

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

FKW

Support person present: No

1. My name is FKW. My date of birth is [REDACTED], 1957. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born FKW in Torphins War Memorial Hospital in Aboyne. When I went into foster care I used my foster parent's surname, which was FKW but I was known as FKW otherwise. My natural family were travelling people. There was my mother [REDACTED] and my father [REDACTED]. I was the oldest, I have a sister [REDACTED] who is ten months younger than me and [REDACTED] who will be sixty on his birthday in [REDACTED]. His name is [REDACTED] but he was always known as [REDACTED]. My grandmother didn't like the name [REDACTED] so she called him [REDACTED] and it stuck.
3. We lived in a tent. It's hard to explain, it was quite big and it had a fire in the middle of it. I don't know how much cooking my mother did because she drank a lot and so did my father. I can't remember much about my time there, I was very young. All I remember is that I had a doll with red hair that I called Audrey. When the authorities came one night and took [REDACTED] and I away, I had a vest on but I couldn't find Audrey. That's all I remember. They took [REDACTED] and I but [REDACTED] stayed there. I was about four. I can remember a man in a uniform that I assumed was a policeman, but looking back it may have been someone from the RSPCC, and Ms Urquhart, who became my social worker. It was during the night that they came and it was summer time. They took us to Arnha Children's Home in Ellon. It's about fifteen miles away from Aboyne, maybe more. Nobody told us what was going on. The man in uniform

was very nice to me. He asked what I was looking for and I told him my doll, but we never found it.

4. I remember all the places I was in. I asked for copies of my records when my daughter was born, she's forty-five now. The social work said they were destroyed in a fire.

Arnha Children's Home, Ellon, Aberdeenshire

5. I remember when I went into the children's home it was sunny. I had a dress on. I think I've blocked a lot of it out. My sister had a speech impediment and no-one knew what she was saying except me. I would have been 2 or 3 years old.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

- 6.

7. Ms Urquhart, the social worker was there briefly. She didn't explain to us what was happening, we were just taken there and that was it. I never saw my mother and father again. I know my father went to Coblehaugh Children's Home a lot asking if any girls had been brought in, but he died when he was quite young so I didn't see him. I assume they didn't tell my parents where they took us.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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8. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

9. I can remember a couple, who turned out to be FNZ-SPO, came to the home and the matron asking them if they would take and me. Mrs FNZ said she only wanted one, which was, but the matron said we were sisters and would have to go together, they had to take the two of us. The couple said they would think about it and came back a week later. They were still adamant they only wanted one girl because they had their own natural daughter, whose name was. Mrs FNZ only wanted but the matron insisted she would have to take me as well. I heard all of this, I remember it. I can't remember the matron's name, she wore a uniform too. You only saw her if you got into trouble, she kept herself to herself. She was in her office normally. I'm not sure if other kids were fostered, I think they were.

Foster care – FNZ-SPO, near Ellon

10. FNZ-SPO first names were FNZ and. They are both deceased now. They had a daughter and lived in near Ellon. It was a small place, just a street. They weren't old, in their late thirties, early forties maybe. I liked Mr he worked for British Telecom, Mrs FNZ was a housewife.

11. It wasn't long after their visit that we went to stay with them. A matter of days. Ms Urquhart told us we were going to live with them and to behave ourselves. Looking back now Ms Urquhart was quite derogatory. She had no real interest in us. She had no empathy towards travelling people. It was like they had to be eliminated. She believed the children wouldn't amount to anything if they came from travelling people. She continually told me this. She was my social worker until I was fifteen. She was with Aberdeen social work department. She seemed old to me, she would be late forties, early fifties. I think she told me she had worked for the. I think Arnha wasn't a home for permanent care.

Routine at Foster care – FNZ-SPO, near Ellon

First Day

12. I remember the day we went to FNZ-SPO. It was somebody's birthday, I don't know if it was mine. There was a nice party. Mr [REDACTED] was nice and welcomed us to his home. Mrs FNZ was quieter. Mr [REDACTED] was very quiet too, but he was a nice man. I realised from the very beginning that what she said was what was done. She was the boss.

Mornings and bedtime/bedwetting

13. They lived in a council house. It had three bedrooms. It was like a semi-detached, but it wasn't. The house was very nice, but you couldn't play because she had to have everything in its proper place. I remember when I went there I wet the bed and she got very angry with me. I hadn't done this before. I don't know why it started there. A doctor came to see me, I remember his name, it was Dr Hopkins and he gave me a lollipop, but I was scared of him. I was generally scared of men, but not Mr [REDACTED] because he was quiet. Any people who shouted at me made me nervous and my stomach would start to go.
14. I remember I wet myself on her couch because she shouted at me. She went mad because it was a velvet couch. She said wetting yourself was dirty. She sent me to bed. It was five o'clock in the day. I remember because all the children were out playing.
15. Mr [REDACTED]'s mother stayed with them and I was put into her bedroom to stay, the bottom room. [REDACTED] shared a room with [REDACTED] upstairs. The grandmother was kind to me. Mrs FNZ was horrible to her. She was blind and I remember Mrs FNZ saying to her, "Have you done your dusting?" and the grandmother told her she had and she would ask her, "Where's the duster then?" She shouted at her too. I didn't mind sleeping in the grandmother's room. I had to go to bed at 6:00 pm, we were put to bed really early.

16. On the outside, to others, they were good people. They went to church and kept a clean home. They treated [REDACTED] differently to how they treated me. They didn't like me speaking for her, they got angry. I wasn't an affectionate child and they weren't affectionate people. I can't ever remember getting a hug from Mrs FNZ ever. [REDACTED] was sneaky, she still had the speech impediment, but she was growing out of it.

School

17. On my first day at school I remember I got a buttry with jam on it for my snack at break. I started school first then [REDACTED] came and we sat together in the class. It was a small school. There was only one teacher, Mrs [REDACTED]. I remember I hadn't been there long when I wet myself at school and the teacher took me into a room and shouted at me. She was very angry. She was fine with me other than that. I wasn't well a lot of the time, but I went to school regularly.
18. I wasn't at FNZ-SPO long when I started school, maybe a week or two. It was across the road from the house. One day I was sitting on the back door step outside because I had wet myself before going to school. Mrs FNZ was really angry with me and made me go to school with no pants on. I remember that clearly.
19. I didn't like school. I found it difficult working with numbers. To this day I still can't count. My reading was good. I had a great interest in books. I used to spend a lot of time at FNZ-SPO in my room reading books. I remember 'Toys in Toyland', and all the Enid Blyton books. I read all of them.

