into the adolescent unit when I was fifteen.

46. Even in the adolescent unit, we always had to be in our beds before ten o'clock at night if we had school the next day. The two women night staff would come round every hour and do checks on us as we slept and they would wake us up about seven o'clock in the morning before they went off duty.
47. After we were woken, we were left to our own devices to get washed and dressed. It was up to us if we wanted to get a wash. While we did, the houseparents would come in, open the window and fold all of our quilts back.
48. Once we were dressed, we'd go down for breakfast and then go off to school. We got out of school at five-to-four, I think, got the bus back and I think we'd be back at Gryffe for about half-four. When we got back we got our dinner straight away and then we could just do what we wanted.
49. It was just like being in your own house, except nobody showed any interest in us. Nobody would ask how our day had been or how we were, we were just left to do whatever we wanted. As far as I was concerned, the staff were called houseparents but they didn't do anything a parent would, they just sat there doing nothing or watching the telly.
50. When I was a bit older and went into the adolescent unit I was given a room with two beds in it. The guy who was in the room with me had the same birthday as me, but he was a year younger. I don't remember his second name, but his first name was ██████.

Mealtimes/Food

51. There was no dining room, we all ate in our different common rooms. The houseparents would get our meals from the kitchen on a trolley and bring it into the different common rooms where everybody would be sitting. We had to set the table with knives and forks and whatever and sit down and eat with the houseparent.

52. Breakfast was things like toast and cereal. It was basic and nothing fancy, but it was okay. School dinners were brilliant by comparison, I loved them. Everybody got the same food and there were two choices: you could take it or you could leave it. If someone didn't like what they were given and didn't eat it, the houseparent would take it away.
53. About eight o'clock in the evening there was also a thing called supper, which I'd never heard of before. At supper there would be juice and toast or a wee cake or something like that.
54. If you hadn't eaten your dinner, whichever houseparent was on duty would bring it back to you at supper. I think they must have thought that if you weren't hungry at dinner, you would be hungry at supper. You'd be given the same food again and you wouldn't get any toast. There was no other punishment for not eating your food, but if you didn't eat it when it was served back to you, you would go to bed hungry.
55. The worst one for serving it up again was ^{RJG} [REDACTED]. She was a big part of my life at Gryffe and she was a big part of me not liking certain foods even now.

Washing/bathing

56. There was no specific time for washing, you washed when you wanted to wash, nobody told you when. There was no shower in the bathroom, just a bath with a shower head attached to the taps, but you could go in there and lock the door. You could be safe in there.
57. The only showers were those that were next to the gymnasium, which were further away from the rest of the building. There was a row of three or four showers in an area off the corridor leading to the gymnasium with just a wall for privacy and no door. Nobody went down to use them if they were just going for a wash.

Clothing/uniform

58. After I'd been at Gryffe for about a week I was taken by Geoff Bamber, the assistant head, to get my school uniform from a place in Renfrew. The shop was like an army and navy store and over the years we were taken back there to get whatever clothes we might need.
59. That first time I got my uniform, which was a long-sleeved shirt, tie, brogue shoes and a blazer. Later on we would go with a member of staff who would tell the shopkeeper what we needed. It was all new, but we never got a choice. The shopkeeper would pull things off the rack and just make sure it was the right size.
60. I can't remember how often our clothes were washed. I think different kids' clothes were probably washed on different days and left on our beds for us to put away.

Leisure time

61. There were two common rooms with TVs in them and a few plastic chairs with cushions on them. There was also a pool table and an old record player in both, because there were children of different ages in there, but I don't think there were any books to read, even if we'd wanted. In the gymnasium we could play football or table tennis and there was grass outside to play football on as well.
62. After I'd been at Gryffe for about a year I started going to cadets and boxing at clubs in Johnstone. I got the bus there along with another lad who went to a different cadet group. I think the boxing was 50 pence a week and my grandad [REDACTED] used to give me the money. If he hadn't I wouldn't have been able to go, none of the other kids went.

Trips and holidays

63. We were taken away once a year or so. I remember we went to Anstruther twice and stayed in a cabin there. Another time they took us to Islay and we also went to

Dornoch. A minibus of six or seven kids and maybe four houseparents would all be taken for few nights or a long weekend. I don't remember much about those trips, but they weren't very good.

