

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

PMC

Support person present: No

1. My name is PMC. My date of birth is 1963. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in Glasgow. My mum was and my dad was. I think we stayed in Glasgow before moving to Milton. At the time I was born I had an older brother called who was two years older than me. I also had a younger sister called who was eleven months younger than me. My dad worked and I think he was a coalman. My mum stayed at home and looked after us. My mum went on to have four more children, and who were five, seven, nine and ten years younger than me respectively.
3. I think life at home was good, I can't remember anything bad. I went to Chirnsyde Primary School. Before going to Fornethy I hadn't stayed away from home or away from my parents.
4. When my mum was pregnant with my younger brother or my sister my sister was getting to go to Fornethy but she didn't want to go herself so that is why I went. I think it was my mum that told us we were going. I don't know why my sister was picked to go but it might have been respite for my mum when she was pregnant.

5. I don't know how long it was after mum told us that we actually went to Fornethy. I don't really have a lot of memories about Fornethy but I think I probably thought I was going on a holiday. According to my sister we got a bus from Argyle Street to Fornethy. I have no memory of this or of arriving.

Fornethy House, Angus

6. Although I do not remember the dates [REDACTED] and I first went to Fornethy I know that my mum was pregnant with my brother [REDACTED] and he was born in [REDACTED] 1968 so that makes me think I went in the school [REDACTED] holiday of that year. That would have made me five years old but I thought I would have been seven or eight when I went so I can't be certain about timings. I don't know how long we went for but the school holidays lasted about six weeks.
7. I have no memory of the location or layout of Fornethy. I cannot remember any of the staff or any of the other girls there. I don't remember ever seeing a boy staying at Fornethy. My memories are limited to when I was forced to eat black pudding and what happened to my sister when she wet the bed.

Routine at Fornethy House, Kilry

Mornings and bedtime

8. We shared a room and I think it was a big dormitory that had something like fifteen girls sleeping in it. [REDACTED] was in the bed next to me. I don't remember anything else other than we each had a metal bed.

Mealtimes/Food

9. Everyone ate together in a dining room and I think that the food was brought to us at the table.

Washing/bathing

10. ██████ told me we all got washed one in and one out of the same bath. I do remember this. We had to stand in line and you were just in the bath and out again. I can't remember how often we would get a bath and I think it was staff who would wash us. I have no memory of how many staff would be there. I also remember a woman combing my hair with the bone comb and it was tuggy. She told me that the next time I came she was going to be cutting my hair.

Clothing/uniform

11. I can't remember if we wore our own clothes but if we did they must have washed them and I just think they would have got all mixed up. I don't remember if we took our own clothes.

Leisure time / clubs / groups

12. I don't remember doing anything but I suppose we must have done something. ██████
██████ said we put wellies on and played on a swing.

Bed Wetting

13. ██████ wet the bed and once woke me up and asked me to swap places with her. They would make her sit in the middle of the floor of the dormitory but I can't remember how long that was for. This was in the middle of the night. They also didn't change her bed so she had to get back into a wet bed. I don't remember if this happened to other children and I don't remember how staff knew she had wet the bed. I don't remember that part.

Abuse at Fornethy House, Kilry

14. I was made to eat black pudding which I didn't like back then. I love it now. I think they said if you didn't eat the food you wouldn't get a pudding. They used the fork to kind of feed me it and I was boaking. I remember I was actually sick in the toilets across from the dining room. Apparently my sister asked where I was and was told I was in the dormitory but I don't remember that. I only remember this happening to me once and I don't remember seeing it happen to any other person.

Leaving Fornethy House, Kilry

15. I think that is all the bad memories I have and that I have somehow just blocked it all out. I have no memory of leaving and getting home. I think my mum must have picked us up at Argyle Street.

Life after being in care

16. Home life was good but chaotic with all the kids in the house. There was never any social work involvement.
17. ██████████ went back to Fornethy but I can't remember when that was. It was probably over the ██████████ holidays. I don't remember if I was asked but I would have refused.
18. I remember one of my brothers reading something out from the paper about Fornethy and he asked if that is where I had gone. Then his wife was reading out names and I thought it sounded familiar. I said that I thought that is where I went to but we just didn't talk about it. Then my brother read something about someone being made to watch a girl being forced to eat black pudding and I said that was me. If that hadn't come up I

would have just forgotten about it. That has really been the most it has been talked about in my family. [REDACTED] hasn't spoken about any of the times she was at Fornethy. My other sister went to Castle Toward [REDACTED]

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

19. Although I don't have a lot of memories about Fornethy when I think back now as an adult it makes me feel that it was a horrible place. I think there was probably more bad things that happened but I just can't remember.

Impact

20. Although I left home at sixteen and got pregnant going on to have three kids I think I have been okay. I think I have just blocked it out and I don't think about it often.
21. My own children didn't go on any school trips or holidays but based on my experience I wouldn't have let them go.

Treatment/support

22. I have never spoken about my experiences and I think they have threatened us or said something bad causing me not to tell. I never spoke to my family and it is funny not telling them and not even telling your mum.
23. I had been a member of the Fornethy [REDACTED] group and the woman [REDACTED] used to stay two doors from my mum. I did something with my phone and ended up with another [REDACTED] account so I don't put anything on it because I don't know what I am doing. I am terrible with technology. To be honest I don't think you want to hear about that stuff all the time.

Reporting of Abuse

24. I have never reported any of this to the police.

Records

25. I have never requested any records but this is something I would be interested in. I can get my sister to do that for me as she knows more about that than I do.

Lessons to be Learned

26. I think that the attitude towards children and the way carers treat people has to change.

27. I hope to help someone else by giving my statement. I don't think I am the only one who experienced this.

Other information

28. 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..... 

Dated..... 27.10.22