Mealtimes / Food

20. It was strange, we were fed well but sometimes I would get different meals from the rest of them. I was a good eater, I would eat anything. The only thing I couldn't eat was cheese on its own. One time she gave us a salad and it had cheese on it and I couldn't eat it, I felt sick. I got it for breakfast the next day. If you didn't eat something

- you got it the next day. I think Mr [REDACTED] wasn't aware of a lot of things she done. He was out working all the time and she seemed to change when he came home.
21. Mrs FNZ would go shopping on a Saturday and take [REDACTED] and they would go for afternoon tea. She never took me, so Mr [REDACTED] took me to football matches. He was good to me, he would try to hide me out the way. I think he knew she was treating me differently. He took me to a football game one night. I got a pie and a Bovril. He was a different man at football matches, I'd never heard him raise his voice in the house. I just remember the holidays and going places with Mr [REDACTED]. I don't even like football.
22. [REDACTED] was leaving primary when we started. I think she was five years older. I got on ok with [REDACTED]. I had very little contact with her, she was very quiet, but she was a nice girl. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] got the same food as FNZ-SPO too. One time they were getting some kind of meat and I got stovies and I asked why and Mrs FNZ said I wouldn't have eaten it.

Birthdays and Christmas

23. FNZ-SPO had a dimple bottle, which was like a whisky bottle. It was empty and Mrs FNZ kept sixpences in it. She saved a lot of sixpences. I never touched that bottle but [REDACTED] did because she liked sweets. She took some sixpences out to buy sweets at the little shop down from the school. I remember it was coming up for Christmas. I had to polish my dad's shoes and our school shoes every night and while I was doing it Mrs FNZ came over and blamed me for taking the sixpences. I told her I hadn't done it and she said, "If you didn't, who did?" I wouldn't tell her it was [REDACTED] so she said, "No Christmas for you, just clean the shoes and get to bed". I got nothing for Christmas that year. She said she was getting the police and I was frightened I would be taken away because I thought it was the police who took me from my mum. [REDACTED] got a big doll that Christmas but I didn't get anything. The FNZ-SPO went out for Christmas dinner all the time, we never had it in the house. They took us out with them.

24. I just remember the one birthday party on the day we arrived. I don't remember whose birthday it was and I can't remember any other birthday celebrations.

Leisure time

25. I read lots and lots of books and in the summer I would play outside all day. I didn't play with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I played with people from the school, from the same street. I got pocket money. I remember getting sixpence. We didn't get sweets. I didn't mind that, [REDACTED] liked sweets, but I wasn't bothered. Gran gave us our pocket money on a Saturday. We could get Edinburgh rock or peanuts but we had to share them with the family.

Trips / Holidays

26. We used to go on holidays to farms. It was more relaxed. I used to go for the milk. The farmer and his wife were nice to me. We all went on holiday except Granny, she was too old. I remember one time we went to Dumfries. On another occasion Mr [REDACTED] took me to Edinburgh Zoo.

Chores

27. I had to polish the shoes every night and wash pots, if there were any after tea. It was Mrs [REDACTED] who told me to do the shoes. [REDACTED] did have to do the dishes sometimes, we took turns. I had to help gran do the dusting sometimes, if I was off school or on holidays.

Religious Instruction

28. [REDACTED] weren't religious but we went to church now and again. I liked the church, there were snowdrops there. I liked them. The minister was an old man. The church was just up the road from the house.

Healthcare

29. I saw a Dr Hopkins when I wet the bed. He was the local doctor. I tried to stop wetting the bed and I'd hold it in and hold it in until my stomach was sore. I saw the doctor about that. I can't recall going to the dentist.

Running away

30. Mrs **FNZ** got an allowance for keeping us. I know this because one day I went through her stuff looking for my birth certificate because I was running away. I ran away and slept in a field for a night. Mr found me the next day.

Abuse at Foster care – **FNZ-SPO, , near Ellon**

31. There were no physical punishments at **FNZ-SPO** just mental abuse, putting me down and saying things about my mum. I remember a gypsy woman came to our door one day, selling something, and Mrs **FNZ** said to me, "That could have been your mum".
32. I met years later and she said she always had to prove herself and please them. I called **FNZ-SPO** mum and dad and they called me **FKW**. I hated it. To discipline me they would put me to my room without my tea at ridiculous times like 4:00 pm. So I would just read books.

Leaving Foster care – **FNZ-SPO, , near Ellon**

33. Everything came to a head one night when I was seven or eight years old. **FNZ-SPO** never normally went out in the evening, but this night they were going to a Christmas dance or something. I don't know where was but she wasn't there. Gran looked after us. was making faces at her, and gran couldn't see her. I pushed to get her to stop and she screamed. Gran asked what happened and told her I'd pushed her for no reason. Gran asked me why I did it but I didn't tell her. **FNZ-SPO** came home, they weren't late. I remember I was standing at the top of the

stairs. They had promised us a mouth organ if we were good and I was really wanting this mouth organ, one was yellow and one was green. When gran told her what I'd done I didn't get the mouth organ. I started shouting at the top of the stairs, I don't know what I was saying, and she was shouting at me, telling me to get to bed. I went to bed but got up during the night and cut up some of Mrs **FNZ** clothes.

34. The next day, I went to school. Mrs **FNZ** said goodbye and gave me my snack for break. While at school I was asked to go to the headmistress' office and Ms Urquhart was there. She told me I was leaving **FNZ-SPO** and I went to Craiglarach Children's Home. I wasn't there long. I went back to **FNZ-SPO** intermittently, but it never worked.

Craiglarach Children's Home, Aboyne, Aberdeenshire

35. So I went to Craiglarach children's home, which was in Aboyne. Ms Urquhart took me in her orange beetle car. **Secondary Institutions - to be published later**

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

- 36.

37. From Craiglarach I went to the Royal Hospital for Sick Children in Aberdeen. I wouldn't speak to anyone at the children's home and I was still wetting the bed. I didn't go to school while I was at the home, I wasn't there long enough. I think they were waiting for me to go to the hospital. I went to the hospital because I'd lost my temper with Mrs **FNZ** about the mouth organ. Ms Urquhart took me to the children's hospital in Aberdeen.

