

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

RLC

Support person present: Yes.

1. My name is RLC. My surname was RLC when I was born and then it became RLC when I was about two years old. It changed again back to RLC when I was eight or nine years old and then to RLC when I married. My date of birth is 1961. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. My mum was and I learned when I was older that my dad was. My dad was a foundry labourer, but I don't remember him at all.
3. It was also only later that I found out that I have an older brother called. He is about two years older than me and he was given away before I was born. My mum was sixteen when she had me, so I don't know what age she would have been when she had. I learned that my mum's brother is the father of and is aware of that. The story goes that my grandad sent my mum away to relatives to give birth to and when he was born he was given to the next door neighbours, and. My mum, dad and mum's brother are all now dead.
4. My mum then met my dad, and as soon as she turned sixteen, she married him against my grandad's wishes. Seemingly, my mum married him at 10am and left him at 2pm. I remember asking mum where I came from if they weren't together and she told me that she would allow my dad back for the weekend after he got paid on a Friday.

5. Mum had nine children in total. The next one after me was [REDACTED], who was two years younger. Then there's [REDACTED], who is three years younger than me. After [REDACTED] is [REDACTED], who is six or seven years younger than me. Their father is [REDACTED], who my mum took up with after she left my dad.
6. After [REDACTED] came [REDACTED], who is ten years younger than me, then [REDACTED] who is twelve years younger and then there is [REDACTED] and then [REDACTED]. I'm not sure what the age difference between them is. Their father was a man called [REDACTED] but I didn't really know them because I was put into Eversley Children's Home with my younger sisters and brother [REDACTED] before they were born.
7. I don't remember a lot from the time before I went into care. I have since read some things in my records, although I don't think some of what is written is true. I do remember we lived at [REDACTED] in Possilpark, but I don't remember much of the house itself, other than the layout. Technically, it was the ground floor flat, but you had about twenty steps to get up into the close. When you went in, the kitchen was on the left, there were two bedrooms on the right and the livingroom was straight ahead. I've read in my records that seemingly the house was uninhabitable and social work were involved with us, but I don't remember any of them.
8. I don't think mum worked at all. She was a drinker and she was out all the time and instead of going to school, I would go to the park. I can remember being about five years old and sitting on the swings in the park and people from the school coming and finding me. I had a good relationship with my grandad and I used to walk up to see him all the time at the top of Possil where he lived. We had a dog and I can remember climbing out of the window and running off with it as well. I can also remember the wee hut across the road from our flat that was actually a shop where two old ladies worked. They were lovely ladies and used to give me sweeties.
9. One night, when I was about four or five years old, my mum and [REDACTED] were out at the pub and I remember being in the kitchen with my sister [REDACTED] in a cot in the corner of the room. A man was looking after us who I think was a friend of [REDACTED] [REDACTED], but I don't know what his name was and I can't remember what he looked like.

10. I have blocked out a lot, but I do know that this man sexually abused me, badly. I don't know if I have blocked out the abuse and a lot of my memories of that time because it was so traumatic, but I remember crying afterwards and the man getting up and cleaning himself. The next thing I remember was someone banging on the door and the man jumping out of the livingroom window. I had to get a chair to open the door and it was my mum standing there.
11. I remember there was blood everywhere and I stood on a piece of glass that had come from somewhere and I cut my foot. My mum picked me up and put me and [REDACTED] in the pram and took us to my grandad's. I then had to be taken to hospital and I remember going there, but I don't remember being in the hospital. I don't know what hospital it would have been either, although if it was the local one, it would have been the Victoria Infirmary. I have since learned that they had to operate on me, but I don't know the extent of my injuries.
12. I don't know this for sure, but I think that because of the severity of what had happened and because the social workers were already involved with the family, I was taken into care in 1967 when I was about six. I was the first to go into care, then [REDACTED] came sometime later, then [REDACTED] and finally [REDACTED]. I don't know how long it was after I was taken into care that the others went. It could have been weeks or even months later.

### **Eversley Children's Home**

13. Eversley Children's Home was at 12 Aytoun Road in Pollokshields, Glasgow and, to be fair, it was absolutely beautiful. It had a driveway through lovely grounds up to the front door. The back garden was massive and in it were separate buildings that were the laundry room and the recreational room. Above the recreational room was [REDACTED] [REDACTED]'s flat. She was the only member of staff who lived on the premises.
14. The building itself was huge. As you went through the front door, there was a big staircase leading upstairs, with a massive, frosted glass patterned window on the landing. In front of that window was a lemongrass plant and I can still remember the

- smell of it. On the left as you went in the front door was the dining room, which was where the television was in the corner. On the right was the nursery where all the babies were kept.
15. Through the back of the dining room was a door to what was called the cloakroom, where we hung our coats up and where we each had little boxes with our names on to put our shoes in. Further on from there was a massive hall where we'd do plays like 'Cinderella' at Christmas. Opposite was the girls' toilets, which were painted pink and the boys' toilets were on the other side and were painted blue. There was also a door to the outside there that opened onto a set of steps.
  16. Past the room where the babies were was a hallway that led to the kitchen and a couple of rooms where we'd see our social workers or other visitors. There were another couple of rooms as well, including a pantry which had a hatch through to the dining room and our meals were served through that.
  17. Upstairs, there was a turn on the landing at the big window and another short flight of stairs up. At the top were two doors, one on the left and one on the right. The one on the left led onto a hallway where there were two bedrooms, with a toilet in the middle. One of those bedrooms had two beds in it and the other bedroom had four beds in it. It depended how old you were as to what bedroom you were in. As you got older, you moved from a bedroom with more beds, to another with less and the bedroom with two beds in it was for the oldest girls. All you had in those bedrooms was a locker next to your bed.
  18. The door on the right led onto another hall, off which was another bathroom and four more bedrooms. The hall turned to the left and, if you walked further on, you came to RLD office straight ahead. Some of those bedrooms were also for girls, but to the right of the bathroom was one of the boys' bedrooms. On the other side of the bathroom was another of the boys' bedrooms, which I think had about six beds, maybe more, in it as well as a fire escape.
  19. I believe there were about thirty children at Eversley, of all ages. The oldest girl when I arrived was called [REDACTED] and I think she would have been about fifteen.

I don't remember many of the other older children, but I do remember her because she used to help look after the little ones.