School

64. I first went to school in [REDACTED] 1979, not long after I arrived. I was sent to Linwood Primary at first and then when I became old enough I went to St Brendan's. Part of the rules at St Brendan's was that you could take your blazer off, but you had to keep your tie on and the sleeves of your shirt down.
65. We went to school on the school bus. We would all walk down to the Main Street in Bridge of Weir and get picked up with the other local kids. They wouldn't know we were from the home unless we got talking to them and told them.
66. It was quite embarrassing at lunchtime because, unlike the rest of the kids who had a ticket for lunch, we had to say to the woman serving that we were from Gryffe. She would write it down and everybody would then know. It was just something else to make us stand out.
67. School was alright, it was like a haven for me. It was a place where I could hide and although I wasn't very good academically, I was good with the physical stuff and I played football for the school team. For a while I very rarely missed a day at school because I wanted to be away from Gryffe.
68. There were times that the school bus didn't turn up and I walked the four miles there. I was determined to get to school somehow.
69. Later on, if I didn't want to go to school one day because I couldn't be bothered, I would just refuse and go and hide in the bushes. They couldn't get me because sometimes I would climb a tree and sit up in it for four or five hours. The only way they could get me down was if I decided to come down.

Healthcare

70. We went to the dentist or the doctor in Bridge of Weir if we ever needed to. If you had an appointment a member of staff would take you and if you had any problem you could go.

Religious instruction

71. The only religious instruction was on a Tuesday when there was a bible class in the wee room on the ground floor that was usually kept locked. Only about two or three people went to bible class, which was taken by a man and his daughter who came in from outside. They weren't part of the staff. They would ask you questions and if you got them right they would give you sweets.
72. As a Catholic I was sort of interested and did go, but after a while and after everything that happened to me I decided there was no God.

Adolescent Unit

73. Even though it was called the adolescent unit, there was no preparation for outside life. We weren't taught anything or given any chores to do, either in the adolescent unit or at any time. We had our own kitchen and we had to do all our own dishes and put them away, but that was it. The only thing I did was make my own tea, there was no food to make a meal with.

Birthdays and Christmas

74. I think they spent £7 on us for our birthday and at Christmas. One of the staff would buy something like a pair of socks to the value of £7 and that was it. I remember for my sixteenth birthday I got a card and a 'Twix'. Apparently two of the staff chipped in to get me the Twix.

75. At Christmas I think there was a big tree when you went in the main door, but that was the only tree. There weren't any trees in the common rooms or elsewhere and I can't recall there being decorations. I don't think anyone went home for Christmas and I think we maybe got a special meal like chicken or turkey on the day. It doesn't stick in my memory.

Visits/Inspections

76. My mother never came to visit, but my grandad [REDACTED] did. I used to go down to the train station and meet him and we'd walk back up to the home. Most of the time we would stay outside because I didn't like taking him in, but he did come in with me occasionally. We were able to spend the time on our own without any staff there.
77. Records I've since seen from the home say that I tried to distance myself from my family. I think the reason was because I didn't know my family. The records say my grandad used to come to visit on a Saturday every week, but I don't think it was that often. I can remember him coming sporadically, but not every week.
78. Although I have no recollection of social work being involved with me before I went to Gryffe, all of a sudden when I got there a guy used to come and see me every couple of weeks. His name was Steven Baird and I think he worked at Townhead in Glasgow. He got killed in a car accident when I was sixteen.
79. Steven used to come for reviews and I've since seen in my records that there is mention of Children's Panels, but I never went to any. I was never told why a review panel might have been taking place or what the result was. I never got any feedback.
80. I would see Steven every two or three months, but he would only spend about five minutes with me whenever he came, the rest of the time he was talking to the staff.
81. After Steven died somebody else took over for him but I don't know who that was. I think it was a woman and I may have met her once, but I don't recall her name. She certainly never came to see me as often as Steven had.

Personal possessions/pocket money

82. We all had a tiny cabinet beside our beds and a wardrobe with two doors, but I don't remember anybody having any personal possessions like photographs or anything. I had nothing in my bedside cabinet. We never got any pocket money from the home so I couldn't buy anything anyway. My grandad [REDACTED] would give me fifty pence when he came to see me, but that was the only money I ever got.

Running away

83. I used to run away every week with my pal [REDACTED], sometimes even more often. There were places in the building where we knew we could hide and they wouldn't find us. There were times when we hid above the staff room for four or five days and they never found us. We would take food with us and listen to them talking and only come down when we'd no food left and we were hungry.
84. Sometimes I would hide up a tree in the woods and be there for hours. When I ran further away I would go everywhere and often got as far as Glasgow before I would be brought back by the police. I often went to a so-called friend of the family's place and stayed there. She would phone the police and they would come and get me.
85. There was never any punishment or consequence for running away. They never seemed to care. I was doing it for attention, but I never got it. I also set the fire alarms off to get attention. Sometimes I set the fire alarms off at four o'clock in the morning, but I did that because I wanted the day off school. I knew that we wouldn't have to go after getting up at that time.
86. Nobody ever asked me why I was running away. If the police had come to try and get me down from the tree, they would just leave and tell the staff I would come down when I was ready. They never came back to ask why I had been up there.