Royal Hospital for Sick Children, Aberdeen

38. I just remember sitting there in the hospital. It wasn't too bad in there. There were quite a few children. There weren't any books to read there. We had school there, it was alright. We were at school all day, had our tea and I think we played pool. I didn't mix with the other kids there. I think I blocked out a lot of things mentally because I don't want to remember.
39. I remember seeing a Dr Simone, she was very kind. She was treating me for mental health reasons. When I first met her she had all these bricks and she asked me to build them. I told her I wasn't because it was silly. Our conversations were like, why do I wet the bed, why did I lose my temper, why was I such a difficult child at the [FNZ-SPO] why won't I speak to people. I couldn't answer the questions. She said that if I didn't speak Ms Urquhart would think I'm retarded and she'd put me in a home for retarded people. They must have had a meeting. I wasn't retarded. I don't remember being on medication while I was there but we had a lot of sessions together.
40. Dr Simone told me that to prove to Ms Urquhart that I wasn't retarded I should sit an exam that would get me into a boarding school. I sat it and got ninety-nine per cent but I went back to [FNZ-SPO], albeit for a very short period of time. I was in the hospital for six months. While I was there Mr [] visited me and brought me an ice lolly in a flask. He told me not to tell Mrs [FNZ] that he had been there. I did not suffer any abuse at the hospital.
41. I went back to [FNZ-SPO] for a week. I was about eight or nine years old. I don't know if I had a birthday. I was given a big trunk and went to boarding school. It was uncomfortable at [FNZ-SPO] and I didn't say much. [] was still there. I went to [] School in []
- [] Boarding School, [] Yorkshire**
42. I was at [] School for about a year. It was a massive old property in the countryside. It had been there a long time. I had a sense of freedom there that I

never had anywhere else. SNR was a EWZ at the time. He had you bathing at six in the morning. I went down to the pool with my dressing gown on and he told me to jump in naked. I didn't then but eventually I did on one occasion.

43. You called the teachers by their first name and there was one thing that I thought was very wrong, you went to what classes you wanted to. I went to English and history because I enjoyed them, I went to biology too. I wouldn't go to maths or anything to do with numbers.
44. The other kids were nice. There was one girl called from Wales, who I was friends with. There was a peer thing and a girl called was the head of it all. She was a girl I got friendly with, we became very close. She was a year older than me. I was ten or eleven. There was woodland and it led up to a young people's borstal, but we never went up that far. We used to go down the woods and that's the first time I started smoking.

Routine at Boarding School,

First day

45. It was summer when I arrived at the school. I lived there the whole time. Some people got home for holidays but I just stayed there. After a year I drank cider and got drunk and got expelled and ended up going home to FNZ-SPO. The Aberdeen social work department paid for me to be at the school. I don't know how I know this but I do. I think Jean Ritchie or Miss Anderson, who Ms Urquhart, told me.
46. There were people from all over at the school. Lots were from abroad. came from France. There was an American girl, I can't remember her name. She went on holiday and came back with lots of different colours of chewing gum. I had never seen anything like it. There was a guy called, unbelievably. He was from Iran. I remembered him because I fancied him.

Mealtimes

47. I could eat six to nine sausages in the morning, you could have as many as you wanted. The food was good. There was always a Sunday dinner. If there was something being served that you didn't like they would make you something else. The only thing I didn't like was cheese. I could take macaroni and cheese or cheese on toast, I just didn't like it on its own.

School

48. I loved history and I liked biology. I went to chemistry but when it became more into numeracy and equations I stopped it. I always went to English and I enjoyed modern studies. I got homework sometimes, for instance if you had a project at history and you didn't finish it, you would do it in your free time. I tried French but I couldn't master it. I remember there was role play but I wasn't comfortable with it.
49. The teachers were very nice. They wouldn't get upset if you didn't understand. They wouldn't shout at you if you got things wrong. They told me I could do a lot better for myself than what I was doing. Religion didn't play a part in the school. I suppose there was religious education though.

Leisure time

50. On Sunday you could go out for the day with a packed lunch and you always got pork crackling. In the winter we would ice skate on a pond that had frozen over, or you could just go a walk. We swam in the pond in the summer. I learned to swim at [REDACTED] There was a pool at the school and everyone had to go in it.
51. After I'd been there a while it was taken over by a new headmaster called Mr [REDACTED] He made a lot of changes to the structure and I was uncomfortable with it. I think he was trying to make it more structured and I found that very hard to adapt to.

Clothing and uniform

52. I could wear what I wanted to wear. I didn't have to go to the Co-op with a slip to get my clothes and things like that. You didn't have to wear a uniform. I wore a grey shirt and jeans. When Mr [REDACTED] came he started introducing a uniform.

Holidays

53. I went home one holiday to [REDACTED], but Mrs [REDACTED] wasn't very tolerant of me and I was just waiting to go back to the school. It wasn't in the summer, it was Easter. I got a longer holiday than the people in Aberdeenshire.

Friendships

54. I made friends there and I'd never done that before. There was [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. There wasn't anything sexual with the males, they were just friends. I told [REDACTED] about my foster parents. Mrs [REDACTED] intercepted a letter from [REDACTED] that she wrote to me when I got expelled and she said [REDACTED] was a disgusting creature. It didn't go down well, she had called Mrs [REDACTED] a 'bugger' in the letter.
55. It was a different way of life to what I had experienced. A lot of pupils from that school went on to Oxford and Cambridge and done really well, but I always had a self-destructive element in me. I constantly thought something would go wrong, like drinking the cider. I knew it was wrong at the time and I couldn't understand why I was doing it. I didn't want to leave, I enjoyed the school, I was very happy. I really liked [REDACTED]. She would listen to me. She didn't judge.

Visits

56. I didn't see any social workers when I was there. I did not get any visits from anyone while I was at the school. I could use the payphone in the school. The school gave me the money and I would occasionally call [REDACTED], but sometimes they weren't in or wouldn't answer.

Healthcare

57. There was a nurse at the school. I think her name was Emily. You could go and lie down in her sick room if you weren't feeling very well. There was a dentist in the town if you had toothache.

Punishment

58. I suppose the only punishments were to suspend you or expel you or warn you. No-one else was expelled except me. Others were suspended for drinking. [REDACTED] was warned. I was smoking at the school too. You got pocket money and cigarettes were cheap, you could buy singles then too. [REDACTED] would bring cigarettes back from France when she went home on holiday, but they were very strong.

Leaving [REDACTED] School, [REDACTED]

59. I was happy at the school, but maybe not as happy as I thought because I got drunk on Woodpeckers cider. I don't know how I got it. Someone older must have got it for me. I sat on a haystack while I was drinking it. I went back to the school and they obviously knew I was drunk and I was put to bed. [REDACTED] and a boy called [REDACTED] were with me. They didn't drink as much as I did. I only did it the once and was caught. I was also eating Nivea face cream. I don't know why I did that, maybe because I was drunk. I may have one Tia Maria and coke at New Year now, but just the one, but I've never really drank again. I got sent to ^{FNZ-SPO}[REDACTED] for a week then onto St Clair's children's home.
60. Mr [REDACTED] came down and got me from the school. He took me to the cinema and we saw the Poseidon Adventure. I didn't enjoy the film. He didn't talk to me about the trouble I had got in, just spoke to me and asked me why I was the kind of girl I was. He said one thing about me was that I had a sense of humour. I don't think [REDACTED] ever had a sense of humour. He came to get me on his own. I never drank alcohol again, I was so ill.