20. Eversley was run by Glasgow Corporation, as it was called at that time, and the woman RLD SNR was a nun called Sister Christine Sherard. She had an office down the bottom of the hall past the kitchen. The SNR after her was RME. Sister Christine wasn't bad, but RME was awful.
21. At first, as far as I can remember, all the staff were female, males only came later. When I arrived, all the children did everything together. We ate together and we did things in our free time together. However, after I'd been there a couple of years, they came up with the idea of splitting us into groups, or what they called 'houses'. There were four houses and each house had a housemother and a housefather and each had their own room and you weren't allowed to go into other people's houses without permission.
22. My housefather was Charles Feely and he was fantastic. He was a 'hippy-type', with long hair. My housemother was Cathy Hastie, whose husband Ben was a driver for the social work. As well as the housemothers and the housefathers, there were day staff and night staff and what we would call healthcare assistants now. It's hard to remember how many there were. There were also night staff and a room where your housefather or housemother could stay overnight. I imagine one of the day staff would have to do a night rotation.
23. Amongst the other staff, I remember Steven Macdonald who was a housefather in another house. Steven was very distinctive because he had hair down to his jawline and a big beard. I also remember RLO, who used to wear big glasses and baggy corduroy trousers. RLO had started on the staff after Steven and became the housefather in my house. I don't think they were particularly friendly because RLO was always a bit odd and didn't seem to mingle in with the rest of the staff.
24. There was also RLI, who was one of the night staff. She was evil. I also remember John Marshall, who was a housefather for one of the other houses, who

then married RLD. He was a nasty piece of work. There was RLL too, she was nasty as well.

25. There were also domestic staff and I remember one in particular who was an old lady who used to serve the dinner. I also remember the cook, who was marvellous. I can't remember her name, but she used to sneak you bits and pieces if you went in the kitchen.
26. RLD was always referred to as RLD and Sister Christine was predominately referred to as 'Sister'. We called all the other staff by their first names and they called us by ours.

### **Routine at Eversley Children's Home**

#### *First day*

27. I remember being taken in a car to Eversley from my mum's house by a female social worker. It was a big black car and I think there was somebody else with the social worker, but I don't remember anything else about them. I had no idea where I was going. I can't wear yellow now and I think that is because I was wearing a yellow cardigan when I was taken into care.
28. I was so scared when I arrived because I remember there were so many children and the building itself was massive, but I think I was actually reasonably happy to be there at first. To be fair, when I arrived I think it was probably better there than the life I had been living at home.
29. I don't remember much else about my first day, but I do remember the staff putting me in a bath and cleaning me because I was full of lice.

*Mornings and bedtime*

30. Everything about Eversley was very regimented. Every morning the night staff would wake us up about 7:00am and we'd get up, brush our teeth, wash our faces, dress and go downstairs in single file to get breakfast. The staff were always there watching to make sure we were doing everything right.
31. Before we went to school, we'd all come out of our rooms, one room at a time and we had to stand in a line while the staff gave us a spoonful of this horrible brown stuff. I don't know what it was, but it was like 'Marmite' and seemingly it was to make sure our bones were growing right. Normally it was <sup>RLL</sup> [REDACTED] who gave us it. I refused to take it one day but she told me I had to and rammed the spoon in my mouth. I spat it out a few times as well, but the staff would always check to make sure we swallowed it.
32. When we came in from school at 4:00pm, we all went into the cloakroom at the back first and we'd all have to take our shoes off and put them in our own little box and hang our coats on our hook. Then we'd get changed and once we were split into houses, we'd all have to go into our different rooms and have dinner.
33. Once we were split into houses, we did everything in our houses. We still had our bedrooms upstairs and girls from different houses shared rooms, but during the day we were completely separate in different rooms. Each room was like a separate house within the main house. There was a livingroom with a sofa, a television, a table for us to eat at and a cupboard behind it where all the cutlery was kept. Off that room was another room that we called the scullery or the 'sluice' where there was a sink that we did all the washing up of the dishes.
34. We did everything in that room, including our schoolwork, watching the television and eating, we didn't use the dining room any more. I remember 'Coronation Street' coming on the telly at 5:30pm and all the staff sitting at the table to watch it. We'd all have to sit down on the sofa and shut up while it was on.

35. When we were younger, we'd go to bed between 6:00pm and 7:00pm, but as you got older it got a bit more lenient. You'd have to be up in your room, but you didn't have to be in your bed until the night staff came on duty at 10:00pm. They would go round the rooms, telling us to switch our lights off.

#### *Mealtimes/Food*

36. I think we were given certain food on specific nights, but I don't really remember a lot about what we ate. I think we were just given normal food, like Scotch pie and beans, which I loved. We all ate together in the dining room at first and then in our individual houses. The staff were always with us and I think they would generally be eating with us. I don't remember there ever being any trouble at mealtimes.
37. We were never given a choice of what there was to eat. If you didn't like whatever they were serving on a certain day, you didn't eat. The lady in the pantry always made sure you got something, though, even if it was just a wee cake. The staff would tell us to eat or we would starve, but I didn't see that as being cruel, I just thought it was part of growing up and it was normal. I didn't see anyone being force fed.
38. Sometimes you weren't allowed to leave the table until you had eaten what you were given. Once we were given liver and I could not eat it. I don't remember who the member of staff was, but they made me sit there until I had finished it.

#### *Washing/bathing*

39. They were also really regimented as far as cleanliness went. We had to be clean and each room had to use the bathroom at certain times. I think bathtime was on a Sunday night for my room. I think the bathroom on the left at the top of the stairs had one bath in it and the other one on the right was the one we mainly used. It was blue and I think there was only one bath in it as well.
40. The worst of it was that when you were having a bath, the door had to remain open. One of the female staff would be standing outside supervising and you were only allowed in the bath for as long as it took to get washed. The member of staff would

just be whoever was on duty and I don't remember it ever being a male. I think the males would probably have supervised the boys. The hardest thing as you got older and you were starting to develop was that you would want some privacy so you would tell the member of staff to "f-off". Then you would get in trouble for swearing.

### *Clothing/uniform*

41. We didn't have our own clothes and we had certain clothes that we could only wear at certain times. I think the clothes that I arrived in must have been thrown away.
42. All the clothes were kept in a locked cupboard in the boys' bedroom and nothing was your own. At the end of the day, you'd put your clothes in a laundry basket and after your clothes were washed, they'd go back in that cupboard. We didn't get a choice in what we wore and whatever came out of that cupboard was what you had to wear. I used to have one leg shorter than the other and had to have special shoes made for me, but the other children even had to share their shoes.
43. One of the staff would take me to the shop to get my shoes made. I think we went to 'Clarks' on Victoria Road and I think the corporation would pay. They looked like normal shoes, but one of them was built up on the inside.
44. The girls all wore a white vest and navy blue knickers, we didn't have bras. If you needed new pants, a member of staff would go and get you what you needed. I remember once we were all delighted because eventually we were given our own pants to wear.
45. The only clothes we had that were our own was our Sunday best and I liked the dress that I wore on Sunday. It was navy blue velvet with a little frilly collar.
46. Eventually, when I went to secondary school, I got my own clothes because we had to wear a uniform to school, which was black and yellow stripes. There was a big shop down on Clydeside that is now a hotel which was the only place you could get the uniform for school. I would go down with a member of staff and I would get my own blazer, my own shirts, my own tie and my own skirt. It was provided by the corporation

and the member of staff would hand over a bit of paper for it, instead of money. I was glad I had my own clothes, even if it was just a school uniform.

