

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

FWX

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is FWX. My name at birth was FWX. My date of birth is 1960. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in Edinburgh and my mum's name was [REDACTED]. She is alive and aged eighty-four. My dad was [REDACTED] and he died at 72. My sister [REDACTED] was born in 1961, then followed by my sister [REDACTED] in 1964 and then my brother [REDACTED] in 1966. I remember my dad as a narcissist, an abuser and a bully with violent reactions and whose word was the law. My earliest memory is of violence between my parents and me protecting one of my younger siblings behind the couch. I believe we lived in three different addresses when I was very young and I am unable to recall the names.
3. There was a woman called Miss Noble who worked in the Royal Dispensary of Edinburgh and she applied to the Edinburgh Corporation for our reception into care. The records say my mother was in hospital and six months pregnant. Miss Noble rang Barnardo's to ask for immediate help for two little girls as the father had no-one to care for them. The records say we were admitted to the shelter at Ravelrig House on [REDACTED] 1962.
4. When I was sixteen I found I had another sibling called [REDACTED] who was born before my parents were married. He was raised by my grandparents. I always

thought he was my cousin. My granny told me he was my brother when I was sixteen. Sadly [REDACTED] died when he was twenty-eight.

Ravelrig House, Balerno, Edinburgh

5.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later



Canaan Lodge, Edinburgh

6.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later



7.

Nazareth House, Cardonald, Glasgow

8. Me and [REDACTED] were discharged to Nazareth House, Cardonald on [REDACTED] 1967 and at some stage all four of us were there, but we went in at different times. I was called [REDACTED] FWX when I was in the convent rather than my first name. I can't remember if I was allocated a number.

9. There were both boys and girls at Nazareth House, but boys must have been taken out at a certain age. I can't remember if there were boys in the green group where I was, but there were certainly boys in the convent. The ages in the green group were from five upwards. I remember that the helper [REDACTED] was older and about sixteen and I think when girls got to that age they ended up staying there to work.

Routine at Nazareth House

First day

10. I don't remember travelling to Glasgow or who I travelled with. I remember a long driveway through the gates. I think I went up the front steps with two of my siblings and my records may be wrong when it is noted we went in at different times. It was a massive building. There were two statues, one of them was Our Lady with a statue of St Bernadette kneeling down to the right of the front of the building. There were steps leading up to the front entrance. Then we went into the reception area on the left hand side of the entrance. Other than that I just remember shiny floors and long corridors.

11. There were two nuns in black and white uniforms. One was old and the other one was younger. They told me I was being assigned into the green group. I think the green room was to the left. It was a big room with a record player and books and there were things like jigsaw puzzles but everything was put away into cubbyholes. After that I can't remember what happened that evening.

12. Nazareth House was a big long building in beautiful grounds. There were two statues outside. I remember everything seemed coloured either grey or burgundy. The green group room was down a corridor to the left of reception. There was a dormitory upstairs. I remember there were back stairs that we used to go down to go to the chapel early every morning. I can't remember going up the stairs, only down them.
13. In terms of staff, I just remember Sister ^{LFL} [REDACTED] who was in charge of the green group. I can't remember anyone else apart from the helpers. There were helpers who worked in the convent and there could have been older girls too. I remember one girl who was a helper and she was called [REDACTED]. She was a lot older than me and she was a lovely girl. She was the only who wasn't cruel. All the staff and helpers seemed to hate children and I can't understand it.

Mornings and bedtime

14. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were in the same dorm as me. I don't know how many were in my dorm. I can't picture another child. The beds must have been close to each other as I don't remember much of a gap between them. There was a small locker beside my bed. There were two rows of beds. I was on the left hand side of the room and next to [REDACTED] I don't know where [REDACTED] slept in the room, but I wasn't close to her. I don't know if I had any personal possessions with me to put in the locker. I've seen in my records that I had a habit of ripping up bits of papers and putting them in my locker.
15. We were woken up frequently in the night and Sister ^{LFL} [REDACTED] checked if the bed was wet by sliding her hand under the covers. If it was wet I got battered and it was always wet. When we got up in the morning we put on the same clothes we had on the day before and went down the back stairs to chapel. Then back to the convent to get ready for school. After that we were off to Lourdes primary school. At bedtime we'd get ready for bed by brushing our teeth and putting our nightdresses on. Our day clothes were folded up at the bottom of the bed or on a rail. Then into bed and no talking and the lights were out.

Mealtimes / Food

16. Breakfast was in the refectory or the 'ref'. I can't remember meals, its only Christmas dinner that I can recall. I hated it. I don't remember a dining room or which side I sat on. We had to eat everything that was on our plate. I remember rinds of bacon and I gagged on them. I have a small throat and a sensitive gag reflex. I was expected to eat the greasy bacon rind and I knew it wasn't going to go down my throat. When she wasn't looking I took it out of my mouth and chucked it under the table.
17. Sister ^{LFL} put her hand on the nape of my neck and into my hair with her fingers splayed and up the back of my head and shoved under the table. She told me 'you'll eat every bit of that, you will not leave this room until you've eaten it'. I was in and out of my chair and swinging my legs under the table. I just couldn't eat the bacon, I tried to and it was sliding in and out of my throat. I was sick and I was thrown a spoon and told to eat that too.
18. I have a memory of Christmas dinner. I can't eat big dinners and I still can't. I couldn't eat the food. I can picture myself under the table and I don't know how long I was there for. She was swinging her legs and booting me. I would like that woman dead. She was evil. How could she hate kids like that, I don't understand it.
19. I don't remember tea time after school or what we ate.