Returning to [redacted]

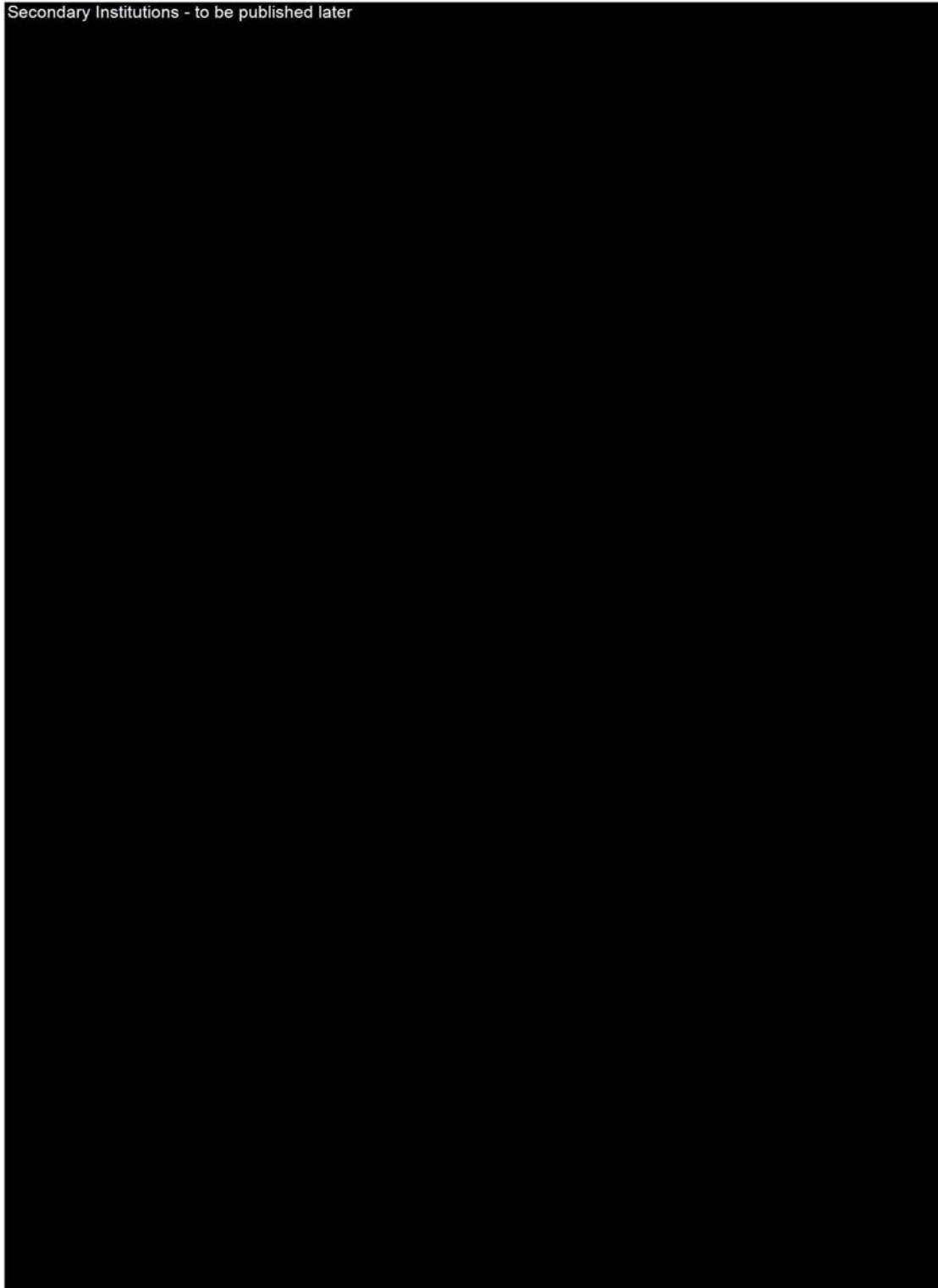
61. When I got to [redacted] house, Mrs [redacted] acted like I wasn't really there. She put clean clothes out for me but that was it. I wasn't there long. She always had a thing about what people thought. When I was in primary school [redacted] gave us little green Royal Bank of Scotland savings books and she gave us money to put in every week. She would tell people, "Oh, look at these children I've fostered". She would never say, "This is my daughters [redacted], [redacted] and [redacted]", she would say, "This is my daughter and these are the two that I foster". I remember her talking one evening, she was in the kitchen, I was in the living room, and she was being quite derogatory towards my parents.
62. [redacted] stayed there until she was in her twenties. Mrs [redacted] got what she wanted, she got rid of me and kept [redacted]. So I went to St Clair's children's home because Mrs [redacted] didn't want me staying there.

St Clair's Children's Home, Aberdeen

63. Secondary Institutions - to be published later
[redacted]
64. Ms Urquhart took me to St Clair's. She was very angry because I'd been expelled from the boarding school. She said she knew it wouldn't last. I didn't reply to

anything she said, she was shouting at me. She called me FKW but sometimes she didn't call me anything at all.

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Leaving St Clair's Children's Home, Aberdeen

75. Mrs **FNZ** referred to me as a tinker and Ms Urquhart always said I wouldn't amount to much because I was a traveller. She said, "You'll end up with lots of kids and be an alcoholic". I never, ever was an alcoholic and I only had one daughter. **Secondary Institutions**

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

76. Ms Urquhart wasn't happy with me not going to school and the matron didn't like me so I was sent to Coblehaugh children's home, which was a smaller place. I think looking back that St Clair's was a temporary thing until they found something more permanent.

Coblehaugh Children's Home, Inverurie

77. I then went to Coblehaugh in Inverurie. It was quite a small town when I was there, a nice place. It was a local authority home just outside Inverurie, over a bridge to Elphinstone. Ms Urquhart came every week and saw different children. You had to wear the same sort of thing as in St Clair's, an apron and a uniform.
78. Aunt **HAF** and Uncle **HAK** **SNR** the home. They were nice. Aunt Lily was the cook. There was a young girl who came in the evening to help. I can't remember her name. There were only seven or eight of us there, if that. It was a mix of boys and girls. I remember the first thing uncle **HAK** said to me was, "You're 's daughter". My dad had done odd jobs at the home and asked if any of his daughters were there. I must have looked like him.