### *Leisure time*

47. We could go outside and play in the back garden and inside there was a television, but there were no games, books or magazines provided. I don't recall the staff organising any games or that sort of thing either.
48. Along with a few of the other girls in Eversley, I was in the Brownies when I was younger and then the Girl Guides when I was older. They were held in the church hall. I enjoyed that and I used to love going rambling and that sort of thing. I actually joined the rambling club at school as well, although I did use to struggle because of my leg.
49. My best friend at school was a girl called [REDACTED]. We went through primary and secondary together and we got in trouble at the rambling club once. We had to take a tin of pineapple or something like that with us, so that if we got lost we'd have something to eat until we were found. We got a telling off because [REDACTED] and I decided to skip off and we opened our tin and ate it.
50. When you got older, you were allowed out of the home and I would go out with my friends. Apart from [REDACTED], all my friends were boys and we'd go up the park, or I'd do 'bob-a-job' with them, wash cars and that sort of thing to get money. I think I started drinking when I was probably about eleven years old, although I never started smoking until I was about nineteen. I'd hide up in the park with my friends and we'd all be drinking.

### *Schooling*

51. I went to school in Melville Street for primary one, two and three and Pollokshields Primary School up to year seven. School was great, I was doing well and I loved it. School was my safe place and it got to the point that I just didn't want to go back to the home.

52. I had some fantastic schoolteachers. One used to come and take me out at the weekend in her little orange 'Mini'. I remember leaving primary school and going to secondary and having to practice Scottish dancing for the end of school dance. This teacher actually made me an outfit to wear to the dance.
53. I used to walk to the primary school, but we'd get the No. 59 bus to secondary, which was Bellahouston Academy. Instead of money for our bus fare, we were given little plastic tokens. Like the primary, Bellahouston was split in two. First and second year were in Paisley Road West and the older years were in what we called the 'big school', which was up the hill.
54. I don't remember getting much homework before primary seven, but we got homework regularly in secondary school and the staff at Eversley would always make sure we got it done. They weren't regimental about it, but they would ask when we came back from school which of us had homework to do and we'd go and do it.
55. I loved secondary school as well, but I didn't sit my GCSEs because I left before I could. At that time, if you were going to be sixteen before September, you could leave in the May and I left as soon as I could and got a job in a 'Wimpey' burger bar in central Glasgow.
56. I would say there would have been a few kids who didn't want to go to school, but I don't really know. I would have thought the staff would just make them go, but I never saw what might have happened if they refused.

### *Healthcare*

57. I don't remember going to a dentist, although I must have done because I have fillings in my teeth. I possibly saw the dentist through the school. We were registered with the local doctor and there was a nurse at the school as well. I don't remember going to the doctor's a lot, maybe only a couple of times.
58. My leg was really painful sometimes because the Achilles tendon hadn't grown properly in one of my legs and the leg was shorter than the other. I went to the doctor

for that while I was at Eversley and when I was fifteen, around the time I left, I had an operation to lengthen the leg and have the tendon stretched.

59. I also broke my leg the first year I went to Bellahouston Academy. [REDACTED] my friend from primary school and I were separated and she was put in a different class because the school said that we were bad together. One particular day, we were all standing in lines and I went into her line. I was so busy looking behind me to check that I hadn't been caught, that I tripped up the stairs and I broke my leg. The school contacted Eversley and one of the staff from there came and took me to the hospital and it was plastered.
60. Over time, my behaviour started to get worse in the home and eventually it started to get worse in school as well. I think I was in my third year when I got into a fight with another pupil and the school referred me to some psychologist, or something like that. I don't remember much about that though.

#### *Religious instruction*

61. There were Catholics and Protestants at Eversley, but religion wasn't a big thing, other than kneeling down at night and saying our prayers. Christine, the second in charge, was a nun, but she didn't wear a nun's uniform, although she did use to spout religion all the time.
62. The Catholics had to go to the chapel for confession and stuff like that and on a Sunday the Protestants went to the church that was on the opposite corner to my primary school. I think it might have been called St Andrew's and it was about a five minute walk away. We were walked down there every Sunday, two-by-two in a crocodile formation. We'd all sit through the first part of the service until the minister announced that the children could leave and then we'd go into Sunday School in the church hall. I used to enjoy going to the Sunday School.

### *Work*

63. We had to make our beds and keep our room tidy, but we didn't have any other work to do. There were domestic staff who did the cleaning and we were never made to vacuum or wash floors. When I was older, I would wash underwear, but we weren't expected to do chores.

### *Trips and holidays*

64. The staff took us out to the pantomime at Christmas, but they never took us on any other day trips, as I remember. We did go on two or three trips to the seaside with the black taxis when I was younger and staff were there then. That was a good day out. I think some of them probably took kids home with them, but I wasn't one of them.
65. The only holidays I remember were to two caravans down in Maidens. RLD and different members of staff would take us down there in the summer and I used to enjoy those trips. The caravans were about a five minute walk from the beach, in the middle of the woods and next to an empty house, which was where all the food was stored for the week. The caravans weren't very big, certainly not like what you get nowadays, and we didn't all go together. One house would go for a week or so and then another house would go.
66. We'd go for walks up to Culzean and that sort of thing and we all had to do chores like washing up and that sort of thing. As you got older, you were expected to look after the younger ones as well.

### *Birthdays and Christmas*

67. I can't remember any birthday when I was a child and I certainly don't remember the home celebrating anyone's birthday.
68. Every year, we'd all put on a play at Christmas in the big hall at the back of the building. All the children would play the different parts and local councillors would come and watch. I remember doing that from a very young age.

69. I don't remember there being a Christmas tree or decorations or a special Christmas dinner. On Christmas day, we'd each get one present and a stocking with an orange and a sweet in it. The presents had been donated to the home by people. I can remember people coming and handing things in. We'd all have to sit on the stairs and wait for our name to be called out to go and get our present.
70. We got to keep our present and one year, when I think I would have been about fourteen, I got a portable record player. It ran on batteries and I kept it in my bedroom. Afterwards, I can remember going to the shops and buying my first single with money I'd got from bob-a-job. The single was Rod Stewart and 'Maggie May'.