Discipline

87. Nobody ever told me anything about what was allowed and what wasn't or what discipline code there might have been. The staff referred to us by our names or by nicknames and we called the staff by their names. Most of the kids had nicknames, I used to be known as PGV [REDACTED] and I would answer to that. Some of the staff, I don't remember who, would call me "Cunt", but I wouldn't answer to that.

Bed Wetting

88. One of the lads I shared a room with at first was a constant bed wetter. He might have been called [REDACTED] and was about eleven years old. He had a rubber sheet on his bed and in the morning when whichever houseparent that was on duty pulled back his quilt and saw it, they would just leave it.
89. They wouldn't turn the mattress or change the sheets and the boy would have to sleep in the same bed the following night. It could have been any of the houseparents, it just depended on their shift pattern, but it was usually Geoff Bamber, RJG [REDACTED] or one of the married couple, RKA or [REDACTED].
90. I can't remember what the houseparents' reactions were, but the boy would be stinking of urine through his clothes because he wouldn't get washed and the houseparents would just leave him. It wasn't right.
91. [REDACTED] was often punished for wetting the bed, which could be a daily occurrence over the two or three months I shared a room with him. I regularly saw Geoff Bamber and RJG [REDACTED] give him what I would call a 'Chinese burn' on the bare skin of his arm and if I never saw it, he would tell me.
92. He would be put on the floor and they used to sit on top of him and twist the skin on his arm between their hands. If he refused to go on the floor, I saw Geoff Bamber slap him on the back of the head and make him go down. It would leave marks, but we wore long-sleeved shirts to school and that hid them.

Abuse at Gryffe Children's Home

93. Geoff Bamber and [R]G [REDACTED] gave me Chinese burns as well. In the beginning it was maybe a weekly occurrence. If I refused to go down onto the floor Bamber would slap me on the back of the head to make me. Once I was on the floor, he would sit on my back or on my chest and either he or [R]G [REDACTED] would give me a Chinese burn.
94. I think with me it was because he said I was insubordinate and disrespectful to the adults. It could have been anything that might have caused him to think it. I might have told him to "fuck off", or something like that. To me, a child might tell their parents that and run away or whatever and that's what I was doing. I was just being a child. It was my automatic reaction to somebody trying to enforce their will on me.
95. Two or three times during the night, people used to come in the dormitory and try and disorientate us. They would switch the lights off and while we couldn't see, somebody would sit on you and pin you down, while the other gave you a Chinese burn or sometimes they'd head-butt you. Sometimes a couple of them would pee on you.
96. I thought it must have been [R]G [REDACTED] and Geoff Bamber and I couldn't understand how it could be happening because it should only have been the night staff that were on duty. Then I found out it was some of the older boys who were sixteen or seventeen that were doing it. I don't know their names.
97. I think they were doing it to us because it had been happening to them and because they thought it was funny. I think they would pee on you to get you into trouble in the morning when the staff came round to check if anyone had wet their bed. I heard other boys talk of being bullied as well, but I never saw what might have been happening.
98. In the first three months of me being at Gryffe I was accused of fire raising. I was downstairs and when I went up to the dorm I found the curtains were on fire. I went back down and told one of the houseparents who went up, set the fire alarm off and the fire was put out. Nobody was hurt and there wasn't much damage.

99. Within about half-an-hour, I was taken into the staff room downstairs where there were two men with one or two of the staff members, maybe Hogarth the head, I'm not sure. The two men were in suits and they told me they were police officers. They were trying to force me to say that I did it and one of the officers slapped me a couple of times across the face, although it wasn't a full, hard slap.
100. I was in there for three or four hours, but I didn't do it so I wasn't going to admit to it. In the end I was told to go away and I never heard any more about it. I'd seen other people who had been in Gryffe and had done things get put to List D schools and I'd thought that's what would happen to me, but they never even came back to me.
101. After I had been at Gryffe for about a couple of months I started to hear other boys say things about Geoff Bamber doing different things. They would say that Bamber used to take two or three boys down to the shower room next to the gymnasium and stand and watch them as they showered and as they did, Bamber would masturbate himself.
102. I used to question this, because I thought that surely he would do that to somebody on their own, if he was going to, not with a group of boys. It was only after I'd been there for about six months that I became aware that it was true and it was probably happening two or three times a week.
103. I used to go down to the gymnasium with other boys to play table tennis and football. One time Bamber found us playing table tennis and told us to go for a shower because we were all sweaty. We didn't even have towels with us, but he told us we didn't need one.
104. Among the other boys that were there were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], but I can't remember who the others were. I think the others were a wee bit older, maybe fourteen going on fifteen. We all did what we were told, got our clothes off and went under the showers. Bamber followed us in and because of the layout of the shower

area there was no privacy from each other or from him. We were in full view of him and he was in full view of us.