79. Uncle **HAK** was a hard worker. He worked in an office, which he hated. He had been in the same place for years and years. I remember he sat on the bench outside with me once and he was about to retire from his job. He said to me, "When you get a job when you are older, if you don't like it then leave, but don't leave without having another job to go to". He was only retired for two months when he died. Aunt **HAF** was a lovely woman. They were really nice people. I couldn't fault them. They had a golden Labrador, which I loved.
80. In the home were a **[REDACTED]**, **[REDACTED]**, **[REDACTED]** and **[REDACTED]**. I don't remember their surnames, and another two boys who were **[REDACTED]** and **FRC [REDACTED]**. Those two had been there when they were younger but were in the merchant navy and would come and stay at Coblehaugh when they were on leave. They were about nineteen or twenty.

Mornings & Bedtime

81. You got up in the morning and went to Inverurie Academy. You queued up in the home and got a plastic dinner token for school dinner and went to school. I used to sell my dinner token so that I could buy ten cigarettes with the money.

School

82. I liked it at Inverurie Academy. I conformed a bit more because I would go with the other people from the children's home. We got called names like 'Homers'. Some of the children there weren't allowed to play with us because we came from the home. There was a girl there called **[REDACTED]** who said she liked me but she wasn't allowed to play with me, but I wasn't to say anything to her mum if I ever saw her. So I just stuck with **[REDACTED]**, **[REDACTED]** and **[REDACTED]** from the home.
83. The headmaster was a very nice man, in fact he put up with a lot from me really because it took me a long time to settle down. I would walk out of school quite often and just go rambling about. Some of the teachers put me at the back of the class. I would go to school but I skipped it quite a bit.

Pocket money/leisure time

84. I was a bit older, about thirteen and I'd get pocket money and take the younger ones to the cinema on a Saturday. I used to like it but I got a bit fed up taking them because they wouldn't behave. I went swimming a lot and after school I'd play hockey and we would go to the cinema.
85. One time [REDACTED] and I went to join a local youth club and on the way home these girls chased us because we were from the home. [REDACTED] got away but they caught me and battered me. We never went back. I told aunt ^{HAF} [REDACTED] and I think it was reported. There were about seven girls there but I think they got the two main girls. I don't know what happened to them.

Trips/holidays

86. I used to go to Huntly school camp when I was in the children's homes. All the kids from schools in Aberdeenshire went. I went for two weeks in the summer. I remember I met my cousin when I was fifty-one and he said he used to go. He said he wouldn't have even known me. I remember going once, I liked it because I liked running and there was a lot of races. There was a lot of sport there. This was when I was in Coblehaugh.

Chores

87. You cleaned the rooms at the weekend, one of mine was ^{FRC} [REDACTED]'s. All the kids got allocated different rooms. There was nobody doing anything different to anyone else. You got sixpence pocket money.

Visits / Inspections

88. I saw Ms Urquhart but I had no other visitors. I had no contact with [REDACTED] or the ^{FNZ-SPO} [REDACTED]

Discipline

89. If you didn't behave you never got your pocket money or you couldn't go to the cinema or go swimming, but I generally stuck to the rules inside the home.

Abuse at Coblehaugh Children's Home, Inverurie

90. One day [REDACTED] and I didn't go to school and Aunt Lily winked at me at tea time and I knew I'd been caught. Ms Urquhart came to see us, she wasn't happy. She said to me, "You can do what you want, you won't amount to anything", and she slapped me across the face. She told [REDACTED] not to mix with me because I would drag her down. Aunt HAF [REDACTED] was in the room, standing by the fireplace. She looked shocked. She spoke to me later and asked if I was alright. I remember it was coming up for Christmas, it was November. That was the only time she hit me. I just think she'd had enough of me. But I couldn't settle at school.
91. In Coblehaugh there was a boy called FRC [REDACTED] and he was in the merchant navy. The children in the home had to clean rooms at the weekend and I had to clean his room. He always acted inappropriately towards me. I didn't like it. He was sexually inappropriate. One day I was walking back from school, through the park, and he was walking behind me and he caught up with me and raped me. I was thirteen and he was nineteen or twenty. I didn't report it because I thought it was my own fault and he said nobody would believe me. I didn't stay long after that because he was still coming there when he was on holiday and I was feeling so uncomfortable. He never did it again. After being raped I think I went to my room. I wouldn't come down for tea and I got into trouble for that.

Running away/leaving Coblehaugh children's home

92. One day I was queuing up for my dinner token, I wasn't getting on very well at school but the headmaster was very patient and kind with me. I just wouldn't listen. He was thinking of expelling me but because I was such a beautiful writer and good at English he didn't. He could see that I could do better. So that happened one day,

and Ms Urquhart was there. The next day Ms Urquhart was in the home at lunchtime. I was queuing up for my dinner token and she shouted me over and told me my dad had died. She said he was on his bike, probably going to the buroo. That was her exact words. I just said, "Oh, alright", and went to school, then I ran away.

93. I hitched all the way to London. I was mostly in lorries and one or two cars. I was very lucky that nothing happened to me on the journey. A couple of lorry drivers quizzed me on my age. I just wanted as far away from Ms Urquhart as I could. I was thirteen years old.

First day in London

94. I didn't know anyone in London. I slept on a park bench the first night, it could have been St James Park. The next day I met a man called Ted. He told me if I went to a place called Centre Point they would give me a bed, but not for long, just a couple of nights. They did give me a bed, but they quizzed me too much so I left. Ted also said he knew of a squat and if I went and asked for [REDACTED] he would help me out. I didn't see Ted again. He had been arrested for stealing a yoghurt out of Marks & Spencer. Seemingly he came from Durham and he had a warrant out on him for something.

[REDACTED] *and the squat*

95. I knocked on the door of the squat and asked for [REDACTED]. He was twenty-eight years old and had a beard. His surname was [REDACTED]. He showed me this room and it had a bed in it. On the second floor was a couple who were squatting and on the top floor was a young man called Pat. He was nice. He just painted. He didn't have anything to do with the rest of them. The squat was in Archway, London. This is where I was introduced to cannabis.
96. That first night I went to bed and [REDACTED] just got in the bed and had sex with me. I just took it for granted that's what I had to do to get the bed. It continued all the time I was there.