*Personal possessions and pocket money*

71. Apart from the record player, I never had much in the way of personal possessions. I got money from doing 'bob-a-job' with the Girl Guides, but we never got pocket money at all. We were never given money for anything. Even the local shop used to accept our green plastic bus tokens, so that we could buy something to take to school.

*Review of care*

72. I think I went to one or two children's panels, but I very rarely did go. I recall one when I was older and mum being there, but I don't remember where they were held. All I do recall is the room itself had a long table in it.
73. I think that panel was to decide whether I could go home or not and I think it was after it, that they started to allow me to have weekend visits with my mum at home. I went home for a few weekends and stayed with my mum and my stepdad, [REDACTED], and my younger brothers and sisters [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].
74. Mum was fine during the day, but then she'd start drinking and over one weekend visit, she beat the living daylight out of me. The neighbour 'phoned the police and I was taken back to Eversley in the black car that the social work used and I stopped seeing my mum for a while.

*Fostering out*

75. When I was about fourteen or fifteen, I went to stay about four or five times for the weekend with a family who stayed in either Nitshill or Priesthill. I can't remember their names, but it was a couple and about four or five children. I'm not sure if some of those children were fostered. They were a nice couple and I enjoyed those weekends. I remember going ice skating with them.

*Sibling Contact*

76. [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and I were all in the children's home when our younger brother [REDACTED] was born. He came into the home when he was six weeks old. The staff at Eversley told me that mum had gone to a mother and baby place to give birth to [REDACTED] and then they took him off her and he was put into Eversley with us.
77. I remember when he was brought into the home. I was upstairs doing my homework when one of the other girls came and told me my mum was downstairs with my little brother. I didn't think I had a little brother. As I went downstairs, I saw my mum, but mum wasn't allowed to see me and I never spoke to her and [REDACTED] was then taken into the nursery.
78. Initially, when I was first brought into care, I was in the same house as my siblings and I was known as [RLC [REDACTED]]. However, after a couple of years [RLD [REDACTED]] got my birth certificate and they found out that I had a different father and my second name was [RLC [REDACTED]]. When she learned that, [RLD [REDACTED]] separated me and moved me to a different house and told me they weren't my sisters and brother. I will always remember that. It broke my heart.
79. I could still see them, but I wasn't allowed in their house and before we were separated, my sisters used to rely on me. I had to actually ask if I could go and visit them and I did so regularly. [REDACTED] was only a baby and I used to try and see him, but I wasn't allowed to see him a lot.

80. Eventually, my sister [REDACTED] was adopted, which left [REDACTED], me and [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] used to go to a foster family for the weekend every so often. They were relatives of one of the members of staff, RLI [REDACTED], and I believe they wanted to adopt [REDACTED] at one point, but my mum wouldn't allow it.
81. I only learned that I had my other younger siblings, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], when my mother turned up at the children's home one day with all of them. Nobody had mentioned it before then.

#### *Family contact*

82. There was a visiting room, but families were only allowed to visit at the weekend and Sunday was normally the visiting day. Staff would be in the room at visiting time, but you were left with your visitors. It was a big room and other kids would be there with their families too. You didn't get individual visits.
83. I didn't see mum for a long time after I went to Eversley because she had to stop drinking before she was allowed to see us. She did come once she had stopped drinking, but not very often. I remember all the families used to come and see the other kids and I used to stand in the front room, in the big bay windows, waiting for my mum to come, but she never did.
84. After visiting was over, everyone had to hand over whatever they might have been given, like sweets or whatever, and it would be dished out to everyone. I remember my grandad coming to visit and bringing me sweets and a bottle of 'Irn Bru'. He also gave me some money, which he hid in my cubby hole, so that I could buy sweets at school. Somebody found it though and it was taken away.

#### *Visitors*

85. The first social worker I remember was Norma MacPhee, who came along in 1970 when I was about nine or ten. I don't remember any of the social workers before her. I thought Norma was really nice. We became friends and are still friends and in fact she is almost like a surrogate mother to me.

86. Norma used to come and see me regularly and would even take me out in her car occasionally. I would be told she was coming and I would look forward to it, however, my punishment if one of the staff thought I'd done something wrong, was that I wouldn't be allowed to see her. That happened a few times and it used to drive me crazy. Even though Norma would come, I'd have to stay in my room and they wouldn't let her see me.
87. The local policeman used to come to the home during the night for a cuppa in the kitchen with the night staff. I saw him a few times, but we never really spoke. A lot of times he would be bringing me back after I'd run away.

#### *Discipline*

88. You'd be pulled by your arm if you were doing something the staff didn't like, but that got less as I got older. Possibly because I could fight back and I would do so. I don't remember ever seeing a member of staff recording any sort of punishment they might have used though. According to the records I have now managed to obtain, nothing was written down.
89. Christine was a nun and I remember one time she took me to St Euphrasia's Home in Bishopton to show me what it was like. I don't know if she had worked there previously. I was always misbehaving and she took me there to tell me that if I didn't start behaving I would be going there. She took me up to this room that was in a sort of turret, which was padded and told me I would be put in there.

#### *Running away*

90. I ran away a lot, but I didn't start doing so until later, probably when I was about thirteen. I was never away overnight because I always got caught. I wasn't very good at hiding. I had local friends and we were all football fans, so I'd run off to be with them. RLL, one of the staff, lived locally and she caught me a few times and used to drag me back. I ran away once when we were on holiday at the caravans in

Maidens as well. I jumped on a boy's motorbike and went with him to the funfair in Girvan.

91. Even the youngsters used to run away. I remember once a young boy called [REDACTED] was hiding in the bushes in the grounds. We saw him, but we never told the staff who were out looking for him that he was there.
92. One time I ran away with a girl I was sharing a room with, [REDACTED] although we never got far. I had got a knife and I managed to open the cupboard that my Sunday dress was locked in. The boys were asking me what I was doing so I told them not to say anything and [REDACTED] and I ran out the fire escape in their room. There was a bush at the bottom and [REDACTED] got scared, but I managed to persuade her to carry on. However, we got caught not long after.
93. We suffered for that. We were taken separately into Sister Christine's office by [RLD] [REDACTED] and we each got the cane. She bent me over the table and hit me four or five times on the backside with it, on top of my clothes, which left marks where she had hit me. I can't really remember what [RLD] [REDACTED] was saying to me, but it never stopped me from running away again.
94. The home would report us missing to the police and it was usually the police who would bring us back. The staff never went out looking for us. I used to go to my friend [REDACTED]'s house and the police found me there one time, hiding in a wardrobe.
95. There was a big blue police box, what I would call a 'Doctor Who' box on Kenmure Street and the local 'Bobby', the policeman, was often in there. As I would walk by, he'd tell me not to run away that night because he was nightshift. He took me back many a time after I'd run away.
96. Each time I was taken back I would be punished one way or another. I didn't always get the cane from [RLD] [REDACTED] sometimes I was put in a room and told not to come out and I'd have to stay in there for hours.