Washing / bathing

20. There was a room with toilets along one side and a row of sinks on the right hand side and cubicles to the left. We were not allowed to shut the cubicle doors when we used the toilets. I think we had a bath on a Saturday or Sunday night. I can picture the bath, but I can't remember being in it. My hair was washed over the sinks and toilets. To this day I can't have my hair washed at the hairdressers and have my hair cut dry now. The adult helpers would assist in the hair washing over the sink. My head was forced under the water by the nape of my neck. I wet myself in terror and had my hands flailing from side to side. I'm not sure if this happened every time my hair was washed.

21. There were flannels for washing our faces in the morning and they were kept on pegs. I can't remember if there were names on the pegs. We had toothbrushes as well. We'd go up to use the toilets after teatime to get ready for bed and we'd brush our teeth. That would be overseen by a helper or a nun. I only saw Sister LFL in the toilets once. Once we cleaned our teeth we went to put on our nightdresses and our clothes were folded up.
22. One time when we were brushing our teeth over the sinks and I cupped my hands to catch drips of water from the taps. The bed wetters weren't allowed to drink anything after 4 pm. Someone pushed my head into the sink and my head was rattled off the sink. I split the inside of my lip and my frenula was split. I screamed when I saw the blood. I was battered around the head, by an older girl or a helper, with an open hand. It wasn't who did it. I was battered then for making so much noise. I was hit often and I would see red colours lighting up inside my head. I remember there being a lot of blood and my toothbrush was covered in blood.

School

23. I went to Lourdes primary school that was nearby. I can remember just two pupils, a girl called and I remember thinking they were normal and I wanted to be like I was jealous of her. She had long hair and mine was cut really short because of the nits. It was cut really badly.
24. I met as a teenager and he knew who I was. I was so painfully shy at school, so much so I was mute and wouldn't speak and didn't want any spotlight on me as that would mean something bad would happen. I wouldn't put my hand up to use the toilet and I would wet myself. The other children would be laughing and I'd be mortified. I didn't want to be the centre of any attention as it normally meant I would get battered.
25. After school we'd go back to the convent and then to the green group room. We could play outside if it was dry.

Religion

26. We went to a service first thing every day of the week and before school. I was always so tired and cold and was hauled out of bed and down the back stairs. I was Protestant at birth and then baptised into the Catholic faith by my dad. I was holy until my twenties and I would pray, but God was no good to me. Fear had kept me involved in the church, The teaching at Nazareth House was very much about fire and brimstone and 'God would strike you down dead' and nuns did everything for him in his name. It instilled fear in us.
27. At my holy communion I was in my white dress and veil. We had been told it was a sin if we touched the body of Christ with our fingers or our tongue. A wafer I had taken as part of the service got stuck to the roof of my mouth. I used my fingers to remove it. Sister ^{LFL} saw me and she pulled me out of chapel and hit me and slapped me, both inside and outside of the chapel. I was sent to bed and was not involved in the festivities that followed the service.

Work/chores

28. There were long corridors. On a Saturday we had to put pink wax on the floors and get down on hands and knees. Then we had to wear dusters on our feet to polish it off with. I tried to slide along and was caught by Sister ^{LFL} and she was with a tall skinny nun. Sister ^{LFL} punched me and the inside of my head lit up bright red.
29. I can't remember doing any kitchen duties or doing the washing up.

Trips / Holidays

30. If we did go on a trip it was with the taxi drivers on a trip to the seaside. The cabs were decked out with balloons and streamers to go to the seaside. was still there then. Sister ^{LFL} hauled me out of the taxi and I don't know why and she told me to go back to my bed. It meant I didn't get to go that time. I went on another trip and it

could have been to Saltcoats. We also went to the circus just before Christmas. I hate circuses and I don't know why.

Leisure time

31. On Sundays we went to the old people's home and we could watch a film, sometimes they featured Mario Lanza. I remember his song, 'Come Prima'. Much later on I worked in London in an export company run by two elderly brothers. One of them started to sing Come Prima and I was transported back to the old people's home. I had a panic attack and felt sick and ran home. By this time I was at least aged in my mid-twenties and hadn't thought about Nazareth House for years, but the memory came flooding back that day.
32. Every Sunday we had a walk in Bellahouston Park. There was one nun in front and everyone else behind her. One day, I was wearing my usual anorak and it was falling off my shoulders. Sister LFL grabbed me and decided to zip the anorak up for me by running the zip up to the top and right up my throat so that it caught my skin. Then she slapped me with her hand across my face and the back of my head. I was making so much noise. I have a scar on my throat now from the zip. A doctor noticed it many years later and asked if I had been touched with a knife.
33. We had lessons in Scottish and Irish Country dancing from a teacher whose name I think was FWJ. He held a black plimsoll, or a gutty, in his hand and slapped us with it if we got a step wrong. It was painful, they had rubber soles and with grips and it hurt to be slapped on the legs or ankles with it.
34. We were in a competition with other kids from the convent. I think we went to a hotel for the competition. We won a prize and I remember a big blue rosette. I made a mistake in the last reel. Sister LFL came over to me and I put my head down when I saw her. I was sitting down and when I saw her coming towards me I wet myself. The navy-blue dress I was wearing changed colour at the wet patch. It was obvious when I stood up. She put her hand on the back on my head, like she had before, and I was marched out of the room and I was put to bed and didn't get to go to the winners party.