105. As we washed, Bamber leant against the wall, unzipped his trousers, took his penis out and started openly masturbating himself in front of us. He never touched us, he just touched himself. I don't remember him asking any boy to touch him either.
106. He told us to make sure we soaped each other properly and to touch each other's penises and make sure they were properly clean. He told us to make sure we got soap up each other's bums and I think he asked a boy to give the other boy's penis a kiss and to suck another boy's penis as well. I didn't know what was happening, I'd never experienced this sort of thing before. I'm not sure, but I think the boy did kiss the other boy's penis.
107. This happened regularly with me there, it was maybe a weekly occurrence. There might be six boys in the gymnasium playing table tennis or football and Bamber would appear. He was the only member of staff that came down to the gymnasium, none of the others did.
108. It was always the same when Bamber appeared, he would tell us all to go and get a shower. Sometimes he would take his trousers down, sometimes he would just unzip himself. You could hear anyone coming because of the floor outside and the fire doors, so if he did hear someone coming he could get his zip up.
109. Nine times out of ten Bamber would ejaculate and when he was finished he would tell us to get ourselves tidied up and go back to our rooms. We didn't have towels with us so we would just have to dry ourselves as best we could with a tee shirt or something like that.
110. On one occasion, when I was about thirteen-and-a-half, [REDACTED], the boy who used to wet his bed, ran away. He got as far as Dumfries and Galloway and I had to go with Bamber to pick [REDACTED] up. I just did what I was told, I was only a wee boy. I think he knew [REDACTED] wouldn't have gone with him if I wasn't there.

111. Bamber was driving a wee van that had a long bench seat behind the front seats. We went to pick ██████ up and he told both of us to sit in the back on the bench seat and cuddle into each other. While we were lying in the back I could see through to the front and saw Bamber touching himself while he was driving.
112. ██████ and I were both fully clothed and he told us to cuddle in and rub up against each other. He could see me behind him in his mirror and told me to pull ██████ close to him. I could see quite clearly that Bamber had one hand on the steering wheel and the other was rubbing his penis through his trousers. I don't know if he ejaculated or not.
113. Bamber used to torture us mentally as well. He would say that if we told anybody, nobody would believe us because he was a fine upstanding member of the community and we were just daft wee boys. He told us nobody cared about us and that is why we were in Gryffe. He said we could die tomorrow and nobody would bother. I had a family, but I believed him. I believed that they didn't care.
114. Bamber had been a scout master before Gryffe and he also used to take a few boys and a tent into the woods at the back of Gryffe. There was a very dense wooded area about 500 yards away and he would maybe take six or eight boys there at a time. Once the tent was up, everyone went in and he would tell all of them to start masturbating.
115. I went once with a few other boys when I was nearly fourteen. I'm not sure who the other boys were, but there would have been one of the ██████ boys, ██████ and ██████. I think the youngest boy would have been about eleven and the oldest about sixteen or seventeen. When we went in the tent Bamber came in as well and sat near the opening so nobody could get out. He told all of us to take our trousers and pants off and said "We're going to play a game of bingo. The first one to come wins the game".

116. All the boys did what they were told and took their trousers and pants down and started masturbating. As we did, Bamber sat and played with himself as well. He took his penis out of his pants and masturbated until he ejaculated. When everybody had finished he told us all to get dressed, packed up the tent and we all went back to the home.
117. He also used to take different boys away from time to time. I don't know where they went and he never took me. The boys would never say what had happened, but I think we all knew. I think pride would play a part and those boys felt like they couldn't speak about it.
118. All my sexual abuse stopped when I turned fourteen because by that time I was really rebelling. I'd joined the cadets and the boxing club and I could fight. I was left alone because I could defend myself. I stopped going down to the gymnasium and instead played football on the grass outside at the front. I was never in the showers with Bamber or sexually abused by him again.
119. I used to beat myself up because I wanted to help the other boys. I used to try and fight him and punch him and sometimes it worked. I took the beatings for the other boys, the boys who couldn't take it. If I knew that a boy was going to get a beating I would stand in front of him and tell Bamber to leave him.
120. Sometimes I would be put on the floor and sat on by Bamber or the other member of staff called RKA. While I was pinned down by one the other would kick and punch me. I would take it just to stop the other boy getting a beating. Bamber used to like me getting a beating. He knew he couldn't get to me sexually and he wanted to see me suffer.
121. These beatings from Bamber and RKA probably went on for a year-and-a-half and were pretty regular. After that time I moved up to the adolescent unit where my houseparent was RJG. I think I saw RJG every single day and I think she gave me Chinese burns every single day. I used to let her because a girl that was also in the adolescent unit, [REDACTED], couldn't take it. I felt obliged to take it for her.