97. Nobody ever spoke to me about why I was running away. I ran away persistently and I think the police found it kind of funny. I used to go out the fire escape in the boys' bedroom and when I was moved into a different bedroom, I would climb through the window onto the roof outside and slide down a drainpipe. I would go out that way and sometimes I would go back in that way and sometimes the staff never even knew I was away.
98. One time when I think I was about thirteen, I ran away to watch football with a couple of boys called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. We were in [REDACTED]'s house watching the football on the television, however [RLL] lived across the road and she saw me. She came over and told me to go back to the home. I refused, but [RLL] dragged me back anyway.
99. On another occasion [RME] accused me of stealing a ring from the couple I was fostered out to at the weekend. I hadn't, but I wasn't allowed out after that and she told me she wanted me to go on the pill. I hadn't had a relationship with any boy, but [RLD] [RME] and Cathy Hastie started saying I was being promiscuous. It really hurt me at the time, because it wasn't true. [RME] told me that she would tell Norma, my social worker, and then I worried that Norma would never come back. This happened at the bottom of the stairs and when she grabbed hold of me, I turned round and started kicking and punching her, trying to get her off me. I was so angry.
100. I never went on the pill, but instead I was given the 'Depcto' injection to make sure I didn't get pregnant and I kept getting it until I was seventeen.

#### *Bed Wetting*

101. There were no issues with getting up to go to the toilet during the night and I did not have a problem with bed wetting, but some girls did. One night, [REDACTED] who I was sharing a room with, wet her bed. She had come to Eversley from St Euphrasia's where she must have been punished for doing that and she was scared she was going to get punished this time too.

102. I think I was only about nine at the time and I knew where the clean sheets were downstairs, so I told her not to worry about it and crept downstairs and got clean sheets. I took them up to the room and changed [REDACTED]'s bed and, because I didn't like the other girl I was sharing a room with, [REDACTED], I hid the wet sheets in her locker to make it look like she had wet her bed.
103. [REDACTED] got into trouble for that, but I don't know what her punishment was. I do know that she hated me even more afterwards because she knew it had been me who had done it.

### **Abuse at Eversley Children's Home**

104. I was physically abused regularly at Eversley. It says in the notes that I now have that I was uncontrollable, but if you did something wrong, you knew about it.
105. Some of the staff were really lovely, but some of them were not and lots of them would hit you for no reason at all. They'd slap you on the back of the head, or sometimes you would get it on the back of the leg.
106. You'd be told to strip down to your vest and pants by RLD [REDACTED] and stand and look at the wall. One time when I was still quite young, I had a fight with my roommate [REDACTED] and RLD [REDACTED] caught us. She told us both to strip down to our vest and pants and made us fight each other in the big hallway outside her office, in front of her and the other children.
107. When I first went to Eversley, I was actually RLD [REDACTED]'s favourite and I got a lot of ridicule from other children because of that. She had a disabled girl living with her in her flat, who I think RLD [REDACTED] had fostered, or adopted, or something like that. Her name was [REDACTED] and she was in a wheelchair. I think now that she must have had cerebral palsy.
108. I used to be allowed up to RLD [REDACTED]'s flat to see [REDACTED] and one time RLD [REDACTED] took [REDACTED] and I away on holiday with her. We went to a bed and breakfast in a seaside town somewhere. All I remember of the trip is being in the bed and breakfast and RLD [REDACTED]

buying me a pair of red shoes. I also remember buying a present of two little deer on a chain for someone, I don't know if it was for Norma my social worker.

109. I don't know why RLD took me there. I don't know if something perhaps happened and I have blocked it out, but shortly after that trip, after we had returned to Eversley, RLD hated me and she was really bad to me.
110. The abuse really started after we were split into houses, after I had been at Eversley for a couple of years. Looking back, I think splitting us up like that made it easy because they wouldn't have been able to abuse us when we were all together.
111. One of the female staff, I can't remember who, was forever taking me into the scullery, where she would shove carbolic soap in my mouth for doing something like swearing or fighting with someone. She would drag me in there, hold me, force my head back and shove the soap in my mouth. I never saw that happening to other children, but I didn't take much notice, I suppose.
112. RLI, who was night staff, used to come into my room during the night and hit me with a slipper across the head for talking. She did that several times to me and she battered the other girls too.
113. Getting thrown in a cold bath happened a lot of times. I never started my period until I was about thirteen and that is when RLL threw me in the bath. I didn't know what it was when my period started and I remember coming running out of the toilet because there was all this blood. I hadn't a clue what it was because nobody had told me. I thought I was dying.
114. As soon as RLL saw me, she dragged me to the bathroom and ran a bath for me. She threw me in the freezing cold water without telling me what was going on. She was trying to duck my head under the water and, as she did, I bit her finger and I nearly bit it off. She was practically drowning me in this bath, telling me I was filthy and she kept holding me in there until the bloodstain came out of my pants. It was only later that Vera, another member of staff, took me aside and explained to me what was happening.

115. I don't know how old I was when the sexual abuse started, but I do know it was when I was in the room with four beds in it. I was certainly at secondary school by then, so I must have been over eleven. There were three beds down one wall and my bed was on the opposite wall. One night, I was lying in bed when Steven Macdonald, one of the housefathers, came in. There was only one other girl in the room, [REDACTED], and she was sleeping.
116. I was asleep as well, but I woke when the door opened and Steven Macdonald started touching me down below, under the covers. I had a nightdress on, but we weren't allowed to wear pants because we were told it was dirty. I asked him what he was doing and he told me: "*Nobody will believe you if you tell anybody*". Those words stuck with me for years afterwards.
117. Afterwards, he never really spoke to me, he used to just kind of smirk at me. Looking back now, I know that he was laughing because he thought he had got away with it.
118. I've no reason to think that Steven Macdonald would have spoken of what he did to anybody, but I don't know if it was because of what he had done that other people might have thought they could get away with things too, because the sexual abuse progressed.
119. One day, I was in the sluice room at the back, when [REDACTED] RLO, the housefather of my house, came in. That is when the touching started. I don't know where everybody else was and I don't know how old I would have been at that time, but it wasn't all that long afterwards that I left the home, so I suppose I must have been about fourteen. He never really spoke to me about what he was doing, other than to tell me not to tell anyone, but I can't remember exactly what he said.
120. He shut the door behind him and came over to me and started touching me and he made me touch him. After that, he regularly touched me whenever we were alone in the house or in the garden. Eventually, he took me to the laundry house in the garden, took the bottom half of my clothes off and had full, penetrative sex with me. This

happened again four times in total, in the corner of the back garden and in the sluice room.