35. There was a boot room where we also kept our clothes. In that room was a long stainless steel pole that went to the ceiling. Somehow I was able to shimmy up that pole using my hands and knees and stay up there for ages. I think I just wanted to be by myself. I don't remember sliding down it. It was either that room or a room off it where we practised that dancing.
36. Years later my daughter brought home someone else's PE kit and it had black plimsolls in it. I put it in the rubbish chute as I couldn't have them in the house.
37. The teacher, **FWJ** looked old to me and in his 40s or 50s. He also drove the minibus for the dancing competition. He had dark hair and he was a short man of medium build. He was stern looking with quiffed hair and I think he used brylcream in his hair.

Birthdays and Christmas

38. I don't remember a Christmas tree or having any presents. We were taken to Woolworths to spend to spend our pocket money on presents. I bought my dad white hankies with **■** embroidered on them and I got bath cubes for my mum. I didn't even know her. I bought sweets for my siblings. The hankies were snatched out of my hand. Sister **LFL** told me my daddy didn't want me and I was a bad girl and I wouldn't be needing the hankies. I don't know what happened to the bath cubes. I remember giving the sweets to my siblings.
39. I got my money from a savings book. I can picture the small book. I got pocket money every week to put in it. There was a tiny squat nun who dealt with the pocket money and the savings book. It was done in the room next to the reception area that had a desk. We had to queue up every week and the money was put in the book. I can't remember anything else. I don't know who got the money out that we needed to buy the presents at Woolworths.

Visits / Inspections

40. I understand we were wards of court. We also had visits from city councillors every year. I have seen that written in my records. I know one of the documents in my records says the [REDACTED] children were interviewed and they seemed very depressed. I was with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in the green room or the reception area. I don't know who interviewed me. I just remember adults in beige raincoats and umbrellas coming in the home. I think they were two ladies. I can't remember faces or hair colour.
41. My aunty [REDACTED] came with my granny. [REDACTED] brought in a dress for me and it was awful. They were from my mum's family. They came once a month. We didn't have a proper conversation when they came. My granny and Aunt [REDACTED] were not there for long. Nothing major was said and we spoke about mundane things like school. I just recall getting a dress and a packet of sweets. We would meet in the reception area and there would be a nun there at the start of a visit and then they would leave. I remember them being in the green room too and that was the room where the green group children spent their free time and I went there on my first day in the convent.
42. I never spoke to my gran and [REDACTED] about what was happening. I didn't speak about it for decades until I spoke to two of my friends much later as an adult, and my doctor. I kept it to myself for years. My friend told me I was nice, kind loving and friendly and she was surprised I'd been in care.
43. My father came often but he was thrown out as he was very combative and would curse at the nuns. He let us down a lot. We would be told we had a visitor coming and waited in the reception area and he wouldn't turn up. I can't remember being in his company for more than a few minutes and he was sent away.
44. He told me years later that was a lie and he always told them when he couldn't get a lift from Edinburgh to Glasgow to see us. He also said to me he had receipts for him paying for us to be in Nazareth House. I wanted to see a photograph of myself as a child and he refused to give them to me as they belonged to him. He eventually

showed me photos of us young children. We were slum children. I had a tea towel for a nappy.

Siblings/contact

45. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were with me in Nazareth House. [REDACTED] was living somewhere else. He disappeared from Nazareth House overnight with no explanation. He was initially in the nursery. I remember peering over the cot at him when he was a baby. No-one told us where he went. I just remember hearing the word 'effeminate' and he was becoming 'effeminate' being around so many girls

Healthcare

46. There was an older nun who gave us polio drops on sugar cubes and I thought of her as a nurse. She died when I was at Nazareth House. I have no recollection of seeing a doctor or a dentist.
47. I had measles and Sister ^{LFL}[REDACTED] thought I was pretending to have them when I was genuinely unwell.

Running away

48. I never thought of running away. I didn't know where I was and the convent was surrounded with a big fence and it was next to a big main road.
49. I remember hiding away and being in a small cupboard with a single door knob. I don't know if I did it voluntarily or if I was shoved in there. I think it was a cupboard for toys.

Bed Wetting

50. Me, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were bed wetters and we weren't allowed to go anywhere because of this. This also meant we weren't allowed to drink water after a certain time in the evening. Sister ^{LFL}[REDACTED] checked our beds once or twice each night to see if they were wet and it would happen every night.

