

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

QBS

Support person present: No

1. My full name is QBS. My name at birth was QBS. My date of birth is 1950. I am 67 years old. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.
2. I went to Quarriers with my siblings in 1951, when I was eleven months old, and I left when I was seventeen years old. I was placed there through a voluntary organisation.

Life in care – Quarriers Children’s Home

3. I went into Quarriers with my two older brothers and my sister. My older brothers were about ten and five years old, and my sister was about four years old. The boys were put into a boys cottage and my sister went into cottage fifteen.
4. I was only eleven months old so I was put into the baby home to begin with, then I went into cottage fifteen, where my sister was, when I was two years old. I stayed in cottage fifteen for the rest of my time in Quarriers. I was very fortunate because I had the same house mother, QJD for the whole time I was there, and I was very attached to her. I think she worked there for 24 years. Usually, if a house parent left then you could end up in any cottage and you would have no choice in the matter.
5. My sister was in my cottage but I wasn’t interested in her. There was lots of company so I could pick who I wanted to play with. There were eighteen children to a cottage at that time. I must have had contact with my brothers but I don’t remember.

6. Boys and girls had separate cottages when I was very young. This changed, latterly, when I was about twelve years old. They had started to mix the cottages with boys and girls. I think they were trying to keep siblings together.
7. Things were quite regimented when I was in Quarriers as a child. We had to line up when the bell went for tea time in the cottage. We would line up with the smallest at the front and tallest at the back, and walked through in an orderly fashion, like we were at school.
8. I loved my time in Quarriers as a child. It was just one continual happy time. I had a very loving experience with QJD She was a very rounded person. She was a brilliant cook and baker. She told us stories and played games with us. She would let us listen to records on her gramophone. She was just a lovely person and created a great, clean environment.
9. We also did lots of chores in the cottage because she only had one assistant. She taught us how to clean bake, iron, sew and darn clothes. The older kids helped a lot with cleaning and peeling potatoes and things, but that was good training for us.
10. The quality of schooling wasn't great in Quarriers. I wasn't brilliant in school, but I didn't have teachers leading up to the qualifying class, which was mid primary; we had students teaching us. I stayed at the school in Quarriers.
11. QJD would take us out of the cottage to Millport, and we would go on the bus. She would always get the fares.
12. My brother, hated the cottage that he was in. He started off in cottage 34, and then he was in either 23 or 29. I think he was in cottage 29. His house parents were the QMM/SPO, who were very strict. He doesn't talk about it much but I think he got a lot of physical punishment in his cottage, and they were hard house parents.

13. The Tangemans were the house parents of cottage 23 and were also known as being very strict. The children who were seen as difficult were sent to them because they were strict. That was what Quarriers did at that time because they thought strict house parents could manage difficult children.
14. I know that there was an issue about house fathers using physical discipline with boys. I never experienced any physical abuse so I wasn't really aware of it going on. We used to get the strap in our cottage but I just saw it as discipline, and didn't think anything of it.
15. I remember certain people from my time as a child in Quarriers. Ruth Wallace was the nurse in the clinic. There was a [REDACTED] QCY/QCZ [REDACTED] in cottage twelve. I think the man was [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
16. I remember a girl called [REDACTED] died while I was there. She was in cottage thirteen and I think she had epilepsy.
17. My brothers and sister all left Quarriers when they finished school, at fifteen or sixteen years old. My oldest brother joined the RAF, and the other joined the army and moved to Germany. They went abroad and I never really saw them again.
18. When I was about fourteen years old, I practically ran the cottage when the house mother was away, because the staff we had were not great at taking charge. I would get the kids up in the morning, light the fire and give them breakfast. This is what made me able to become a house parent later on.
19. I went to see a careers person when I was leaving Quarriers, when I was fifteen years old. They then liaised with a social worker within Quarriers to help get me a place in college or a job, and accommodation. That was my very first experience with a social worker.

20. I wasn't aware of any psychological input when I was a child in Quarriers. People weren't into that kind of thing back then. I think the main thing they focused on was looking after kids and keeping them safe. There must have been something around to look at kids' psychological needs though, because I know from my records that my brother was referred to a psychologist for stealing.

Life after care

21. I left Quarriers when I was seventeen years old. I was quite immature for my age because I had never been out of Quarriers.
22. When I left Quarriers, I got my records. It had my admission form showing what weight I was and how many teeth I had when I came in. There were also some letters from my granny. She had taken us out a few times and there were letters from her asking Quarriers for permission to take me and my siblings on holiday. She died when I was seven years old.
23. Quarriers sorted out my finances and subsidised my care for a while. I struggled a little bit with the outside world because I had been so sheltered. I didn't know what to ask for when I got on the bus to get my fare. I was nervous about things like that and I was quite immature for my age. I don't know if that was because of Quarriers or because I was institutionalised. I don't see that as Quarriers' fault.
24. I went to a college in Johnstone, and became a short hand typist. I got a job in a lawyer's office. I lived in digs with [REDACTED] QJD [REDACTED] niece and her husband, for about three years.
25. I moved to Glasgow when I was about twenty years old, and lived in the Young Women's Christian Association hostel. I got a job in a lawyer's office. I did that job until I got married at 22 years old.

26. My husband, [REDACTED] QBT, and I were interested in working with children. We worked in a youth group in a Glasgow church. We had vulnerable kids from the group come over to stay with us.

Working at Quarriers

27. Quarriers had an annual thanksgiving day in September, which I went to. While I was there, one of the house parents told me that they were desperate for more house parents.