121. I was too old for John Marshall, but I know that he abused my sister [REDACTED] because she told me. I suspected it was happening at the time because of her behaviour, but it was only years later that she confirmed it. She told me she was regularly raped by John Marshall.
122. I never had much to do with him because he was housemaster for another house, but I didn't like him anyway. He was this skinny character with blond hair that was brushed back and there was something about the way he behaved that made me think he was creepy. He made me feel uncomfortable.
123. I only found out later on that John Marshall married [RLD]. I don't know why because [RLD] was not the marrying kind and I was not aware of them having any sort of relationship. Thinking back now, I think he knew what he was doing, it was his way of making sure he would continue to have access to the children.
124. It's hard to explain, but when something is happening as regularly as it did in Eversley, it's hard to look on it as abuse because you just thought it was the normal routine. A lot of the children used to touch each other, often in the toilets at the back, and we would speak about it amongst ourselves. We were still young, but for a lot of my time at Eversley Children's Home, sexualised behaviour was normal, although I don't think any of the staff would necessarily have been aware.
125. The touching used to happen when we were away in the caravan as well. It wasn't as bad as what [RLO] did, but if it happened nowadays you would think it was too close for comfort. Things such as sitting on each other's knees and that sort of thing.
126. Looking back now, I realise that those other children must have been getting abused too and that is how they knew what to do. I never witnessed anyone else being sexually abused and so I can't categorically say that a particular member of staff did a particular thing, but I know that it was happening.

127. When I was about fourteen, I had become really good friends with a boy called [REDACTED] who was also at Eversley. Although girls were not allowed in the boys' rooms, I was in his and we had been lying on his bed talking, when one of the staff saw us.
128. We were accused of having sex and we were taken into the recreation room below [REDACTED]'s flat in the garden. I was caned by [REDACTED] in there and, although I didn't see [REDACTED] getting punished, I know he got caned by [REDACTED] as well. I tried to tell [REDACTED] that nothing had happened, but she didn't believe me and she called me various names. She was basically accusing me of being a slut, while she hit me with the cane about five or six times across my backside on top of my clothes.

### **Reporting of abuse at Eversley Children's Home**

129. When I was probably about ten or eleven, I was going to get my shoes when I went in a shop on Victoria Road and saw there was a man outside selling papers. The weirdest thing is that I recognised his voice as he shouted out "*Evening Times*", or whatever the paper was. I knew immediately that he was the man who had abused me at home in mum's house before I went into Eversley. If I remember correctly, he was arrested after I reported it, but I don't remember speaking to the police about it.
130. I reported [REDACTED] the night staff who hit me with the slipper, to one of the day staff, but I can't remember who. She didn't believe me anyway and nothing was done.
131. I also told my housefather Charles Feely the next day after Steven Macdonald abused me sexually. Charles Feely took me to [REDACTED] but she called me a liar and I got in trouble. I told other children and asked if Steven Macdonald had done the same to them, but they said he hadn't and I thought it was just me.
132. I knew it was no use telling anybody what [REDACTED] was doing after that because I knew nobody would believe me then either. Thinking back on it now, when my behaviour started to escalate, they should have been looking at why, but instead

they didn't believe me and told me I was a liar. I realise now that I became angry and was fighting with everybody and yet none of the staff asked me why.

133. I got on very well with my social worker Norma. She was a comfort for me and I could speak with her, but the home had drummed it into you not to say anything. Abuse was the norm and as much as I now understand how it was wrong, at the time it was my life and I didn't feel traumatised.
134. There was also the fear that if I did say anything, people might not want to know me and would look at me differently.

### **Leaving Eversley Children's Home**

135. I left Eversley Children's Home in 1976 when I was fifteen.
136. I thought I was getting taken out of Eversley because I was bad, but then I was told I was too old to stay there anymore. My social worker, Norma MacPhee, picked me up and took me along to West Princes Street Girls' Hostel in Glasgow.

### **West Princes Street Girls' Hostel, Glasgow**

137. Secondary Institutions - to be published later
138. I was still seeing my social worker regularly, although it was a guy called RLP RLP because Norma MacPhee was ill.

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143. I was also abused by the man who was my social worker while Norma was off, RLP [REDACTED]. I was almost sixteen by this time and I had to see him at his office. He was always nice to me and eventually, while it was just him and me in his office he kissed me. I knew it was a strange thing for him to do because he was a social worker, but it almost made me feel wanted. I wasn't angry and I didn't feel I should report him, but I pushed him away, left his office and never went back.

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### **Leaving West Princes Street Girls' Hostel**

148. I left West Princes Street Girls' Hostel after I had been there for a few months and when I was just coming up to sixteen years old.

149. I was moved to Bristol to a place called St Elizabeth's which was run by the Richmond Fellowship and was for troubled teenagers. Young people like me who had experienced trauma. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

150.

151.

### **Life after being in care**

152. I left St Elizabeth's when I was seventeen. I was in a relationship with a guy called [REDACTED], who had also been in there. [REDACTED] was a boxer, but he had anger issues and was very withdrawn. He was from Croydon, so I went there to be with him. We stayed with his dad for a while before we then got a flat together down there.
153. I got a job in a bar and, just before my relationship with [REDACTED] broke down, I met the man who was to become the father of my oldest daughter, [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] and I split up and then I started going out with [REDACTED]'s dad. However, when I got pregnant, he didn't want to know.
154. I stayed in Croydon and I was always in trouble with the police because I used to get involved in a lot of rows and arguments and whatever. I would fight with my shadow back then.
155. I stayed in touch with Norma, my social worker, because she had become my friend and was almost a mother figure for me. Just before I gave birth to [REDACTED], the council gave me a house and Norma helped me furnish it. I had another relationship with a guy that lasted a couple of years and then I moved to Streatham Hill and got a job in a bar and met the man who was to become my husband, [REDACTED].