51. She had what I call a swish stick because of the noise it made as it came through the air. I don't know if it was a rod or a stick. She'd pull up a wooden chair and bring it close to the side of my bed. This was in the middle of the night. She'd sit on the chair and she was fully dressed with her habit on. I'd be standing by the side of my bed and she would be facing the side of the bed. She'd strip me naked and make me put my hands up high in the air with fingers pointed upwards. I wasn't allowed to put my arms down. I can still feel the pain in my shoulders now and I can't put my hands above my head. If my hands dropped a fraction I would be whipped with the swish stick. She would hit me anywhere she liked to from head to toe. I was only allowed to put my hands down when she'd had enough of sitting there.
52. I can't picture exactly what the swish stick looked like that she hit me with. I remember my ear was very painful. I don't think she aimed for my ear. She was deranged and she terrorised me. I had loads of injuries as a result of her using the swish stick on me and a doctor was never called.

Discipline

53. There was a room that was connected to our dorm and that was where Sister ^{LFL} [REDACTED] slept. The door to her cubicle entered into the dorm room. There were glass windows surrounding the cubicle covered with blackout curtains. I was a curious child and I peered into the room and I saw a single bed and a crotched blanket over it and a locker. There was nothing else in the room. I got caught by Sister ^{LFL} [REDACTED]. I can't remember if I got battered by her that time.
54. I didn't talk to anyone and I just knew not to approach anyone and talk to them. My head went down so I didn't catch their eye. I didn't respond to any conversation. I tried to be invisible. If they noticed me I could be abused. If I saw other children being chastised or beaten I put my head down and didn't look to the right or the left and was grateful that it wasn't happening to me. I could hear it but not see it. The only abuse I can recall witnessing was when Sister ^{LFL} [REDACTED] was beating [REDACTED]

Abuse at Nazareth House

55. Sister ^{LFL} called us 'whore's children' and told me 'your mother's a whore' and you're here because no-body wants you. ^{LFL} liked to use that language on us. I was mute in her presence. She terrified me. Even the sight of her would cause me to wet myself and then I'd get battered for wetting myself.
56. Sister ^{LFL} left the convent suddenly. My sister was a quiet, gentle soul and she was the youngest girl in the family. I was aged about seven or eight and I woke up to see Sister ^{LFL} check's bed to see if it was wet and was screaming. She battered in her bed with her hands and fists. I can't recall if had injuries the next day.
57. I snapped and I flew out of bed and jumped on the nun's back. I was on her back and my arms were raised and my arms were round her neck to hold onto her. I was so angry. She threw me off and I landed on the floor. She turned on me and she either told me to take my nightdress off or pulled it off herself somehow. I remember the chair and her sitting on it. I think I was in shock and so was she. She was using her swish stick and I got the worst beating ever. I was naked and whipped head to toe. I could hear the word 'defiant' being said. I fainted. No doctor was called. I couldn't get out of bed the next day. I hurt from head to toe. I don't know if I went to school that day.
58. Sister ^{LFL} disappeared that night and she wasn't there the next morning. An older girl, maybe one of the helpers, mentioned a broken bone. I don't know if that meant Sister ^{LFL} had a broken bone or if that was me. I've never been aware of having a broken bone myself. I never set eyes on her again.
59. One of the nuns died. She was a lovely nun and we called her the nurse as she gave us polio drops on sugar cubes. She was very old and wrinkled and smiled a lot. She was laid out in an open coffin. All of the children had to queue up to walk past her coffin and kiss her. I was in the middle of the queue and the children at the front were

crying and screaming. I hadn't a clue what was going on. I think all the convent children were there.

60. When I got to the coffin I was told by Sister ^{LFL} to kiss the body. Her hands came up the back of my head and in my hair. Somehow she lifted me and her hand was under my armpit and my head was pushed forward into the dead nuns face. I was hysterical. The strange thing was the nun who had been so wrinkled in her lifetime suddenly didn't look wrinkled anymore and she looked young. I can remember that vision I had of her face in those few moments. I was forced to kiss that dead nun and no-one had ever kissed me. I saw that other children were made to kiss the nuns face that day.
61. I remember seeing a priest on that same day and he was dressed in a white and purple robe and scarf. He said no words about what was happening. He was quite young and in his thirties or forties. I don't know his name and just recall the colours of his clothes and he had blond hair.

Leaving Nazareth House

62. I left Nazareth House in 1969 and was taken into foster care. I believe from my records that a priest called Father Sheridan was involved in putting my name forward for foster care as I have read in my records that he was involved. I looked a bit like the foster mother as we both had red hair. He was not a nice man.
63. I went into foster care sometime after Sister ^{LFL} disappeared. One day I was in the reception area and there was a man and woman. She was called ^{FVP} and the whole family called her ^{FVP} as her nickname. He was called She was small and wide and he was so skinny. He had a nice, kind gentle voice. I was asked if I wanted to go and visit them and go out for a trip with them. I said yes and my head nodded but my heart was saying no, but I didn't want to let them down. I wanted to get out of the convent, but didn't want to leave and

64. I was taken out for local day visits at first and I was spoilt rotten by them. Then I visited them in Croy for half day visits and this progressed to overnight. Then for weekends before I went to the foster family for good. I was aged nine and coming up for ten. There was no discussion about my feelings about fostering with the social worker.