Application process

28. I thought I would be too young to get the job, but I wrote a letter to Quarriers applying for it, saying that my husband and I were interested in working with children. I initially applied on my own, because my husband was working as an engineer for Rolls Royce. I felt like I had something to offer as I had been brought up there myself.
29. I was invited for an interview as a response to my letter. I had no training or qualifications in caring for children. Quarriers said that I had plenty of experience because I had been brought up in Quarriers. I knew how the place and the units were run, and I had also helped to look after the children when I was a teenager living there.
30. I can't remember the interview but I was asked when I could start. I was there a month later. I moved back to Quarriers to work as a house parent in 1974, when I was 24 years old.
31. My husband and my eleven month old son moved to Quarriers to live in the cottage with me. That was accepted when you had a family. My husband continued to work in Rolls Royce. He kept his job and we also kept our house in [REDACTED] because we weren't sure how it would all work out.

32. My husband left his job after a year and became a house parent with me. We had another two children while we worked at Quarriers. Our daughter was born in 1977, and our youngest son in 1982. We all lived in the cottage together, as a family. My two older children grew up in Quarriers, and my youngest son was only two years old when we left.
33. I worked as a house parent for thirteen years. I left in about 1987 when I was about 37 years old. We went there with the intention of retiring there but things changed.

Training provided

34. It was considered that I didn't have experience as a house mother, so I was to have some training on that.
35. On my first day at Quarriers, my husband, my son, and I were given accommodation in cottage eighteen. I had been told I would get a phone call to tell me what to do, which I never got. I had to call the office to ask where I was supposed to go. They told me to go and shadow [REDACTED] QNZ who was a house mother in cottage seventeen.
36. I shadowed in cottage seventeen for a month. I have to say that it wasn't much of a training because I didn't work with any of the children. I was always in the kitchen, cleaning cupboards and preparing meals. I went over and did shifts there as required.
37. I am not aware of whether the training for new staff changed during the time I worked there. I think it was just a case of people who wanted to be a house parent, came for an interview, and if they passed, then they started work. I don't know for certain if anybody else got more training than I did when they started.
38. I never really had any formal training the whole time I was at Quarriers. There were not policies or procedures in place to tell house parents how they should interact with children.

39. About half way through my time working at Quarriers, a lot of the assistants and some of the house parents started going on courses to get formal qualifications. Training was made available for people who wanted it, and for the assistants who wanted to do the early stages of becoming social workers. I had the option to go on training courses that lasted a few days. This was towards the end of my time at Quarriers.
40. I didn't go on the training courses because the children in my cottage were very challenging. Things worked when I was there, but if I was away for any longer than my usual two days, then the children would likely have been removed from my cottage because staff couldn't cope.
41. I also didn't want to further my career at that stage. I was happy where I was. The training also wasn't mandatory.
42. The house parents were once taken to a conference in Dunblane, which was about who looked after the carers. In other words, who looked after us. That happened towards the end of my time in Quarriers.

Structure of Quarriers

43. There were 43 cottages in Quarriers, which were big houses that housed up to sixteen children. Each cottage had house parents to look after the children, as well as staff members to help out.
44. Children were referred to Quarriers through the local authority. It was Glasgow City Council who placed them there.
45. There was a central office that ran Quarriers. They placed the children in the cottages and decided when they were leaving. The superintendent, Mr Mortimer, was the most senior person in there.
46. My line manager would eventually be Bill Dunbar, who had been a social worker and was also a house parent. He worked in the office and was just always around.

Terminologies changed but he was like a line manager. He was like a deputy to Mr Mortimer.

47. I didn't think Bill Dunbar gave great advice. He was indecisive and sat on the fence with a lot of things.

Placement of children

48. The children in my cottage changed all the time over most of the thirteen years I was there, but there were always about fourteen in my cottage. The numbers started to drop by the end.
49. It is difficult to say how often the children changed. When I first went in, children would stay for a long time. The longer I was there, the shorter the stays became. I think that's because Quarriers had started to work towards sending the children home or get them into foster homes.
50. Children would leave if they were going home to their own families. On occasion, house parents would leave, and the children from that cottage would be dispersed to other cottages, until new house parents arrived. The children didn't get a say about where they went.
51. When I had a vacancy, I would just get a phone call from the office within Quarriers to say that a child or children were coming to my cottage.
52. Initially, I wasn't given any information about the child or their background when they were placed in my cottage. We were just told their name, if they had siblings coming in with them, and where they were from. I don't remember a whole lot of details, or a folder with information.
53. If a plan was made for children to go home, I would just be told when it was time for the child to leave. I wasn't involved in the discussions about what happened with the children. It was all done by the office. That changed over time.

54. House parents started to get more information about children as time went on. It was still the office that decided if a child was going home, but they started to inform us of their plans. We would be told if a child was going home in a few months, so we were able to start preparing them for it.
55. The changes were very gradual over the time I was in Quarriers so it is hard to pin point exactly when changes happened. As time went on, the office started asking house parents for their opinions in relation to children so we started to get more involved in the discussions.
56. As a house mother, I didn't have much contact with the office on a daily basis. They would contact me if a child had a visitor or a social worker visiting. We didn't have much personal contact with Bill Dunbar.
57. I worked with two or three social workers over the time I worked at Quarriers. I would report to the social worker initially, if I had any issues within the cottage. The social worker would then talk to Bill Dunbar.

Record keeping

58. There were no records of the children kept within the cottage. I don't know if they were kept in the office because we had nothing to do with that. I wasn't given any and I didn't keep any.
59. I vaguely remember that towards the end, we had a folder with an individual page allocated to every child, and we were supposed to record any incidents in it when they occurred. If everything went along well, then there would be nothing to record.
60. The other thing we were asked to record and keep were the daily menus. We had to show what we fed the children. That was a bone of contention because the staff wouldn't always note it. Then somebody would come round to ask what the children had eaten and we couldn't always remember.

61. I had the opportunity to get my own personal records, when I left at fifteen years old. It had my admission form and some letters from my granny, so Quarriers must have kept some kind of records for kids coming into the home.