122. It was the same routine with **RJG**, she clearly thought she had to control us by giving us those Chinese burns on the arms. She would tell us that she had been in the community for years and nobody would believe us if we spoke about it.

Reporting of abuse at Gryffe Children's Home

123. When I was at school I always used to roll the sleeves of my shirt up to show the marks from the Chinese burns, but none of the teachers ever asked where the marks came from.
124. The only teacher who did ask was a guy called Arthur Bell, who was the P.E. teacher and saw the marks on my arms a few times. Whenever he asked I just told him I'd fallen or that someone had grabbed me. To me it was less grief, because I didn't want anyone to think I was a 'grass'.
125. When I was taken back to Gryffe by the police after I had run away I would say I wasn't getting cared for and I think told them on three occasions that I was being abused. I never specifically mentioned the sexual abuse. To me that was enough, but they never asked for more detail, they never even wrote anything down and still I was taken back.
126. As an adult now, I wonder why that was happening when I was telling the police the reason. Surely it should have occurred to them that there must have been something wrong with Gryffe if I kept running away. It was a cry for help and nobody was listening.
127. I approached other members of staff at Gryffe and tried to tell them about Bamber, but they just used to tell me not to be stupid and to go away. I can't remember who they were, some of the houseparents. I always used to tell a group of them at the same time, but even then nobody believed me. They made it clear they thought I was telling lies. I'm not sure whether those other staff were aware what Bamber was doing, but they certainly weren't prepared to listen to me.

128. I also told Steven Baird my social worker a couple of times what was going on. I don't know if he was in on it though, because nothing ever happened. I told him about Bamber masturbating himself and I've since seen in my records that there is mention of allegations being made, but there was nothing more specific and Bamber's behaviour continued.
129. I was never told that my allegations were being looked into, but the records I've since obtained say that I came forward on a number of occasions. They say that the home looked into the allegations, but nothing was found. I don't know what that means. I wonder now how it can be that it's recorded that I came forward consistently, but nothing was done. It doesn't make sense.
130. Although I saw my grandad [REDACTED] every week, all he was interested in was football and he never talked about anything else. He thought his job was to come and see me and give me some pocket money and when I tried to tell him things I don't think he listened. I tried to tell him twice, but I gave up because he wouldn't listen.

Leaving Gryffe Children's Home

131. Nobody told me that I was coming up to leaving Gryffe, but I was expecting it. I thought that once you were eighteen that was it and you were put out. I'd been wanting to leave, but I was uncertain where I was going or what I would do.
132. One night, about half-past eleven, I was talking to two of the girls in the adolescent unit in their bedroom when one of the staff came in. I don't remember who it was, but they told me I wasn't supposed to be there and within two days I had left Gryffe. I don't know if there was a connection.
133. There was no preparation for me leaving, I can't remember anyone sitting me down and talking to me about it. Nobody told me to pack a bag, all I knew was I was going somewhere in Glasgow. I never even saw anyone from the social work.

134. I left Gryffe in [REDACTED] when I was still seventeen and I felt even more lost. I didn't have an identity. I felt as if I'd done something wrong again and was being discarded like a piece of rubbish. Despite all the abuse I'd suffered, Gryffe was where the only family I had was and that was being taken away.

135. I thought I was going to my grandad [REDACTED]'s, but I was driven by one of the staff from Gryffe to another home called Ardoch in Pollockshields. I was only there for about a month and the records I've since obtained say that it was supposedly for some sort of transitional period.

136. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

137. Eventually, after four weeks, I just said I was going. I got my stuff and left and nobody stopped me. My grandad [REDACTED] was still alive so I went to his. I'm sure he would have told the social work I was there with him and they maybe got in touch with him, but they certainly never spoke to me.

138. I started looking for a job and tried to join the police at first, but I failed the medical because I was too small so my grandad suggested I try the army. I didn't fancy that, however the Marines looked more appealing so I applied and got in. I only stayed with my grandad for about five weeks before I went down south to start my training.