Foster care with FVP-SPO [REDACTED] **at** [REDACTED] **Croy**
and [REDACTED] **Croy**

65. Their home was in a big house that had been converted into four smaller properties. They were on the top floor and the first property had one bedroom. I kept my own surname of FWX [REDACTED] and I wasn't allowed to forget my name was FWX [REDACTED] FVP [REDACTED] was the eldest child from a big family and the mother died. FVP [REDACTED] looked after the two households and took in the pay packets and bought the shopping and did the cleaning.
66. There were three of us in the household and I was back and forward to my grandad's house a lot. The first family home at [REDACTED] had only one bedroom and I slept on the bed settee in the living room. Then we moved to number [REDACTED] as it was a bigger property in the same street and I had my own bedroom.
67. FVP [REDACTED] father's house, my grandad's house, had eight adults in it. Their surname was [REDACTED]. At FVP [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] it was just the two adults. She had tried having children of her own and had suffered miscarriages. Her dad became my grandad and he was a stern, dour Scot but he was a diamond to me.
68. At first, in my granddad's house there was [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] (who was married and out of the house), [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] (whose name was really [REDACTED]), [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] (who was married and out of the house). The mother had died when [REDACTED] was aged four. Later on I lived in that house full time from the ages of seventeen to twenty-one and some of the siblings had moved out. The others were aged from teens up to twenties and thirties. [REDACTED] was married and her husband and two children and expecting a third and they stayed in the house at the same time as me. There were four bedrooms.

69. Both FVP and █████ were alcoholics and drank Carlsberg Special Brew. She was far worse than █████. FVP would hide her drink in a cup and down the side of a chair. It became more frequent after █████ lost his job. My relationship with █████ was good, but my relationship with FVP was awful. She was a vicious alcoholic.
70. The █████ ran out of coins for the meter. FVP dealt with the money for food shopping and running the household and they ran out as she had spent it all on alcohol. Their house was in darkness. FVP's sister █████ then took over the running of the house. FVP started drinking four cans of Carlsberg Special Brew every day rather than just at weekends. █████ was a quiet and gentle and he just wanted a quiet life.
71. I loved the family, but the mood in the house could change quickly. I learnt avoidance tactics from a young age. They were brilliant to me and I got on great with them. We had our rows and we had our arguments. My grandad from my foster family was dour and not talkative, but he used to let me borrow his clothes. His name was Mr █████ I was told I could call him what I wanted and I called him granda. He worked in the coal mine.

First day

72. FVP had a younger sister called █████ and the youngest child from my grandad. She was aged thirteen when I moved in and she hated me. She'd been the youngest for a long time and her nose was out of joint. I went into foster care wearing a pale dress and coat from the convent. █████ took me for a walk. She said 'your mammy and daddy's waiting for you' in my new granddad's house and they were going to take me back. I ran away up Croy hill and I hid as I was terrified. I was found curled up in the foetal position and crying my eyes out. █████ was told off for what she did. She was never kind or nice to me.

Food

73. When [REDACTED] was working he got paid on a Thursday and it meant I got a hot meal of roast potatoes, Yorkshire pudding and roast beef and it was known as a TV dinner. It was ready-made and was heated up in the oven. The only thing FVP cooked was a big pot of stew made in the [REDACTED] house. She'd bring some of it back to her house for her and [REDACTED] and maybe some of it for me. This is what I was expected to eat when I came home from school. FVP put far too much salt in it and I hated the taste so [REDACTED] made me a roll and square sausages instead every night. Apart from that food I just had the TV dinner on a Thursday.
74. I had lunch at my grandad's and my tea with FVP and [REDACTED]. There was a stew of some at the start of the week and they would just add ingredients to it and it became a pot of soup. I never had had any of that at lunchtime and I'd have a piece and jam or a piece and crisps. I can't remember eating breakfast.

Clothing

75. I had a red bomber jacket and we went to Glasgow to buy it. I wanted it as I'd seen people on Top of the Pops in something similar. It was the only new thing I remember having to wear. I don't know where my clothes came from otherwise.

School

76. I had to change schools from Lourdes school in Cardonald to [REDACTED] in Croy and I was petrified at my first day. It was a small village school and there was just two classes and two teachers who were lovely. They brought me out of my shell, I was so shy. My first best pal at school was [REDACTED] who normally sat next to [REDACTED] but [REDACTED] was off sick and had been best friends with [REDACTED] and I took her place. She didn't like me when she came back.
77. I was too shy to get the milk at eleven o' clock and I told the teachers I didn't like milk, but really I loved milk.

78. Mr ^{FUW} was ^{SNR} and he insisted that the 'best girl of the day' brought him a cup of tea every day to his office. I remember him as a tiny, skinny guy with grey hair who was soft-spoken. I was the best girl one day and I took him a cup of tea on saucer and I had shaky hands and was trying my best not to spill any tea into the saucer. He would ask for the door to be closed. I stood by his desk and he put his hand up my skirt and into my knickers and started patting my backside. I was shocked and completely mute. I knew what he was doing was wrong. He was talking and I've no idea what he was saying. He acted like it was a normal thing to do.
79. I ran away from school to my granda's. I went there at lunch time anyway. I didn't say a word until came home from work, and he came home between five and six. I told him what Mr ^{FUW} did to me and he then told ^{FVP} She quizzed me about it. I was standing outside of the room and I could hear them talking. She spoke openly about how angry she was and 'how dare he'. I was glad to have been believed.
80. She went up to the school and a meeting was held. At home afterwards I heard 'I was a troubled child' and the phrase 'you don't know what blood runs through her'. After the meeting Mr ^{FUW} stayed on in his role. I remember he used to pat the head of every child going into morning assembly. He never had his hands in my knickers again and I was not alone in his presence.
81. I went to secondary school in Cumbernauld. I can't recall the name. I loved school but I wasn't there often as I used to get woken up in the early hours of the morning by the drinking and the partying in the foster house from Thursday to Sunday and then the money ran out so the party stopped. I don't remember any investigation about my poor attendance but it was underlined in my school report.
82. I did four mock o' level exams and passed well, but didn't go back. I got a job at sixteen. I was shy and had no confidence in myself, despite seeming brash and friendly.