Social workers

62. Quite quickly after I was there, Quarriers allocated social workers to the cottages. These social workers were employed by Quarriers and worked in the office. They were each allocated certain cottages and were then responsible for all the issues within that cottage.
63. House parents would go to the social worker if they had any problems with a child. The issue could be raised as a unit, by the house parents or a staff member. The sort of problems that arose were children not going to school, stealing, or fighting. It was mostly behavioural issues that were taken to the social worker.
64. Other matters that were taken to the social worker were if the child wanted to see their siblings or parents. They could tell us and we would raise it with the office on their behalf. I wasn't always aware of what the child's home situation was, so I would take it to the social worker. It was my responsibility to take any issues the children had, to the social worker, for them to address.
65. The office made decisions on whether contact could take place, and they didn't give us the reasons for their decisions. A lot of children didn't have contact with their parents at all.
66. The social worker would deal with the issue and would do things like refer a child to a psychologist or things like that. The children didn't have any involvement in the discussions. Quarriers social workers were there to mainly assist the house parents and staff, but the children also had access to them.

67. Quarriers didn't have any formal, written procedure in place for children to raise issues. I wasn't told about any formal procedure anyway. The children all knew, however, that they could go to the office and speak to a social worker if they had an issue. They would sometimes say they were going to the office to speak to the social worker if they had an argument with us. If a child told me they wanted to speak to the social worker, I would tell them to go down and see them at the office.
68. If a child had a complaint, they would go to the office and could also speak to Mr Mortimer or Mr Dunbar. All the administrative staff, the social workers, and the super-intendant were based in the office.
69. As time went on, regular meetings with the social worker were introduced. I don't remember the details or how frequent the meetings were. I was just so busy with the daily running of the cottage.
70. During the regular meetings, the social worker would do an overview of the entire house. They would discuss whether there were any problems in relation to any child, and also just see whether all the children were ok. The children weren't really involved in those meeting. That is around the time when the house parents started to get more involved with what happened to the children.
71. If there was a meeting about the child, then the child could be at the meeting to have their say. I felt that they should be at the meeting because it was about them, but a lot of the time they didn't want to be at the meetings.
72. Later on, some children started having local authority social workers allocated to them from out with Quarriers. Then later, all children had local authority social workers allocated to them. It was a gradual change over the thirteen years I was there. I think this happened around the middle of my time there. Quarriers were good at keeping up with the changes that were happening.
73. When the children had their own social workers, they could raise any issues they had with them.

74. The external social workers would sometimes come to the house to see the children. They would either talk to them in the house or take them out. If a child raised an issue, the social worker would discuss that with me. It wasn't recorded anywhere because it was quite informal. They were never serious matters. They also sometimes called me, through the office, to discuss a child.
75. I have to say that the local authority social workers were quite lax. I think they were supposed to have regular contact with their allocated children, but the contact could be monthly, bi-monthly or not at all. It depended on the social worker. I would sometimes phone the social worker to say that they needed to come and see their child. That could be because the child had requested it or because we felt it had been a long time since they had seen the child. Then they would come to see the child.
76. When something serious happened, I would phone the office and ask to speak to the social worker. If the matter was very serious, I would ask to speak to the super-intendant, who was the most senior person in the office that I could talk to. There was no set procedure on how to react to serious matters so I just used my discretion.
77. There was an occasion when a boy got a knife out and put it to my husband's stomach. I phoned the office straight away and asked to speak to the super-intendant, and got him on the phone. I thought it was serious enough to go to the top. My son, [REDACTED] was holding onto my knee while I was on the phone. The boy who took the knife to my husband was removed immediately. Other matters that were considered serious were if a child was out of control and throwing things and smashing the windows.

Staff and children meetings

78. There used to be a staff meeting for all the house parents, with the super-intendant and all the office staff. It happened either every month or every two months. These didn't happen when I started the job, but were introduced soon after. During the meetings, we would be informed about what was happening in Quarriers. The meetings were to discuss the practical day to day running of Quarriers. People could

also voice complaints there. It became a running joke that some house parents would just use the meetings to complain about the quality of the mince, even though the quality of the food was good.

79. House parents could get together and make representations to the management team at these meetings. One of the issues that was raised was that the house parents only used to get one day off a week. The house parents got together and asked for two days off a week, which was granted. Other practical issues were discussed at these meetings such as clothing allowances for children.
80. Other issues, such as vandalism in the village, could be raised, which were indirectly about the children. Specific issues about the children were never discussed at the staff meetings. House parents might have unofficially met up with other house parents and talked about things.
81. Towards the latter part of my time in Quarriers, there was a committee formed of the older children in Quarriers. They would have meetings, which Mr Mortimer would attend, and the kids had a lot of say in those. I wasn't involved in those at all, but I thought it was a good idea to give the kids a say.

Management support

82. I remember we had a boy in the cottage who was looking after his brother's dog. We weren't allowed to have pets but we had let him look after this dog. I told him to take the dog for a walk. He got mad at me and threw a jug of milk at the window and smashed the window.
83. I phoned Mr Dunbar to tell him what had happened, and his response was that he had a fridge for me. I had been looking for a fridge, but at that moment I was looking for support.
84. Looking back now, I can see that we maybe didn't get the support that we needed. At the time, you just thought that it was the way Quarriers worked and got on with it.

Complaints procedure

85. There was no policy in place to raise grievances. It was all done ad hoc. If we had a problem within our cottage, we just discussed it between us and tried to deal with it. I don't know what happened in other cottages. All the cottages were quite different.
86. There was no framework set by Quarriers on how the cottages were supposed to run. The house parents set how they wanted their cottage to run, and that was how it went. All the cottages were different because the house parents were different. Some had children of their own, and some didn't. Some were new and some had been there for years. They were just run differently.
87. If a member of staff were to have an issue, they would raise it with Miss King. I don't know what her official title was. She was the domestic supervisor. She hired the cleaners and dealt with the assistants.
88. If a staff member had any issues with the house parents or didn't like working in the cottage, they could go to Miss King and she would find out what the issue was, or move them. I would only talk to Miss King if she was placing somebody new with me, or if she was investigating an issue.