156. We got married and had another daughter, [REDACTED], however I was still getting in trouble with the police. Around 1994, I was put on probation when I think I was pregnant with my third daughter, [REDACTED] and I used to have to go and see my probation officer once a week. She asked me if I'd ever thought about what I wanted to do with my life and I told her I'd always wanted to be a nurse.
157. I didn't have any qualifications, so she found me an access to nursing course in Lewisham. I applied and I had to sit an exam and I got in and I completed the course. I got thirty-eight out of thirty-nine level three credits and I was the top student for the year. I got the [REDACTED] for outstanding achievement.
158. After completing the course, I applied to study nursing at Southbank University and at King's College, and both of them accepted me. King's was nearer, so I decided to go there and I started my career. I qualified in 1998 and started to work my way up the ranks. I learned to drive and, bit-by-bit, my life started to come together.
159. In the early 2000s, I received radiotherapy treatment for a cancerous tumour on my neck. The treatment was not administered correctly and, as a consequence, my jawbone has been damaged and I often experience pain. However, I continued nursing and I sat a degree course to get further promotions and I am now a matron and a practice development clinical lead. I don't do any hands-on nursing anymore, I train others.
160. My husband [REDACTED] died of bowel cancer in 2021 and it was a struggle for a while after for me and the kids. At times, it still is. He was the patriarch of the family, especially where the kids are concerned.
161. I live alone now, but I actually quite like my own company. Sometimes it gets lonely, but then I remember my daughters are all nearby. One of them lives in Clacton, so I bought a static home near her. It's my happy place.

## Impact

162. I trusted nobody and the older I got, the angrier I got.
163. I started self-harming when I was fifteen, when I was in Bristol. Secondary Institutions - to  
Secondary Institutions - to be published later  
[REDACTED] I continued self-harming for a lot of years and it was only when I had my children that I stopped.
164. I've never done drugs, but I have taken a lot of alcohol over the years. It's been alcohol that has got me in trouble, fighting and arguing a lot and I have struggled to get help. I still drink too much even now, although I am getting better. Sometimes when I'm in pain from the cancer treatment I have had it might be the only way I can get a few hours' sleep, but a lot of the time I drink because of my past.
165. Sex was normalised at Eversley and, as much as it was bad, I don't remember being traumatised by the sexual abuse when I was a child. I know it happened when I was a little girl, but I don't know if it happened at other times as well and I have blocked it out. It just did not seem to bother me until I was an adult and I started to have a consensual sexual relationship and it totally disgusted me. It made me physically sick and, even now, I remember how awful I felt.
166. It tore me apart, but, bit-by-bit, I managed to get through it and I think that is when I started to tell Norma, my former social worker, about how I was feeling. She asked me if something had happened to me as a child and it was only then that I was able to speak of what had happened.
167. I told my husband [REDACTED] before we got married as well and, as much as he understood, there were times when my experiences really affected me. The abuse was starting to filter its way to the surface when I was pregnant with my youngest daughter [REDACTED] and I was drinking a lot and suffering depression. I was also self-harming quite badly and I developed anorexia and was hospitalised a couple of times because of it. [REDACTED] struggled a lot with that because he didn't know how to help.

168. It was a struggle when each of my children left home. I'm very close to my girls and it was like something was being ripped apart. If anything, I think I am over-caring and I don't know if that is because of my life. My kids do not go without, I am always there, sometimes too much. I don't often say "No".
169. My sister [REDACTED] and I lost touch because I was taken out of Eversley and moved to Princes Street Girl's Hostel. She thought I'd left her and she never spoke to me until she was about thirty-six after mum had found her. She came to see me and she was pregnant at the time, however after she gave birth, all her children were taken off her because of her drinking. She ended up living in a caravan and she developed a brain tumour and died.
170. When Eversley moved to Castlemilk, my brother [REDACTED] was moved to another home called Creagdhù, which was further up the road in Pollokshields. He used to get taken in a bus to a special school somewhere and I don't know if he was put in a different home so that he could keep going to the same school. After he left Creagdhù, [REDACTED] went into himself and wouldn't speak with anybody and now I can't find him. I wouldn't be surprised if [REDACTED] had been abused in the children's homes he was in as well.
171. I did finally get back in touch with my other sister [REDACTED]. She's also a nurse, funnily enough and she lives in Hull, but she's not ready to meet up. My older brother [REDACTED] found her, but she refused to come and meet our mum. We then found out that she had turned up at mum's funeral and we were really angry. We couldn't understand why she wouldn't come and see her when she was still alive.
172. I don't see my other sisters and brothers a lot, but we're in contact every now and again. They don't want to meet up with [REDACTED] because of her refusing to see mum when she was still alive.
173. I don't tell many people what happened to me, but I seem to be drawn towards a certain type of person. People who have been abused. It's not a label, it's something about how we recognise each other. You also attract abusers if you have been abused. It's as if you are transparent and they can see right through you and they know you are a person they too can abuse.

174. With all this that's been going on recently, with me thinking more about my experiences when I was growing up, I've actually lost friends because I have chosen to. My eyes have been opened and I am now more able to see people for what they are. I have been friendly with one of them for forty-five years and we do still talk, but we don't really have the same relationship anymore. The people who matter to me are still in my life, but as time has gone on, the others have become insignificant.
175. The difficulty when you open 'Pandora's box', is putting the memories back in. I know that after I have spoken to the Inquiry, it will take me a couple of days to put it all back. I couldn't sleep the night before I spoke with the Inquiry because every time I closed my eyes I was thinking about what I was going to say.
176. I have lots of nightmares and as much as I try and fill my time with things I enjoy, things that I like to do, when there's nobody there and you're lying in your bed at night, things still come back. It could be something on the television or a song or a smell and suddenly the memories are triggered.

### **Treatment/support**

177. In 1981, I tried to commit suicide just before I had my oldest daughter [REDACTED]. I was sectioned for a week and I got some counselling then and I was told I had a personality disorder.
178. When I was doing the access to nursing course, I was suffering badly with anorexia and my youngest daughter [REDACTED] was born ten weeks early. I was sent to see a psychologist or a psychiatrist called Dr Gay who was at Maudsley Hospital, but he was a horrible man. I can't remember what it was that he said about the abuse I had suffered, but it was terrible and he left and I was given somebody else.
179. Things then got really bad and I self-referred myself to a place in Croydon. I was given an assessment to decide what sort of therapy would be best for me and initially they were suggesting CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy), but I knew that wouldn't work.

I ended up getting Cognitive Analytical Therapy at the Bethlem Royal Hospital in Bromley.