Trips/holidays

83. [REDACTED] was a painter and decorator. One of his bosses lent him a caravan at the seaside. We stayed there for a long bank holiday weekend.

Visits

84. There was a social work visit every year by a different person every time. They came by train and not by car. We would meet in the living room and I would just nod my head when they talked about school. The visit lasted about an hour. That would be me, FVP and my granny [REDACTED] sometimes.
85. I was told by FVP if I spoke up 'you know what's going to happen' and that meant I would go back to the convent or back to my dad. The social work visits were not announced, but FVP knew when to get the sandwiches out and the teacups and I was told to be on my best behaviour and put on my Sunday best.

Family contact

86. I'd go back to Nazareth House to visit my sisters and they'd come out individually on visits. It was Christmas. I had presents for [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. FVP and [REDACTED] were with me and I was in my best clothes. I was aged about eleven or twelve. I remember being in the convent, but don't remember the visit. Unknown to us, my dad was on his way to the convent and he saw us. He had a friend with him. He saw us walking out of the convent. He went ballistic. He got me by one arm and FVP had my other arm. They had a tug of war over me. Dad won and he was pushing me into the car. I was kicking at him and screaming I didn't want to go with him.
87. FVP was screaming hysterically for the police to be called. She and [REDACTED] went into the convent. My dad's friend told him 'leave the bairn alone. She's greetin' her een out'. I didn't know what it meant. The police arrived and my dad was swearing at them. FVP went into the convent and phoned someone in Croy to ask for a lift.

88. My dad hit me across the face and I had the marks on my cheek for hours afterwards. It was a threat to me for a long time after that if I didn't do what FVP wanted 'you'll go back', or 'you know your father wants you to live with him'. She knew I was terrified of him. We didn't go back to the convent. I think I was aged eleven or twelve.
89. I saw my sisters on holidays. The one I remember was when my granny and granda in ██████ had my sister ██████ for her birthday. That was in ██████. Our ██████ FVP sister, took me up to the party. The place was full of people and only three of us had red hair. Me, my auntie ██████ (my granny's daughter) and another woman who I didn't know. My brother ██████ was there, but I thought he was my cousin. He had alopecia. He kept saying 'that's your mammy, that's your mammy' and auntie ██████ was telling him to shut up.
90. It turned out it was my mother who was brought in secretly to see her two children. She had red hair. She kept crying and was taken out of the room. We were staying overnight and me and ██████ were in the big bed. ██████ was sitting in a chair and the red headed woman was reading us a story and started crying again. The next day ██████ must have worked it out and there was a big argument and the red-headed woman wasn't there anymore. We were taken away the next day and I wasn't allowed to go back to my granny's until I could make my own mind up.
91. My sisters, ██████ and ██████ either one of them or both, came in the summer holidays. ██████ came one time. FVP said she wanted to adopt us all, but it never happened. ██████ and I didn't get on as we didn't have a bond. When I was twelve my father decided he wanted us all back even if it broke my heart, and I've read that somewhere. He wrote a long letter at the time that I read. He even went to see a solicitor about getting us back.
92. Later on, ██████ came back into my life. He was a wee blond haired boy. I got his address from a social worker when I was sixteen and I went to try and find him in Glasgow but couldn't find the place. I next saw ██████ when I was twenty-two and living in London. He'd got my address from people in Croy and he came to see me. It

was great to see him and he ended up staying with me. Then my mother turned up unannounced and uninvited and told us none of it was her fault. [REDACTED] came back to my home and caught sight of her and disappeared. He assumed I had set it up.

Running away

93. Granda [REDACTED] worked down in the pit. I'd not been at the foster home for long when I overheard him talking to FVP [REDACTED] about a conversation he'd had with another man in the pit. They'd been talking about fostering children as I'd recently come into FVP-SPC family. The other man had grandchildren in foster care. My granda told him my name was FWX [REDACTED]. The other man said I was his granddaughter. I ran away when I heard this as I thought I would be taken away. I ran to Croy station and I was found by the police hidden under a bench.
94. [REDACTED] made me a cup of Oxo and sat with me in the living room and we had a chat. He told me I couldn't keep on running away and how I was a perfect fit for the family. He started to cry and he hugged me and no-one else had ever touched me in a kind way. He gave me a wee book and pen and told me to write things down that I was worried about. I don't know if I ever wrote in the book he gave me.
95. I ran away frequently. If anything upset me I would take off. The above example is the only time I recall the police picking me up. I had terrible meltdowns and tantrums as a kid. I don't know what started them off. One of my friends, [REDACTED] came on holiday with us and I had a tantrum and she was shocked as she had never seen me like that.