Other house parents

89. I shadowed [redacted] QNZ in cottage seventeen for a month when I started in Quarriers. She had also been one of the nurses in the clinic when I was in Quarriers as a child, and later became a house parent. She was harmless and airy fairy about everything. She was a single house mother and loved all the kids.
90. There were the Nicholsons who we took over from. We had the [redacted] QMO/QMP next door to us. Anne Kerr was next door to us in cottage forty. [redacted] QFF was in cottage 41. [redacted] and her husband were in cottage 35. She had been brought up in Quarriers as a child too, and her maiden was [redacted].

91. Miss Adams was in cottage 39. [REDACTED] QFG [REDACTED] was in cottage 38. Kenzie and Willie Taylor in 34. [REDACTED] QAH/SPO [REDACTED] were in 33. There were the [REDACTED] QAY/QEI [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] QDJ [REDACTED] I remember the [REDACTED] in cottage five, who I think are both dead now. I remember [REDACTED] QGT [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] QFT [REDACTED] in cottage thirteen, who took over from the [REDACTED] QKR/QKY [REDACTED]
92. These are people I remember over the course of my time at Quarriers. They were not necessarily all there at the same time.
93. I also remember John Porteous. My husband played the organ in the church and would practise on a Saturday night. One Saturday, John Porteous was standing right at his back. I don't know if it was a control thing. John was always around. He was a fire officer and was quite full of his own importance. We didn't have much to do with him.
94. Bill and Helen Dunbar were in cottage four. They were always in Quarriers and are still there. Bill worked in the office. I think he was a social worker before.
95. Some house parents were considered senior house parents and difficult children were then sent to them. I think Quarriers started noticing that some children needed more attention. That happened nearer the end my time at Quarriers.
96. The [REDACTED] QMO/QMP [REDACTED] were considered senior and the difficult children under twelve years old were usually sent to them. In my opinion, that was because of their years in service, as opposed to their ability to do the job at hand. They are both dead now.
97. I think the house parents in cottage 41 had special training and they got the difficult children over twelve sent to them.

Working as a house parent, cottage 42

98. I took over from the Nicholsons in cottage 42, because the house parents had left. I wasn't aware when I took over cottage 42, that there had been allegations of sexual abuse against Mr Nicholson. I wasn't given any information from Quarries about why he had left, and the children never mentioned anything. I don't know if Quarriers knew that there were allegations of sexual abuse made against him at the time. I think they came out later.
99. Cottage 42 had fourteen children in it when I took over, and there were a lot of difficult children in it. It is my opinion that they were sent to live with the Nicholsons because they were quite strict and it was considered that they could manage these children. Cottage 42 had a reputation for being a strict cottage. I had quite a job getting rid of that reputation.
100. I wasn't given any handover in relation to the children who were in the home. I was just in one day and that was it, I just took over.
101. On the ground floor, there was a huge playroom, huge kitchen and dining room. The dining room was latterly turned into a TV room because we dined in the kitchen. There were three main dormitories and a bathroom on the first floor. There was a great, big, out building that was attached to the cottage at the back, which was called the shed. It had a stone floor and the kids could play there.
102. As a family, we had our own bedrooms. My husband and I had our own bedroom, and my kids shared because we didn't have enough rooms. We also had our own sitting room and bathroom.
103. The fourteen children I looked after ranged from about four years old to school leaving age, which was about fifteen. They were mixed boys and girls.

Staff

104. I was only 24 years old when I started. I just got the normal staff to help me when I took over. That was a deputy, an assistant and a cleaner. The deputy's role was to be in charge when I was on holiday. My deputy was Jennifer McKnocker, who was older than me, and she stayed my deputy for the whole thirteen years that I worked there. She was great.
105. The assistant was probably a lower down position, and their role was to help to care for the kids. They were usually seventeen or eighteen years old and came in daily from outside.
106. Initially, I had one assistant and a cleaner to help me. About a year later, Quarriers asked the house fathers who had day jobs, if they wanted to work as house parents full time within Quarriers. My husband left his job at Rolls Royce and started helping me as a house parent. They also gave us an additional deputy staff member and an extra member of staff. They increased the staff gradually.
107. I was at the cottage most of the time because I lived there and I was in charge, but there wasn't really a line management type of system. We ran the cottage as a group and just got on with it.
108. It was rare that all the staff would be working at the same time. They were used to cover days off and holidays. I was in charge of the rotas.
109. I wasn't given any additional support, other than normal staffing, when I started. This was despite having many difficult children in the cottage. I don't think these problems were really identified back then. The child was just thought of as misbehaving. It was ok though as I felt like I could cope.
110. A lot of the children were identified as having challenging behaviours and specific needs, but Quarriers didn't provide us with the staff to cope with them.

111. Quarriers would quite often give you quite unsuitable staff. They were probably there for the right reasons but were just not right for the job. It could make the situation more difficult. I had one assistant, Valerie Gibson, who would never leave the kitchen. She would clean every cupboard from top to bottom every week, whether it needed it or not. I don't know why she wanted to work with children.
112. I was also given an assistant called Marjorie who was quite a nervous person. She was allocated to me to assist with a particularly difficult family of children, because my daughter, [REDACTED] was very young at the time too. She didn't make my job any easier. She couldn't cope, and if anything, it actually made things more difficult for me.
113. I had to use the staff I had in the best way possible. If they weren't comfortable working with the kids, then I would deal with the kids and let them do other chores.
114. The number of children in my cottage went down to eight towards the end, and that was a much more manageable number of children.