97. The police stopped me a couple of times and asked me my name and age and where I was from. I told them the truth. They checked me out on their walkie talkies and contacted Ms Urquhart and I heard her saying, "Just leave her". I distinctly heard her say that. She was maybe trying to teach me a lesson. They asked if I had somewhere to stay and I said I did, so I got away and went back to [REDACTED]
98. I remember being in hospital when I was in London. I had been very unwell. I had pains in my stomach but [REDACTED] didn't put it down to much, dismissing it as nothing being wrong with me. Someone in the flat told him to take me to the Accident & Emergency. I went there and I had a burst ovarian cyst. I was operated on immediately. The doctor was really kind to me. I was a bit of a mess. He asked me when I had become sexually active, where I lived and where I came from. I told him and gave him my doctor's details in Aberdeenshire.
99. The doctor said he was going to send me somewhere to recuperate, I suppose I was really run down. [REDACTED] came in to see me that night and I told him I was going somewhere else and he told me to get my clothes on and we left. I still had the stitches in my stomach. I had thirteen stitches and I'd been getting injections every day. I had been in hospital for about a week. There was a nice young nurse who looked after me, I can't remember her name, or the doctor. I have forgotten the name of the hospital, maybe St Thomas's. No hospital social worker came to see me when I was in there. I'd imagine [REDACTED] will have passed away by now, but I don't know. He was married and had a child. I think the lady lived in Birmingham, [REDACTED] was from Ireland. He was twenty-eight. He was a very heavy drinker and very violent when he wanted to be.
100. Not long after being in hospital I was arrested and went to prison and they dealt with the stitches in my stomach. They put cream on my stomach, because they were in an awful mess. I was thirteen. Someone passed away in the squat and the police came. They asked me to empty my pockets. I had a tiny piece of cannabis on me but I didn't know it was illegal. I didn't know anything like that. So I was arrested and taken to Holloway prison. A male plain clothes police officer battered me and said that is what he would do to his daughter if she was a prostitute like me. I think the

person in the squat died of natural causes but at the time I didn't know what on earth was going on.

101. The next day a very nice lady, a young female police officer from Aberdeen came and got me. I think her name was Andrea. I must have looked a mess. She had a shirt for me and saw my back was all bruised when I got changed. She asked what had happened to me and I told her a police man done it. She wasn't happy. When we got to Aberdeen she took me to a Chinese restaurant. I'd never been to one. In London I would beg for my food. I would go to a Hare Krishna place next door and said a few prayers and they would give me chicken and rice. The police officer was so kind.

Craiginches Prison, Aberdeen

102. I was put in to a police cell and went to Aberdeen sheriff court the next day. The defence lawyer there wouldn't defend me. I had no shoes, I'd walked about London with no shoes, so I had jeans on and the shirt the lady had given me. The lawyer said he was sick of people like me appearing in court, so he wouldn't defend me. The sheriff asked me how I plead. I thought I was there for murdering someone because I thought you only go to jail for murdering somebody. I didn't realise it was just for cannabis. The sheriff remanded me in Craiginches prison.
103. At Craiginches I was put in a cell with a woman who wouldn't pay her hotel bill and another woman who didn't speak English at all. I was thirteen, they were adults. I asked for a cigarette and the one who could speak English told me I had to work for them.
104. I was in Craiginches for three weeks to a month. There were no other children in the prison. I didn't even know why I was there, no-one told me and I didn't know what was going on. The prison wardens were really nice to me. One said I shouldn't even be there. I was thirteen but I looked really young. I felt very threatened by the woman who hadn't paid her hotel bills because she was very domineering. I was in my cell

with her and an Arabian woman who didn't speak any English. I know she'd just had a baby.

105. Mrs **FNZ** came to visit me once. She said she was disgusted and that I was a little prostitute. It wasn't true but she said I had been with men for money. I had only been with **[REDACTED]** and **FRC** when he raped me. Mr **[REDACTED]** was with her, he was very quiet. I asked her if she would get me shoes and she said, "No, I only came for you to sign this". It was my Royal Bank of Scotland savings book. I signed it over and they left. I didn't have any other visitors. Actually, when they said I had a visitor I thought it was Ms Urquhart.
106. I appeared in court three times. The third time the sheriff, who was a nice man, asked me a number of questions including my name and date of birth. He was angry. He said, "This is ridiculous". He said if Aberdeen social work wanted nothing to do with me then Glasgow would take me. He said I was only a child and needed a care and protection order. So I was taken out of prison and put in a remand home. I never saw Ms Urquhart again. Miss Anderson, who worked under Ms Urquhart, came for me. She took me to St Euphrasia's. We stopped on the way and had a picnic in a nice park in Perth.

St Euphrasia's List D School, Bishopton, Renfrewshire

107. St Euphrasia's was a List D school at the time I was there. It was in Bishopton, Renfrewshire, just past the Erskine Bridge. It was just a little village. I never saw the village when I was there, but I remember when I was leaving and I went to get the train it was a small place. You were locked in. I got out once to go to a hospital appointment in Glasgow to check my stomach. I was getting a lot of anti-biotics.
108. St Euphrasia's was run by nuns from the Good Shepherd. Sister **LLW** was **SNR** **SNR**. There were also volunteer workers there from some organisation. They got room and board. It was a very big house, the corridors were very long. It was in the countryside, two miles from Bishopton. It was quite isolated. There were no boys there, but there were a lot of girls. I was one of the older ones. Most were there for

not going to school, being in stolen cars or pregnant. There was a mother and baby home at the bottom of the drive. It was called St Gerard's. I was at St Euphrasia's on a care and protection order.

Routine at St Euphrasia's List D School, Bishopton, Renfrewshire

109. I was in a dormitory. There could have been ten beds on each side of it. There were other dormitories there too. I had a wardrobe that I put my clothes in. I had a shiny, sparkly star, a brooch, that I had from London and I hid it for a long time, but I lost it. There could be fights in the dorm, but there was always someone on at night and they would sort it out.

First day

110. On my first day I remember walking in and meeting Sister **LLW**. She didn't like me and said she wouldn't stand any nonsense from me. I didn't say anything. I didn't speak to anyone for about a month. I didn't understand the Glasgow accent. There was one tall girl there, I can't remember her name, and she asked me to, "Pass the breed". I didn't know what she said, and said, "I beg your pardon", she said it again and I still didn't know and she thought I was making a fool of her so she punched me in the face and gave me a black eye.
111. I met a woman there called **FSH**, who had been there all her life. She told me her story many years later. She wasn't a nun, she ran the sewing room. She took me under her wing and I worked in the sewing room with her. **FSH** couldn't become a nun because she couldn't stop smoking. She was lovely. She was the making of me.
112. There were different houses in the home. I was in St Claire house. **FSH** and a lady called Anne-Marie ran it. Sister **LLW** came in and told them she wanted me out, I don't know why, but **FSH** argued with her, saying everybody needed a chance. **FSH** told me this later in life. She had several arguments with her about me staying there. **FSH** was paid staff, she had a cottage there. There was a

Sister ^{GWJ} there who was really nice to me too. ^{FSH} knew all about me and told me she knew I'd had a terrible time and she wasn't letting me go.