Bed wetting

96. FVP [REDACTED] got regular payments for looking after me. I knew that at the time. She would put in for a new mattress for me that I didn't need and she claimed I wet the bed frequently. I had stopped wetting the bed when I was in the foster home up to the point that my dad tried to kidnap me outside the convent and started again when he tried to take

me. As I grew older I would wake up in the night to go to the toilet and that became normal.

Abuse at foster home

97. After school FVP would start on me as she wanted me to ask a neighbour for money as [REDACTED] wouldn't be paid for a few days. I was humiliated by this. If she didn't pay them back they would tear strips off me in public. FVP wanted me to ask to borrow money from neighbours and friends and I don't think they'd agree to it with her directly and she sent me instead. They knew everyone in the neighbourhood and the neighbours had borrowed money from FVP when they could.
98. [REDACTED] lost his job and the drinking got worse. It was still party time once it came to 8 o'clock and anyone would be let in if they had a drink or food with them. I was thirteen and in secondary school when it started. It was so cold in the house and the heating came from a single coal fire. Every room was freezing.
99. I used to get woken up with people asking me to make a pot of what was called 'white chips'. To me they were cooked, but in truth it was freezing in the house and I had to wait for the ring on the hob to heat up a pot of lard. There would be between three and ten adults drinking in the house until the early hours. Every night I was woken up to make a pot of my white chips. Chips aren't meant to be white, but that was what they looked like when they came out of the pot.
100. I had to light fags for FVP from the electric ring of the cooker from when I was aged twelve. The coal fire would have gone out. I switched on the ring of the cooker to light the fag. My eyebrows and eyelashes would get singed. It meant I started smoking from the age of twelve and it started from me lighting them off the cooker for her. I ended up pinching lighters and cigarettes and took them to school.
101. There was a house party when I was fourteen. There was a function on at the Miner's Social Welfare club. FVP needed my help to get her ready as she was too overweight

to do it herself. I had to help her get into a panty girdle, it was like a vice and I also had to help her get out of it too when she was drunk. I hated doing it. It was hard work and I was tiny. I had an exam at school the next day and as they were going out I had peace at home to study. I went to bed early. There was a house party when she came back. She'd bring anyone home who had a drink or a carry out with them. I would often wake up and there would be strangers sleeping on the sofa. This was every night and every week.

102. I was woken up in the early hours by a man in my bedroom who had two fingers inside my vagina. I woke up screaming. I leapt out of bed and screamed. People came running up the stairs. ██████████ was there, she was FVP ██████████ friend, and she was asking me what the matter was. I said 'that man's after hurting my privates'. I was hysterical and upset. A woman slapped me on the face and it turned out she was the mother of the man.
103. FVP ██████████ came in the room. She was very drunk and telling me to shut up. ██████████ told all the others to get out. The man was stood at the door. He was quite young and in his late twenties or early thirties and had sandy blond hair. He had a look on his face that I'd not seen before, a cross between a smirk and a grimace. He told ██████████ he'd heard me screaming and I must be having a nightmare. I saw the man had his fingers crossed and ██████████ didn't get to see that.
104. ██████████ was in my room and he closed the door. He told me to go to the toilet and wash myself. There was a splatter of blood on my nightie. I told ██████████ I didn't want to live in in that house any more. He told me he would get a lock put on my door. I got a sliding snib for the door that weekend.

Leaving foster care

105. Social work involvement stopped when I was sixteen. The day when Sister Ann came to see me at the foster home and I told her about the parties was the last visit. There

was no discussion about the end of foster care. There was no support or aftercare from social work.

106. I'd started working at sixteen as an office junior in Glasgow. I lasted four weeks and I got a cheque at the end of it for £40 and FVP took the money off me. I was aware that she was paid money for looking after me as she got money for things she claimed I needed. I left that job and got another one as a bookkeeper recording the weight of trucks and the load they carried. I enjoyed the interaction with the truck drivers. Two other girls worked there and made fun of me as I looked like a tramp in comparison to them.
107. FVP took my wages off me and I told her I wanted to keep the money. We had an argument and I snapped and I shoved her in the bedroom. I held the door shut so she couldn't get out. She told me she would send me back to the convent and this threat meant nothing to me now. She shouted out of the window that I was threatening to kill her. Neighbours came up the stairs and FVP was red with fury and told me to get out of the house.
108. I took clothes from my bedroom and put them into a black bin bag and went to my granda's. I asked him to lend me money until I got paid. I got £10 and I went to Edinburgh to see my dad and then left him after one hour. I went to Cambuslang to where sister lived. I was there for a couple of nights. Then I went to live with my granda and never spoke to FVP again.

Reporting when in care

109. I was sixteen when a nun came out from the social work office once and the fact that she was a nun terrified me. She was lovely and her name was Sister Ann. I told her about me making the white chips, the smoking, the drinking and the parties. I didn't tell her about the incident, described elsewhere in that statement, in my bedroom as I couldn't tell a nun about that and I was too embarrassed.