Children

115. There were many children that came and left my cottage over the thirteen years I worked there. Many of them stayed long term. I remember [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] There were two brothers called [REDACTED] I had a group of siblings called [REDACTED] Then I got their two younger brothers, [REDACTED] as well.
116. The five [REDACTED] children were placed with me. They were [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] They all had different fathers and were quite a difficult family. [REDACTED] was particularly difficult.
117. I remember getting a group of three children from the [REDACTED] family who were quite difficult. They were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] QBZ, who were twins, and their younger sister, [REDACTED] This would have been around 1979.

118. The [REDACTED] children were very small when they came to me. [REDACTED] was still at nursery and the other two were in primary school. The twins were very wrapped up in each other. [REDACTED] QBZ used to do all of [REDACTED] talking for him, and he just walked about with his finger in his mouth. They were really nice kids, and I really liked them.
119. I think the [REDACTED] children had been in another cottage before they came to me. Then they went back to their parents for a while and when they came back to Quarriers, they came to me. The house mother who had them before me asked me: "oh no, you don't have the [REDACTED], do you?" She told me that they were back in because they had set their parents' house on fire.
120. Quarriers gave me another assistant called Marjorie, to help with the [REDACTED] children, but she couldn't cope with them. She was quite a nervous person and wasn't right for the job. I think Marjorie is dead now.
121. My own daughter, [REDACTED] was only two years old at the time and [REDACTED] was a bit older than her. She just wouldn't leave [REDACTED] alone and was very difficult with her. As a result, [REDACTED] became a bit difficult and I started having issues with her. I didn't think that was right. [REDACTED] had been recognised as a difficult child, but I hadn't been aware of that when she had come to me.
122. Mrs Morris, the psychologist, decided that [REDACTED] should be moved. Mr Mortimer agreed because he thought it was too much having her in the same cottage as [REDACTED]. Mrs Morris also decided that [REDACTED] QBZ should be moved. I think the two girls may have been moved to a different cottage together, which may have been to the [REDACTED] QAY/QEI at cottage seven. [REDACTED] may then have been moved on elsewhere, and I think the two girls were separated.
123. I didn't have the [REDACTED] children for long before the girls were moved. [REDACTED] stayed with me. I remember [REDACTED] QBZ coming back to my cottage at bedtime with her pyjamas on, crying for me. That was distressing because she never got a choice about moving, and the decision was made for her.

124. The [REDACTED] twins were fostered out separately at different times, and I think [REDACTED] went into specialised care. I think [REDACTED] had been fostered or adopted up north somewhere. We were called to a disruption meeting in Kirkcaldy, involving him, so he must have been there at the time. That is a meeting that takes place when a placement breaks down and the social worker wants everyone that has been involved in his life to be there. That must have been in the early 1980s. I think [REDACTED] was about fourteen years old at the time, and he seemed like the same wee boy but only bigger.
125. That was my only other contact with the [REDACTED] children after they left Quarriers, because we didn't really get told what happened to children when they were moved on.

Routine in cottage 42

126. I was responsible for the running of the cottage and the staff, and I was there most of the time. It was called a cottage but it was a house with fourteen children in it and also staff members. I saw my role similar to that of a mother's. I was there to run the house and look after the children.
127. There was a lot of practical work to do. A lot of the time, the cottage just ran itself. What I mean by that is that they had to be up at a certain time, and have breakfast to get to school. Then they were home for their lunch at a certain time. They came home after school and got bathed, had to do their homework and have their tea. There was a routine and you just followed it.
128. I was always up early in the morning at 7 am. For the first year, my husband would go to work. The staff would come in to help, and one of us would be in the kitchen getting breakfast ready for the kids, while the other helped them to get ready. After a year, my husband became a house parent and helped in the mornings too.
129. When the children went to school, the house parent and staff had all the chores to do. There were coal fires that needed cleaning, although they were later changed to

electric. We had a cleaner come in but there was still a lot of things to do that come with running a house, like cooking, washing, laundry, ironing and mending of clothes.

130. The bed sheets and towels went out to get washed once a week, but we had to do our own personal, general washing. We didn't have washing machines when we first went in so my husband did the washing by hand every morning. We later bought a washing machine ourselves to do the washing. Quarriers did start providing them later on. They did move with the times.

Mornings and bedtime

131. There had to be some sort of order for bedtime with there being fourteen kids. It was organised by age so the younger kids went to bed first, then it was staggered so the younger ones would be asleep by the time the older ones went up.
132. There were very lax bed times. The kids all knew what their bed time was, but if I didn't tell them to go to bed then they would never go. I would let them stay up if it suited me. It was just like you would do with your own kids. The kids only really had a strict bed time if they misbehaved and were sent to bed.
133. There were single beds in the dormitories initially and then we got bunk beds.
134. The kids kept their toys and possessions in their lockers, which were downstairs. They weren't locked or anything, they just had a hole that you could put your finger in and open. They also had lockers upstairs beside their beds. They kept their slippers, books and night things in there.

Food and mealtimes

135. When I took over cottage 42, the kids still lined up to come through for dinner and stood round the table behind their chairs before being told to sit down. There would also be no talking at the table, which I thought was odd. That must have been what

the Nicholsons insisted on before me. I soon changed all of that and made it more relaxed.