Life after being in care

139. Legally I had to start using [REDACTED]^{PGV} when I started applying for jobs. I had bit of a problem having to explain where the [REDACTED]^{PGV} came from.

140. I signed up for twenty-five years in the Marines and went to train in Plymouth. I remember a guy who was training us saying that you must be psychotic to want to join the Marines and I thought he was probably right.

141. After Plymouth I was posted to Bickleigh in Devon, which was good. After Bickleigh I was posted to various places over the years, including Kuwait and I saw action in Belfast, Bosnia, Afghanistan and Iraq. I've seen a lot of dead bodies, which was horrible. The smell stays with you.
142. The guys I worked beside in the Marines were like a family to me. I'd never had a family looking after me, but in the Marines I had and while I was serving with them I met a woman, [REDACTED], and started a relationship with her. We split up eventually, however in our time together we had two daughters, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I also have a son [REDACTED] who is twenty-nine now.
143. I was in the Marines for nineteen years, but got discharged because of psychological problems and because I hit an officer. I was told it was down to battle fatigue, but I don't know why I did it.
144. I didn't know what to do when I came out because all I knew was being surrounded by a group of people. There had always been people there to back me up and then all of a sudden there was no safety net for me.
145. I was still living in England at that time, but when the relationship with my daughters' mother broke down I went back up to Scotland. I got off the train at Waverley Station in Edinburgh, spoke to a policeman and told him I had nowhere to go. He sent me to [REDACTED], which was housing for veterans and I got a bed there.
146. I was there for about three weeks before I got a flat in Edinburgh through Veterans First charity organisation. I knew I had to retrain so I went on an eight week course in working with children. The course was all university graduates wanting to specialise in the field, but I was doing it because I felt that I could help after my own experiences as a child.

147. By that time I was about thirty-eight and I got a job with the YMCA working with children. After a while I got another job, which was also through the YMCA, working with children with special needs and then I got a mentoring job.
148. I also managed to get a job as a care assistant in a children's home, mainly doing nightshifts. I think I got on well with most of the kids, although some of them did abuse it. I had a lot of empathy with the children, I had been that child when I was young. I'm not sure how long I did that for, maybe four years or so.
149. In the mentoring job I think the youngest child I worked with was about nine and the eldest was sixteen. I would be paired up with a child once I'd met them and once we both agreed that we could work together. The job was alright, but I don't think we had enough time with the children because we only had a slot of about two hours a week with each child. I don't think that's enough time to have a proper influence if that child is being taken out of a home where, perhaps, their parents are taking drugs or whatever.
150. I only stopped the mentoring job about four years ago and started working with homeless people as a support worker at [REDACTED] in Edinburgh. Now I'm just doing one day a week at that, because I'm not allowed to work any longer because of my Personal Independence Payment (PIP).
151. I met my partner [REDACTED] while I was still working in the children's home. I've now been with her longer than I've been with anybody else. Normally I'm with someone for three years at most and then I'm off. [REDACTED] and I have been together six years now. I've probably told [REDACTED] more than I've ever told anybody.
152. My daughters [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are in the Lake District now and I'm a grandad to [REDACTED], who's four.

Impact

153. I think my relationship with my son is quite good, but I have no relationship with my daughters, which I believe is a result of my time in care. I only hear from them when they're wanting stuff, no more than that. I think my relationship with my oldest daughter, [REDACTED], is probably the most insecure. I was coming and going all the time as they were growing up and there was a period of about ten or twelve years when we weren't in contact at all.
154. I am one of life's nurturers and I wrapped my daughters in cotton wool, but that was because I love them, not because I wanted to hurt them. I am the type of parent that will text their children all the time to find out how they are and what they're doing. I need to know they're alright and I find it difficult to step back and give them space.
155. After years of not seeing my sister [REDACTED] she got back in touch with me about six or seven years ago because somebody had told her I was dead. She told me that she thought I must hate her. I told her it wasn't the case that I hated her, it was just that I didn't know her. I shared a mother with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], but that was all, we have nothing else in common. I've not spoken to [REDACTED] since our mother's funeral twenty-three years ago. I think our relationship would have been different if we had all been brought up in the same house.
156. I've not cried in forty-odd years because crying is a sign of weakness. I learned not to let people see that I'm weak and I learned to stand up for myself. Even to this day I still feel as if I am the wee boy that I was in care. I still feel vulnerable at times and I can't let people get too close. I don't want to get hurt again, because if I get hurt it brings it all back.
157. I react badly if I think someone is criticising me. My partner [REDACTED] might say something and my reaction will be to think that she hates me. I think I'm a deadbeat or a loser, even though she'll tell me that's not what she's saying.