Mornings & bedtime

113. You got up at 5:30 am to be ready for chapel at 6:00 am. You were wakened by someone ringing a bell, a member of staff. You had to put a black veil on to go to chapel, which was inside St Euphrasia's. If you weren't born a Catholic, you didn't have to go. From there you got breakfast, then went to classes. I didn't do very well in the classes because my mind was elsewhere. I did enjoy typing.
114. At night I would read Jane Austen and Emily Bronte books or watch television. I had one good friend, that I spoke to. I didn't really speak to anyone else. was a friend of mine too. She was pregnant but she kept it quiet. She had the baby in St Gerard's then came back to St Euphrasia's. She was awfully upset. She didn't get to keep the baby. ^{FSH} told me years later that the father of the baby was s father. She was very quiet, her and were different from the other girls. There were some poor girls that came from terrible homes.
115. The other girls would get visitors and leave big dog ends in the ash tray. I always cleaned the visiting room, so I got these cigarettes. I'd share them with You were allowed one cigarette a day at 8:00 pm. A couple of days I lost out on it, but most days I got it.

Mealtimes

116. The food was very basic. Porridge for breakfast, mince and potatoes, stew and fish on a Friday. I ate them all, there was never cheese involved. I remember you got one boiled egg a week and one time someone stole mine, so ^{FSH} gave me bacon and eggs. I don't know who done the cooking and we didn't do any kitchen cleaning.

Clothing

117. I had no belongings, you had to wear a green uniform, which consisted of a shirt, pullover and skirt, all green. I wore desert boots and looked stupid in them and the green uniform. We got a change of clothes once a week. You queued up and got your clothes for the week.

School/Religious instruction

118. You didn't get normal school subjects like maths and English, you got practical stuff, life skills for leaving there and getting a job. We had typing lessons, hairdressing lessons and sewing lessons as well as health and hygiene. Eventually I was more or less in the sewing room with FSH [REDACTED]. We had lunch about 12:00 to 12:30 pm then back to school until 4:00 pm. There was one teacher from out with, Miss Brown, who taught typing. She was nice.
119. After school we went back to the chapel for benediction. The priest was Father HNI [REDACTED]. He was very good looking for a priest, with dark, curly hair. I spoke to him at confession, which you went to most days. I would make things up like I swore under my breath or banged a door because sometimes I hadn't done anything wrong. I had a terrible conscience, even before I went there. If I did something wrong and hadn't been punished I felt really guilty, I felt ill. That stayed with me all my life. I don't mean anything really bad, things like mumbling under my breath at someone or answering back. I didn't talk to Father HNI [REDACTED] about London. Most things were centred around religion. We were meant to say prayers at night, but I never did. FSH [REDACTED] called me a heathen. We went three times to church on Sundays. At chapel we would take turns in cleaning the vestry and things as there were no altar boys. You always had something to do. I'm not a practising Catholic now.

Christmas and birthdays

120. At Christmas we only went to midnight mass and that was it. I got an extra cigarette then because most of the girls were away. There was no Christmas dinner and no presents. There were no birthday celebrations for anyone either.

Washing & bathing

121. I think you got a bath once a week, on a Sunday when you got the clean clothes. A nun gave you the clothes. The nuns told us not to look at ourselves when we had a bath. How can you not look at yourself when you are washing yourself?

Chores & Leisure time

122. At weekends we would sit and watch television in the evening. During the day we would clean. We were never at the cinema or went swimming or shopping. There were no holidays there. We got no pocket money. What was there to do with it anyway?
123. There was a lady that worked there called LMM. She didn't like me either. She asked me to wash the floor once. I got to the end of the corridor and she kicked the bucket over. I asked why she had done that and she told me to get a toothbrush and clean it up. FSH came and asked what was happening. I told her but LMM said, "Not at all, the girl's lying". FSH said, "I don't think so", and took the toothbrush from me and gave me a mop. I did do something wicked to LMM, I put salt in her corn flakes because of what she did to me. I think she noticed but she ate them anyway. That was the worst thing I did when I was there.
124. Sister LLW and LMM didn't like me, other staff were happy enough with what I done there but not them, they would find fault. It wasn't just me, they behaved like that with other girls. was treated like that too.

125. They put on a Passion Play for Easter and I got the part of the Virgin Mary. The school governors came to see it. That day someone had taken my pants off the radiator and I'd argued with a girl who I thought had taken them, maybe she hadn't, and she punched me and gave me a black eye. As well as this the girl playing Jesus jumped out of a window trying to run away and broke her leg. So the Passion Play was cancelled. FSH had to stand up and say to the governors, "There'll be no Passion Play this year. Our Lady is in detention with a black eye and our Lord Jesus jumped out of the window and ran away". I got detention for fighting. I was put in a detention room with just a bed and a toilet in it. I was in there from morning until the next day. They gave you your tea there. A girl who was a prefect, or nearly leaving, came with my tea. We had practised for the Passion Play at weekends.

Health

126. There was a sick bay, but I was never in it. A nun, who was a nurse, worked there. She was in the convent and had no dealings with us unless we were ill. I never saw a doctor when I was there. I was never very ill.

Visits

127. Girls got home on leave. If you were bad you didn't get your leave. They would go home for Christmas, I stayed there. I had no contact with FNZ-SPO and I had no visitors while I was there.

Running away

128. I never ran away. 'Our Lord', from the Passion Play jumped out of the window but she broke her leg. I can't remember her name. Other girls ran away but they were always brought back, so I realised there was no point. You just got into trouble. I knew I had to be there a year so I just wanted to get it over with and just do it. I only saw Sister LLW when I was in trouble, which wasn't very often. I kept out of her way.

FSH

129. FSH was very firm, very strict, but she was very fair. Once I disagreed with her and she slapped me in the face and called me a 'bitch'. I had done something really wrong and for days I felt awful. I realised I'd let her down. That was the only time she got really angry with me.
130. FSH was close to me and over the years she kept in touch with me. She died in Kent four years ago. She sat down and told me a lot of things I wasn't aware of, like dad and the amount of times she argued with Sister LLW to keep me there, and how she didn't see me as bad, just very confused. She must have seen something in me.

Leaving St Euphrasia's List D School, Bishopton, Renfrewshire

131. I was at St Euphrasia's until I was fifteen and a bit. I had been there for eighteen months. Some left at thirteen and fourteen year old. Maybe it was the length of time I was told to stay there, I don't know. I can't remember when I was told I was leaving. I think it was a day or two before I went. I only owned jeans, a shirt, a denim jacket and desert boots. I didn't even know where I was.
132. When you left you got a rail pass to go anywhere you wanted. FSH very kindly slipped me five pounds when I was leaving. I got the first train north, which went to Aviemore. It was as far as I could go up north. I got the train to Glasgow. I got a bit mixed up in Glasgow because I think it took me to Central station. Somebody told me I had to go to a different station to get a train up north. I didn't see any social worker when I was leaving.
133. When I got to Aviemore I met a nice couple who let me stay in their caravan for a week. They were a married couple called Jodie and Anna. She was really nice and gave me some nice clothes. She had really curly hair. I had my sixteenth birthday in Aviemore. I was only there for a few weeks and then got a live in job at Coylumbridge which helped.