136. When I first went into Quarriers, the food would be delivered to the cottage. There was a shop within Quarriers and we got daily deliveries of bread and milk. We would also get deliveries of butcher meat, potatoes, sugar, eggs, fruit and tins.
137. The food then changed to a credit system so we had a certain amount of credit per week per child. This was excluding the staples like milk, bread, butcher meat, vegetables and potatoes that were still delivered to the house. We also always got fish on a Friday. We then went to the store in Quarriers and purchased extra things based on the credit systems. They would be extra things like cornflakes, biscuits or baking things. I tried to keep within the budget.
138. The staple foods were delivered and that was what everybody was to eat, but we decided how to cook them. We had to keep the menus of what we fed the kids.
139. All the food was prepared in the kitchen. It was the member of staff or myself who was responsible for making the breakfast. I did most of the cooking but the staff would help.
140. The kids who went to Quarriers school and came home for lunch, got their main meal of the day at lunch time. The kids who went to the outside school and didn't come home for lunch, got their main meal of the day in the evening for their tea. That was just how it happened.
141. The kids were encouraged to eat because a lot of them were under nourished when they came to us. A lot of them didn't like eating vegetables. We had an obligation to feed the kids vegetables and I would try to help the younger kids. I would encourage them but not force them. If they didn't want it, I would take it away.

142. My own family ate the same food that was prepared for the children. We didn't have different food. We also all ate together in the dining room with the children as a family. The only time we would maybe eat separately was if we occasionally had visitors. We would then sit in the sitting room and have a cup of tea.
143. I know other house parents in other cottages bought their own food and ate separately from the kids. The QMO/QMP did that.

Clothes

144. When I started working in Quarriers, the children in my cottage already had their clothes. When a new child came in, I would check what I had in the wardrobes in the cottage to begin with. New children would then be taken to the drapery to get kitted out. They had a school uniform and play clothes. All the children got new clothes when they needed them.
145. Since leaving Quarriers, I have heard that some cottages just had general boxes of clothes for all children to wear. I always liked the kids to have their own clothes. I think I would go to the drapery with them and we would pick clothes together, within reason. I gave them a lot of choice, and if they didn't like something then they didn't have to wear it. I thought that if they looked nice and liked what they wore, then they would feel good about themselves.
146. When children got to fourteen, a clothing allowance was introduced for them. They already had their full complement of clothing, but they would be given twenty pounds each a week on top of that. This was for them to buy things that they wanted. I always liked the kids to have their own identities and so it was good that they got to have an allowance to pick their own clothes. It was a good scheme and it worked. I thought that was quite generous and forward thinking of Quarriers.

Emotional needs

147. If the kids had a problem, they would talk to me, my husband or the staff about it. We looked after them as if they were our own children. We would take them up on our knee and give them cuddles. They were generally happy.

School

148. The young children went to the nursery school within Quarriers. There was a school in Quarriers. I think all the children went there initially. It then changed into a special school during the time we were there. That was because there were so many children with challenging behaviour and educational problems. The other children would go to a mainstream, comprehensive school out with Quarriers.
149. At the time of the change, we had twelve children in our cottage and eight went to the special school within Quarriers because of the issues that they had. Only four from our cottage went to the outside comprehensive school. The schools used were Linwood in Paisley or Park Mains High School in Erskine. Later, Gryffe High School in Houston was built, and the children went there.
150. Most children of primary school age went to the primary school within Quarriers. When they finished primary school, they had to sit a qualifying exam. If they passed it then they went to an outside comprehensive school, and if they failed it they went to high school within Quarriers.
151. The children from Quarriers didn't get much homework. The children from the comprehensive schools just got on with their homework themselves.
152. My own children also went to the nursery school within Quarriers and primary school in Bridge of Weir.

Leisure time and holidays

153. The kids could play outside, and they played football in the outbuilding when it was raining. They could also play inside and have their friends around. Later on, when they started going to outside schools and made external friends, they could have friends over or visit them. Other house parent's didn't allow other children into their cottage, but we did. It was up to the house parent.
154. There was a sports centre within Quarriers and a full time leisure man who organised things like football matches for the kids. He also had an assistant who arranged things for the girls. They were both employed by Quarriers and the activities were for all of the kids within Quarriers. They were free to join any activity they wanted like football, netball and hockey, and there would be competitions.
155. The kids were taken on fishing trips. There was also a swimming pool and kids used to go regularly. That later closed down.
156. My husband and I bought a fifteen seater mini bus from Quarriers so we could take the kids in our cottage out, as well as our own children. That wasn't through Quarriers, it was just something we decided to do ourselves because we wanted to. None of the other cottages did that.
157. We took the kids in our cottage out to the zoo, the pictures, Largs, and for picnics. It was entirely up to us where we took them, and we took them places where you would just take your own kids. There was no restrictions put on us by Quarriers on when and where we took the kids, but then the financial responsibility was also our own. We didn't get any money for outings from Quarriers, so we usually took them places that didn't cost too much.
158. Taking the kids out in the mini bus was a big part of our lives. We did things that other cottages didn't do, but that's because we did it ourselves.

159. We also had holidays through Quarriers, which were called cottage holidays. Two cottages would normally go on holiday together on a big double decker bus. Quarriers had access to properties in Girvan and lands in Turnberry that we would take the kids on holiday to. I remember being there when Elvis Presley died.
160. We would spend a fortnight away and take all the clothes and food, and have a great weekend.
161. Latterly, we stopped getting the houses so we started going to church halls in Parkhead and Kirkcaldy and had great holidays where we sort of semi camped.
162. We took the kids to Scarborough on holiday which was great. That was something my husband and I did ourselves.

Personal holidays and visits

163. It was up to the house parents who they invited into the cottages and entertained. They could invite other house parents or people from outside. We didn't really socialise with other house parents. We did have family and friends from outside visit us, because the cottage was our family home so they had to come there to see us. The children would either be part of it or doing their own thing. It depended who came to visit.
164. I saw my role as a house parent to be there all the time. I think other house parents went away more and left their assistants to look after things. I just took my allocated holidays so I could be there most of the time and stay on top of things.
165. My husband and I were there as a couple, so it helped to have an extra member of staff when he joined. It also gave Quarriers a problem because it meant we had to take our holidays together. We had 2 days off a week and 7 weeks holiday over the year.

166. We bought a house in Bridge of Weir because we needed somewhere to go on our days off and our seven weeks holidays. We always took our own children with us on our days off and on holidays.