158. I've never been married. I think people who get married are people who don't think they can get any better and just settle for the first person they meet. I put up a wall because I don't want people to get close to me. If they get close to me they could hurt me.
159. I am unable to trust people, whether that's with money or whatever. If I need to do something I need to be the one making the decisions and I need to be the one in control. I have problems eating with other people. I'll eat when I want to eat, I don't want somebody else telling me when to eat. It's the same with washing. I'll wash when I want to wash, not when somebody else thinks I should be.
160. It's because of this need to control and because I don't want to ask anybody that I sometimes get stressed out.
161. I'm scared to sleep. I feel as if bad people are going to come in and hurt me and if I fall asleep I'm letting my guard down. I have a light on all night and can only sleep during the day. That calmed down a bit when I was around twenty-five and in the Marines because there were guys around me. Even though I might have been posted somewhere where there were bombs going off in the distance, I had security and I could sleep. When I left my inability to sleep came back, but not to the degree it is just now. It's horrendous at the moment.
162. I think about my time in care every day. There are quite a lot of things that can trigger memories. It could be something on the telly, something that I've read, or something someone says. While I was in the Marines I'd been bottling things up for many years and it came to a head when I punched an officer. I was medically discharged after I was told I wasn't in the right place to continue.
163. I keep wondering if the abuse was my fault. Whether there was something I did wrong to deserve it. I think I must have been a horrible kid for my own mother not to want me and then to leave me with a guy who used to batter me every day. I was just a wee boy doing what wee boys do and I was sent away. I didn't know where I was at

Gryffe. I might as well have been hundreds of miles away from the people I knew, people that were supposed to have loved me.

164. I went back to Bridge of Weir with [REDACTED] once. We stopped outside and parked across the road from the gates, but we never went any further. I wanted to get out with a sledgehammer and knock the gates down. I know that the people responsible for what happened aren't there physically anymore, but I wanted to smash the gates and kill the memory.
165. I think it was about three years ago that I first heard that Geoff Bamber had died. My first reaction was that I didn't believe it, but I hope that he is dead. If I could dig him up and make sure he was dead I would do it.
166. I've ended up with a criminal record because there's no stopping me if I lose my temper. A guy nearly reversed his car into mine so I got out and shouted at him. A red mist came down and I lost it. I called the guy a "bender", but I didn't know that he was gay and he took me to court, saying I was homophobic. It was just a word I used, but the result is that my job opportunities are now limited.
167. The only thing I've ever craved was a family. I have it now, but I feel as if I've only found what I've always craved in the later stages of my life. If I'd had that earlier, perhaps all my demons would have gone and maybe I could have settled. I don't want perfection, I just want to be able to go into my own space and feel safe.
168. I know that I always have an underlying agitation. I'm pleased if other people are happy, I want other people to be happy, but I don't think I deserve to be.

Treatment/support

169. I've been seeing doctors and psychiatrists since I was a very young age. I think I was five years old when I was first referred to a child psychologist and when I started primary school I started going every week to see one. It says in my records that I went

to see a psychologist on a weekly basis while I was at Gryffe as well, but I don't remember. I do recall being omitted from some classes and being in a room with just one adult.

170. Around 2004 I went to the doctor because I couldn't see my children. When I was discharged from the Marines I could see them every day, but when I no longer could I found it hard. My explanation to my ex-partner [REDACTED] and my children was that if you love someone so much and you can't get to see them every day, a wee bit of you gets killed off each day. That's how I was feeling and that's why I distanced myself from them. I didn't want the hurt of not seeing them every day.
171. My doctor put me on medication for depression and referred me a psychologist. I had a few sessions with a consultant clinical psychologist at the Edinburgh Access Practice in Spittal Street, Dr Adam Burley. I also had a few sessions with a community psychiatric nurse (CPN), but I had to stop seeing him. I wanted to kill him because I didn't like him. I didn't like his accent. I kept up contact with Dr Burley and if I ever had any issues I could go and see him.
172. I was diagnosed with Complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (C-PTSD) in 2016, I think. I might have been diagnosed before because I'd had the symptoms for some time, but that was when my doctor mentioned the diagnosis. I'd been diagnosed by a psychiatrist I'd been seeing through my GP called Dr Deacon at Inchkeith House.
173. My GP recognised that I wasn't able to continue with everyday work patterns and advised me to apply for a PIP, which replaced the Disability Living Allowance I had been receiving, even though I didn't want to. I should probably have applied earlier than I did because it had been getting too much for me, but I didn't want to give in.
174. I have a letter dated 11 March 2019 from Dr Burley, which he wrote for my PIP. In his letter he recognised that I suffer severe and debilitating anxiety and depression, each of which is of a long-standing nature. He says that my mental health difficulties can be attributed to early development characterised by extreme adversity in the form of neglect and abuse. I can provide a copy of his letter to the Inquiry if required.