134. The job didn't work out, so I went to Coblehaugh and asked if someone could get me a job. Although I didn't meet her, Ms Urquhart got me a job in an old folk's home in Balmedie as a live in. I didn't like it.

Life after being in care

135. I didn't stick the job long and met a man and got married when I was seventeen. His name was [REDACTED]. He was four years older than me and he was a wrong one. He was from Musselburgh but was up north working, renovating a building, labouring and stuff and he had digs in Aberdeen. I met him in the August and married on [REDACTED]. We had a daughter, [REDACTED]. She was born in the [REDACTED] and I was eighteen in the [REDACTED].
136. I came down to Musselburgh to live with [REDACTED]'s mum and family, it was strange. He was very violent and aggressive and in and out of prison. I stuck it out but then went to see [REDACTED] FSH. She put me up in her cottage because I didn't know where to go. She told me that he was no good for me. She wanted me to give up [REDACTED]. She said she knew a good family from Canada that could take her but I wouldn't give [REDACTED] up.
137. I went back up north and lived in Stonehaven for a while before going back to Musselburgh. I got a job as a live-in chambermaid and [REDACTED] was allowed to stay too. I left my husband, I had been married for ten years. [REDACTED] was always with me. I was in Jedburgh and Hawick for a couple of years but came back to Musselburgh and I've been here for forty-seven years altogether. [REDACTED]'s mother was good to me, she said, [REDACTED] FKW "you have a house in Musselburgh". So I came down and took the house.
138. I have suffered from depression for years. I was in Dingleton Hospital, which was a mental health hospital, in Melrose for a year to sort myself out and [REDACTED] was put into care. I met [REDACTED] there. She was the mental health officer. She is still my friend to this day. I have struggled with my mental health and still take anti-depressants. I'm

under the umbrella of mental health but I cope well with it. I have good insight into it, so I know the warning signs. The last time I had a break down was when my second husband, [REDACTED] died when I was fifty. That was twelve years ago. I have a granddaughter called [REDACTED] who [REDACTED] and I brought up. She has a son called [REDACTED] who is four. They live in Dunoon.

139. I have worked in [REDACTED] Hotel as a chambermaid. I also worked with the Edinburgh Association for mental health for five years. I then worked for the Church of Scotland with adults with learning difficulties for thirty years. I had to medically retire when I was fifty-five. I was always honest with any job application, I told them I suffered from depression. I went to college and got my HNC in social care at the Jewel & Esk college. I met my second husband [REDACTED] at this time and he encouraged me a lot.
140. [REDACTED] was a good man, I was in my thirties when I met him. Unfortunately I didn't have as many years with him as I'd like to have had. I loved him very much and he loved me. I ran away from him a few times in the first couple of years. He put up with a lot, I think it must have been hell for him but he taught me a lot. He was a very quiet man and very honest. I wouldn't have another relationship now. I still read a lot. I'm quite content living on my own. I'm very fortunate.
141. I met my sister [REDACTED] years later and she had her social work notes. I was about twenty-one when I met her. I don't know where she got them from. I met her twice in Edinburgh but it didn't work out. We have different values. She called me common as muck. She said a lot of things about when we were young that I disputed.
142. I remember reading something because I knew I had a brother, I just didn't know where he was. It said [REDACTED], ([REDACTED]), was returned to his mother because for being a 'tinker's child' he was in good condition. There's an organisation for traveller's called Article Twelve. Lynne and Tammy run it. Through them I found my brother [REDACTED], ([REDACTED]). He's in Bangor, Ireland. I've visited him over there a few times. I didn't meet him until I was fifty-one. He's quiet, he had a hard upbringing. He has a wife, who is lovely, and two nice kids who are grown up now. He is a very deep thinker, he

doesn't say much but I know he loves me and he's close to me. He calls every week. [REDACTED] didn't want to know. She wants nothing to do with travellers. The first people I will see after lockdown is [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], then [REDACTED].

143. FSH [REDACTED] died in Kent but was buried in Bishopton. [REDACTED] took me to the funeral. I went to have a look at the school while I was there. It's very different now.

Impact

144. I never think about my time in care unless someone brings something up that reminds me of it. I've discussed most of it with [REDACTED]. I got so ill that I became psychotic and I was doing things that I didn't understand until much later. I was telling people to go away and I'd never have done that. I'd speak to people even though I didn't want to and I was very submissive. I was very quiet, I went along with what other people wanted. Looking back, it was like somebody telling me to stand up for myself.
145. [REDACTED] has always been there for me. She thought I was sexually abused by my father for some reason. I told her I hadn't but she said every time a man comes in the room I don't like it, that I was uncomfortable around men.
146. I still don't trust people very much. I have a close circle of friends that I trust, but I shut myself off. I never ask for help. I shut myself off and try to work it out for myself. I never cuddled [REDACTED] or played with her properly. I didn't know what to do. [REDACTED] and I brought [REDACTED] up and done more with her than I did with my daughter, which was unfortunate. I loved my daughter, but I didn't know how to love her. [REDACTED] cuddled me when he left for work. When he first done it I asked why. I'd never had that. I always thought any form of intimacy led to sexual intercourse. I thought that was the way it was.
147. I have never spoken to my GP about counselling and I've never been a member of a survivor group. I believe the Catholic Church is hypocritical. A lot of the nuns do good things but there are some bad ones. I haven't been to church since [REDACTED].

died. I did go to mass when I first got married to him. He was a [REDACTED] in the end.

148. It's so strange to think so many things have changed so drastically over so many years. I just kept slipping through the loop, I don't know why. Ms Urquhart just didn't like me, it was as simple as that.

Reporting of Abuse

149. I have never reported anything to the police. The hospital knows and [REDACTED] knows.

Records

150. [REDACTED] got her notes when I was twenty-one. I applied for mine but I was told by Aberdeen social work department they had been destroyed and as such I have never seen them.

Lessons to be Learned

151. There should be someone in place to support girls, someone for them to speak to. Not social work, someone to trust and for them to have a say. It was like nobody ever listened to me. The first person to listen to me was FSH [REDACTED]. I don't think I was anywhere long enough to build relationships. I probably wasn't the easiest child, I believe that. I'd answer back and bang doors, things like that.
152. I hope nobody slips through the net like I did. If there's a child who is quiet and seems defiant, look at them, talk to them. Don't ignore them because their difficult. I can see if I hadn't been a travelling child Ms Urquhart may have coped with me, instead she continually said I would never amount to anything.

Other information

153. I was told of the Inquiry from my cousin [REDACTED] who lives in England and she thought it would be good for me to do it.

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

Signed..... [REDACTED] FKW

Dated..... 29 March 2021