180. At first I didn't like the counsellor, Angela, but she was actually really good. I used to see her every Thursday and bit-by-bit we talked through everything and she taught me how to compartmentalise. She told me what to do when there were triggers, she told me to make myself think of my happy place. I try, but it's not always easy.
181. I've done a lot of self-help as well. As a nurse, I have learned a lot and so I have been able to understand a lot as time has gone on. It's funny because I am one person at work and somebody else when I leave. I had to be on top of my game in my role because I had nurses on my team who had their own problems and who would come to me. I've always taught my nurses to leave their bag of worries at the door and pick it up on their way out. I tell them that if they don't, it has a knock-on effect on their work and therefore it has a knock-on effect on their patients.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

182. I reported Steven Macdonald and RLO [REDACTED] to the police in Kilmarnock in 1999. My husband [REDACTED] and I had moved up with our daughters, but they couldn't adapt to living in Scotland, so we moved back to Croydon. I don't know if it was living in Scotland that did it, but one night I experienced a massive trigger and I completely lost the plot. [REDACTED] told me I needed to do something about it and I decided he was right.
183. I walked into Kilmarnock police station and I sat with a police officer and told her everything that had happened and she noted a statement from me.
184. There was an investigation, but the police didn't do anything about RLO [REDACTED] because they said he had mental health problems. The police came to my house and told me they had found RLO [REDACTED] because previously we didn't know where he was. I was elated that they had found him, but they told me they couldn't do anything about it because he was "A bit like Roy Cropper from Coronation Street" and they said they wouldn't get anywhere.

185. I was so angry because what he did was far worse than what anybody else had done. I couldn't understand why someone with mental health problems couldn't be held accountable for what they had done.
186. When the police arrested Steven Macdonald, instead of doing a normal identity parade, I had to try and recognise his voice and what he said to me because what he did had happened in the dark. I had to walk down a corridor in Govan police station where there were men in different cubicles. Each of them had to say the same words he had said to me when he abused me: "*Nobody will believe you if you tell anybody*". As soon as I came to him and he said the words, I collapsed on the floor and things went on from there.
187. Steven Macdonald was charged with several offences and in 2004 it went to court because he denied anything had happened. At court, Charles Feely, who had been my housefather, stood up in the witness box and when he was asked if I had reported it, he confirmed that I had.
188. However, the charge for what he did to me was overturned on a technicality. They said that my husband had been overheard saying something outside the court, although I still don't know what it was that he is supposed to have said. The judge called us back into court and that one charge was dropped. That was wrong because my husband did nothing and I was so angry. The police told me it didn't matter, because they said he had been convicted of the other offences, but it angered me because I felt that for once I had got justice only for it to be taken away.
189. It was soul destroying because I felt like everything I had gone through, all the interviews with the police, had been for nothing.
190. I know that John Marshall's victims eventually got justice. I know that he was extradited from Australia and that after a trial he was put in prison for something like twenty-five years. My sister [REDACTED] did not get justice though. She ended up drinking herself to death before the trial.

## **Civil action**

191. Somehow, the 'Daily Record' newspaper found me when I was back working in East Croydon and they came to my place of work to try and get me to speak about my experiences as a child and at court. I don't know how they found me, but I refused to speak with them. I was quite angry that they had tracked me down.
192. However, I refused to let it go. Someone told me that a lawyer called Cameron Fyfe, who was with Drummond Miller, dealt with claims for abuse such as I had experienced. I went to see him in Glasgow to ask his advice and he started a civil action for me against Glasgow Council. He ultimately moved on from Drummond Miller, but I stayed with the firm while my claim was being dealt with.
193. In October 2024, Glasgow Council finally accepted responsibility and I was awarded compensation. That is all very well, but it doesn't take it away. No amount of money can take away anything, all it does is help you live more comfortably and do things you might not have been able to afford before.
194. Furthermore, although the council are accountable and have accepted responsibility, the people who committed the abuse have not. That is why I get angry.

## **Records**

195. I have been trying to get my records for a long time and only got them a few months ago from my lawyer with Drummond Miller. She told me that what she gave me was all she had been provided with by Glasgow Council.
196. I first asked for my records around 1988 when [REDACTED] and I were getting married. I contacted John Street social work office and it was about two years before they got back to me and said there had been a fire and all the notes were burnt.
197. When I then went to speak to Cameron Fyfe at Drummond Miller, he said he would ask Glasgow for my notes, despite what I had been told. At first, they said there were

no notes and they were asked to look again, but I think it took about three years to get anything. The council weren't responding to emails or to letters and Drummond Miller had to apply for extra funding for a barrister who had to go to the judge who was handling my civil action and tell him that Glasgow were not cooperating. The judge gave the council an ultimatum of so many days and it was only after that, that they handed over my records.

198. I think the records I did eventually get from my lawyer have been photocopied several times because they are really difficult to read. A lot is redacted as well. If you were to read them, though, you would think they related to a different person. There are things written in them that are totally untrue. One entry reads '*We don't know what to do with her, she is totally uncontrollable*'. Another says, '*Where are we going to put her*'. You would think I was this really bad child who nobody could control and I don't remember any of that. There is nothing about the punishments and there is nothing about the abuse.
199. Norma MacPhee, my social worker at the time and my friend now, has looked at my records and has told me that there is a lot missing. She has told me that she used to write copious notes and they are not there. She has also said that what is written is not what she wrote and that nothing is in her handwriting.
200. Norma and I had flown down to Bristol when I was moved from the girls' hostel to St Elizabeth's and she had to take my notes with her for my admission. She took the notes back with her, but I remember at the time reading an entry Norma had written about a yellow cardigan. When I got my records I looked for that entry and it is not in there.

### **Lessons to be learned**

201. I don't know what care is like now and whether there are still any Dickensian-type places such as Eversley. I believe a lot of homes are privately run now, however, the council must do regular visits, a bit like what happens in nursing when there are Care Quality Commission inspections. They don't tell you they are coming, they just turn

up. That's the best way to do it because if everything is okay there is nothing to worry about.

- 202. Everyone in social services needs to have the right qualifications and knowledge to enable them to understand and recognise an abused child. They should be able to recognise the behaviours of children who are being abused, whether that's physical or mental behaviours.
- 203. Everyone, including whoever is running a home, must be properly vetted and their qualifications should be checked thoroughly. If anything, because they are working with children or young adults, checks should be even more rigorous.
- 204. Children in my time did not have a voice. We weren't able to tell anyone what was happening. Anyone visiting or working in these homes now should be sure to talk to the children, listen to them and acknowledge what is going on around them. If they have the right training and qualifications they'll pick up on the child who is sitting in the corner. That would be the child they would approach and ask how they were.
- 205. I hope that abuse such as I experienced never happens again. I hope that people are able to recognise the impact abuse can have on a child. I am now in my sixties and my experiences still have an impact on me. I wouldn't want that for anybody.

**Other information**

- 206. 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..... 25/2/2026 .....