175. I've also been seeing a psychologist who is attached to the Rivers Centre in Edinburgh. I'm due to attend an eight week course of group counselling through her next year. The course is not about me as an individual, but it is about how I cope with my feelings, my past and my situation, to help me change my perspective. My psychologist told me that I'm a nurturer and I will have to step back from wanting to comfort others there.

Reporting of Abuse

176. I contacted the police in 2006 and made a statement about what had happened to me at Gryffe. I'd read a story about Geoff Bamber in the Scottish Sunday Mail after he had been convicted of raping a six year old boy, served time and was about to be released. I think he was only out for about a day before he was arrested again.
177. I spoke to two detectives, one called Moira Fife and the other called John Deans, who were both from Renfrew. I told them that Geoff Bamber was the man I had come forward about in 1982 when I was being taken back to Gryffe for running away, but that the police then didn't believe me.
178. As I spoke, Moira Fife made notes and John Deans sat with his back to me, asking me questions. All of a sudden John Deans turned round and held a photo up of Geoff Bamber and asked me who it was. I told him and he told me that Bamber was in police custody at that time. Eventually I stopped the interview because of the way the two detectives behaved. They accused me of just reporting it so that I could get compensation and I was so annoyed I didn't get as far as telling them everything Bamber did.
179. I went back to Moira Fife in 2007 and she said that there was one other person who had corroborated my story. I thought that would have been enough, but she said that their enquiries were ongoing and went away. I never heard from her again.

180. About three years ago I was going to take private action against Bamber and spoke to a solicitor, but was told that Bamber had died in custody. He had been due to appear at court, but he died before doing so. My solicitor told me he had spoken to Moira Fife, but he was finding it hard to pin her down and get any information from her.
181. Eventually I stopped the civil action because I realised money wasn't the answer. If I had received compensation it would be as if it was Bamber's money and I don't want anything to do with him.

Records

182. Around six months ago I applied for my social work records from Glasgow District Council after I was advised to do so by Clare Soper from the Redress scheme. I spoke to a guy called Kevin Howe who works at Commonwealth House in Glasgow and after a couple of months I received them.
183. The records are heavily redacted and consist of about twenty pages. When I picked them up, Kevin Howe said there were actually over a thousand pages, although some of those records related to my family.
184. Some of the records were useful for putting a timeframe to things, but I was very angry when I first read them. There is a comment about my step-father having custody of me and I couldn't understand how that could have been as he wasn't my dad. They also say that I favoured my step-dad and that he bribed me to stay with him.
185. I couldn't understand why they were saying that. He beat me regularly and I hated the guy. He used to address me as "the bastard PGV" in front of my mother and yet some social worker wrote that I favoured him.
186. There is also a comment about my mother showing no interest in me and there's a report to the social work in Glasgow from RJG at Gryffe, talking about my progress.

187. I can provide a copy of the records I received should the Inquiry wish them.

Lessons to be Learned

188. I know that there have been massive changes in the care of looked after children, but I know that bad people still slip through the net. The disclosure checks that are now required are really good and some of the bad people will be weeded out, but you can never know for sure that someone won't slip through.

189. I know there's only so much that can be done, but rigorous vetting is needed. It doesn't matter whether abuse is mental, physical or sexual, it's still abuse and it shouldn't be allowed to happen.

190. There were good people on the staff at Gryffe, but there were bad people too and it's the bad people that you always remember.

191. I don't think there were the same kind of checks then as there are now. It came out after Bamber's death that he had been moved from Quarriers to Gryffe because he had been abusing boys at Quarriers. At that time it seemed that staff could move freely from job to job.

192. If a child is repeatedly doing something like running away, there must be more than just one person reviewing that child's care. If the good members of staff have a suspicion a child is not being treated right there should be a mechanism for them to report it.

193. Training in life skills is necessary and I know that now kids in homes are put into furnished flats when it's coming up time for them to leave. When I left Gryffe there was nothing like that, you were just thrown out.

Other information

- 194. I actually got an apology from the guy who had been the head of Gryffe when I left, Ralph Anderson. I met him by chance about six months after I left and he told me he was sorry that I had been put out as I was. He recognised I hadn't been taught any life skills and had just been forgotten about.

- 195. What I can't get over is people not believing me when I tried to report what was happening. I tried repeatedly, but no one would listen.

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

PGV

Signed

Dated 27th JANUARY 2020