Religious instruction

167. Quarriers was a religious organisation that was founded on Christian principles. There was a church in Quarriers and we had to take the children on a Sunday morning. This was expected of all the cottages. There was also a church service on a Sunday evening, but that was optional.

168. We used to take the children out to another church in Johnstone on a Sunday, where our friends went. It had a great Sunday school which the kids loved. We were pulled up by Bill Dunbar who asked where we were on Sunday because our absence at the Quarriers church had been noticed. He told us we had to go to the Quarriers church so we stopped going to Johnstone.

Birthdays and Christmas

169. Quarriers gave the kids their main presents for Christmas. People also donated masses of gifts to Quarriers, which were kept in the old fire station. Each house parent would go down a few weeks before Christmas and pick presents for the children in their cottage. You would pick what you thought the children would like.

170. Some kids would get presents from their parents so I would get extra presents for the other kids and try to make all their bundles look equal.

171. The kids got to keep their own presents. They could keep them in their lockers. I tried to keep an eye on them and make sure that some kids didn't break other kids' toys. Some valued their possessions more than others. I would look after their things if they asked me to.

172. We tried to make Christmas as happy a time as possible. We had decorations and a big Christmas dinner.
173. We were told when kids' birthdays were when they came to us. Quarriers gave kids an allowance for their birthday. It was a certain amount for a certain age. It came to us and the child could ask for what they wanted and we would get them what they wanted with their allowance, within reason. We would sometimes find the extra money if it was out with their allowance.
174. The staff in the cottage would also have a whip round to get the children birthday presents. We would have a birthday tea, a cake and buy lemonade for everyone in the cottage. They could also bring their pals around. That was something we did in our cottage. I don't know if that happened in every cottage.
175. The childrens' families tended not to be involved in birthdays. I think the father of the [REDACTED] kids and the [REDACTED] kids used to come on their birthdays.
176. My own children got presents from our family. My husband [REDACTED] QBT also made them a snooker table and things for them. We weren't very materialistic. I would make sure my children weren't made to look like they had better things than the other kids. I would have them open their personal presents behind closed doors.

Visits and inspections

177. We used to have what we called a 'Lady visitor.' These were titled ladies who were part of a Ladies Committee, including the Lady who's family had given up the land for Quarriers to be built on. Other Ladies would pay visits, but it was more social. Some were interested in the children and some weren't at all interested. These visits took place about three times a year.
178. The Ladies Committee used to give the house parents a garden party once a year.

179. I am not aware of any external bodies that came to check on the standard of care or inspect the cottage or Quarriers.
180. Miss King, the supervisor, would sometimes come in for a spot check. Dr Minto, who was the general director and doctor of education, came once a year at Christmas for a visit. They didn't inspect the place though.

Healthcare

181. There was a clinic every morning and at 4 pm, which anyone could go to and see a nurse. That was for things like warts or septic fingers.
182. There was a doctor in Quarriers who was always on duty. I would call and make an appointment if the children needed to see a doctor. Towards the end of my time there, Quarriers started using outside doctors.
183. There was also a hospital in Quarriers, as well as a dentist.
184. There was a psychologist called Mrs Morris who was there from when I started. She was in charge of all the children in Quarriers, so had quite a large remit. Quite a few of my children were referred to her. They had just started to look at psychological things properly when I was a house parent there.
185. We would be told by the school about the problems with a particular child and then they would be referred to the psychologist. It could have been the social worker or the school who made the decision to refer children to the psychologist, but I am not sure. The involvement of a psychologist increased more when local authority social workers got involved. I think the behaviour of children became more challenging because of the different reasons they were coming into care.
186. It wasn't the house parent's place to make referrals because we didn't have the training to make that decision.

187. Sometimes the child would refuse to see the psychologist. They used to say that they didn't want to play in the sand. They felt like she just made them play in the sand pit and they didn't want to do it.
188. After seeing the child, Mrs Morris would sometimes request to speak to us and we would attend meetings with her. She would suggest ways to help the child and how we should deal them.

Discipline

189. Quarriers never gave us guidance or advice as to how we should discipline the kids. There was no training or instructions given to us on what would be appropriate discipline.
190. The strap had been banned by the time I worked in Quarriers. I was not aware of anybody using the strap.
191. If a child misbehaved, I would mostly just lecture them and tell them not to do it again. I would also discipline them by telling them they would have to go to bed an hour early or that they would get less pocket money, but I would always forget.
192. I once recorded an incident where I smacked a child, [REDACTED] which was termed as corporal punishment. I logged it in a book in the cottage which we had been given to record incidents, by that time. I think the procedure was that you could use corporal punishment but you had to log it. That must have been what happened then. Someone must have told us to do that.
193. It was the only time I logged anything in the book. I am not aware if there were any other entries from anyone else in the book. I don't even remember what it looked like. I think the office must have issued the book at some point to the cottages.

194. The child made a complaint to his father, who was in prison. The father made a complaint to the Secretary of State for Scotland, and it came back to Quarriers. Someone from the office came and questioned me about smacking the child. They just wanted the facts, and I was honest about what had happened, and told them that I had logged it in the book. I think the child was removed after that. Nothing else happened.
195. I didn't smack a child again after that. I felt it wasn't worth it and just found other ways to discipline children.
196. About half way through my time there, they told us that there was to be no corporal punishment. I think that meant not to smack the kids. I never observed smacking within Quarriers anyway.
197. I don't know what happened in other cottages because I was just too busy. I was there to look after my unit and I didn't have time to socialise. I wasn't aware of anything going on in other cottages. You would sometimes overhear the kids talking about what happened in other cottages. I once heard that some kids in other cottages weren't allowed supper until they were fourteen years old. It was silly little things like that and I thought it was just tittle tattle.

Pocket money

198. The office set the amount of the pocket money that the children got. It came to me from the office on a monthly basis and I kept it in tins with their names on. They usually got given pocket money weekly, on a Saturday, but I would give them it in between if they needed it for something.

Chores

199. The children all did wee chores like drying dishes, setting and clearing the table, and sweeping the floor. They all knew they had to do something to help clean up after a meal and that it was expected of them. They all just mucked in.

200. My own children helped with the chores too. I didn't make any difference between them. I know the house parents before us made a difference between their own kids and the kids in the home. I heard the kids talking about that. I felt it was important to all be there together.
201. I can't remember having a rota for chores. I didn't work with rotas because the kids would come and go. I would just get the kids who were there at the time to help.
202. I would also maybe deprive the children of a special trip they were supposed to be going on, if I was trying to make a stand about something.

Abuse at Quarriers

203. I wasn't aware of any physical, sexual or emotional abuse going on while I was at Quarriers. Emotional abuse is terminology. What would be classed as emotional abuse?
204. Towards the end of my time in Quarriers, I started hearing things about other people that could have been sexual abuse, but I personally wasn't aware of anything. In hindsight, looking back now, I suppose certain things could have been seen as grooming. I wasn't aware of sexualised things going on, because I had been sheltered from all of that. We weren't given any training on what risks to look out for with children in that way.
205. Looking back there were just two things that come to mind. Some boys were in the Boys Brigade in Quarriers, and [REDACTED] picked specific boys to go on holiday in Ireland with the Boys Brigade. He picked [REDACTED] from my cottage. I thought it was a bit odd that [REDACTED] was choosing the boys that he wanted to take so I didn't let [REDACTED] go. My intuition told me it was odd. I don't know if [REDACTED] had maybe been the year before and this was the second year when I stopped him, because I was concerned.

206. Another boy from my cottage, [REDACTED], was in Scouts and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] LRE [REDACTED] took photos of the boys with their tops off. I thought that was a bit odd, but [REDACTED] could stick up for himself.
207. I didn't report anything at the time because there was nothing to report and I didn't have any grounds to report anything. It is only in hindsight, when things came out about the two men, that my feelings made sense to me.
208. I was never involved in any proceedings in relation to the abuse of a child in Quarriers.

Leaving Quarriers

209. During my time in Quarriers, they put a lot of steps in place to help children prepare for leaving. When children reached fourteen or fifteen, and were about to leave school, they knew they would be moved into the hostel in Quarriers. I was involved in the preparation of moving them from the cottage to the hostel. I would have discussions about who their link worker would be and who would be helping them.
210. The hostel was introduced about half way through my time at Quarriers. The kids initially had a choice about whether to go to the hostel or to stay in the cottage. It then became compulsory. It was a good system.
211. The hostel was a big unit where they had their own bedrooms, bought and cooked their own food. They got helped to get jobs or go to college, or got jobs and travelled independently. It was a sort of training place for the outside world.
212. The number of children in my cottage dropped to about 12. When Fred Edwards was the head of the social work department for Glasgow, there were negotiations. I think they were short of money and wanted to move towards fostering, so they stopped referring children to all institutions. They also started looking at the children in Quarriers and who was suitable for fostering.

213. The children in Quarriers started to leave to be fostered out, and there were no more children coming in. The numbers in Quarriers began dropping and there were staff members who had no children to look after, so they had to agree some sort of redundancy strategy. Quarriers wanted to operate a last in, first out policy for staff, which wasn't always good. My husband started negotiating with Quarriers on behalf of the house parents to negotiate a better deal.
214. The staff numbers fell as the number of children fell. By the end, there were only two children left in my cottage. It wasn't financially viable for them to keep us open after that and we were quickly made redundant.

Life after working in Quarriers

215. My husband and I continued to live in the cottage within Quarriers village, and we became foster carers. We did that for about twenty years. We got lots of training about risks to look out for and had to keep lots of records when we fostered. We got folders on all the children and we were also required to keep diaries on the children. We got more involved as time went on, and started to appear at panels.
216. Fostering was harder than being a house parent because in Quarriers we had two days off a week and holidays. You never got time off as a foster carer. We retired from fostering about four years ago.
217. I heard things about sexual abuse after I left Quarriers. I think the house father in cottage 42 before us, Mr Nicholson, served some time in prison for sexual abuse. I took over the same group of children that he had in the cottage. I don't know what the details were. I only found out about this when the court case happened. I didn't know at the time, and I don't know if Quarriers knew at the time.

218. I knew Samuel McBrearty, who has also been convicted. I knew him when I was a child in Quarriers and he was a joiner. I think him and his wife later became house parents. I don't know if he was there at the same time as I was a house parent.
219. I have had nearly all the kids I looked after as a house parent come back to see me. Even the ones who I thought didn't have a great time have come back to see me. They came to visit when I was still in Quarriers as a foster carer. The ones who I can remember have visited me are [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED]. There have been others who I can't remember.

Records

223. I don't know anything about the records that Quarriers kept. They were all kept in the office which was nothing to do with me. I had nothing to do with any of that. I wasn't required to keep any records. I think towards the end of my time there, we may have been required to do a monthly report on the children. I might be confusing that with my time as a foster parent after Quarriers, though. I don't really remember.

224. We must have been required to keep a note of corporal punishment because I remember writing in that once when I smacked a boy. I suppose that means it must have been allowed because the book was in the cottage. Somebody must have given that to me, or it must have already been in the cottage. Corporal punishment was stopped during my time there.


Other information

225. I think Quarriers was a much nicer place for children to grow up in than some of the local authority homes. They were very forward thinking and always came up with new ideas on how to look after children. They changed with times and kept up with their legal obligations.

226. Most of the children my husband and I looked after had a fantastic experience at Quarriers. We had a hugely happy time and loved being house parents.

227. 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.

QBS



Signed.....

Dated..... *5th October 2018.*