110. The only time I saw a social worker by myself was when I walked with Sister Ann to the train station and I told her about the late night parties. She told me I would soon be out of there. I didn't know what that meant. There was no discussion about where I would go after foster care. In my records it says it was a 'successful placement, but the family seemed rough'.

Life after being in care

111. When I moved into my granda's I already worked as a book keeper and receptionist. My Granda encouraged me to write to the local hospital to be a domestic and I ended up being interviewed for a nursing assistant post. I started working there with patients who were physically disabled and very misshapen. I loved them and I loved the job. I was invited to do more nurse training but I was afraid of doing exams. I started to do the training course to be a nurse.

112. At the same I had a boyfriend called [REDACTED] and he was a heavy drinker and he would be physically violent with his fists and his boots. I became pregnant after five years and we got married. He was made redundant on our wedding day. After eight months he left me alone with the baby and he went to London. I had no one to help me and mind the baby so I could do my finals to complete my nurse training.

113. I went to London to be with [REDACTED] and we lived with his sister. Then we got a bedsit. He lost his job and he was playing around with other women while also beating me. He was an angry and violent drunk. The police were called after a particularly violent incident and an unsympathetic police woman told me 'the way you're going, you're going to lose that child'. Two years later my neighbour called the police and this time I got a male officer who was also Scottish. The police told [REDACTED] to leave and he did. After ten years of non-stop beatings I cut him out of my life and divorced him when I was twenty-six.

114. Three years later I met my second husband, [REDACTED] who initially appeared to be kind gentle and quiet. It turned out he was dangerously mentally ill and this became horrific

in the long run as he was diagnosed officially as psychopathic or the new term anti-social personality disorder. I was subjected to some physical abuse and much more emotional, sexual and emotional abuse.

115. I was unable to return to nursing as I couldn't do any lifting due to a back injury. I worked in various different jobs. We moved to Ireland in 2002 as my husband had inherited some money that we invested in a big, rundown cottage in the countryside. I had gone from being a working woman with my own income. We lived rurally and I had no access to money and he cut off the electricity so we couldn't use the computer or watch TV. We had two sons and the only income I had was child benefit, but my husband would take that too and spend it on things for the cars.
116. I rang up a priest for help and that was useless. I found an advert for Women's Aid in the yellow pages and I spoke to someone there and explained everything. They explained to me that this was a case of serious domestic abuse. I had to leave him. My husband gave me 1000 Euros in cash and a cheque for 23,000 sterling and I had to sign the house over to him in return. I had no choice. I left with my son [REDACTED] as the other one, [REDACTED] preferred to stay with his dad and I went to London. I soon received a message that my son in Ireland wanted help and we moved back there.
117. My son in Ireland was living alone in the cottage and I lived in there with [REDACTED] I was then isolated in a rural area with two boys and no transport, no money and no food. I contacted support agencies and they helped me to get back on my feet and we ended up in a women's refuge that was supportive for me.
118. Both of my sons have been diagnosed with high functioning autism, but to me there is nothing functioning about their condition and it is much more complicated than autism. Both of them have a personality disorder that means they take their anger out on their mother. [REDACTED] battered me and warned me he could kill me and anyone who came to the cottage. The refuge staff contacted the Garda and they came and took the knife from him. [REDACTED] had learned so much behaviour from his father. We were moved into a house where I continue to live.

119. I was abused daily by both boys and the support services were very poor. The Garda put [REDACTED] out of the house when he was nineteen because of his out of control rages against me and himself. That was in 2013. It was impossible for me to work in this time period as I was a twenty-four hour a day carer. I had an emotional breakdown in the same year. I have not seen [REDACTED] since.
120. I went on a residential course called 'How to recover from domestic violence'. I went to the old building where it was held and I could smell nuns. They did live there, but did not wear uniform. There were two of them and they were lovely. A nun in normal clothes came into the treatment room and she was staring at me. She had cold blue eyes and looked like Sister LFL [REDACTED]. She had a bad aura about her. I fled the property. I needed help and stayed out of the property for two hours until it was time to leave.

Impact

121. I worked for a charity much later on and we were involved in a kayak race and we had to learn to flip over in a pool. I was wearing a wetsuit. I couldn't flip over in the kayak, I was too scared. The trainer asked me to just put my head in the water and blow bubbles. My voice box closes when I'm under water and I can't say anything. At Nazareth House the helpers forced my head under water sometimes and I'm terrified of being in water. I can swim as my foster father taught me. I can't go in the deep end of a pool and I can't put my head under water.
122. I couldn't blow bubbles in the swimming pool and it meant I couldn't take part in the kayak race. I felt humiliated that I couldn't do it and I was the only one who couldn't do it. I could walk along the kayaks that were lined up next to each other in the pool and everyone else in the kayaks cheered me.
123. I met with a psychologist through Future Pathways who was lovely and she sent a three page letter with my history and recommendations to my GP practice. They claimed to have lost it for a few weeks. I don't have a diagnosis, but the psychologist

commented in her letter that I have low self-esteem and require compassionate therapy.

124. I went to visit Nazareth House to see [REDACTED] when I was sixteen. I went only the once as it gave me the heebie-jeebies and I started shaking. I was there with my boyfriend [REDACTED]. I kept in touch with my foster father [REDACTED] on an infrequent basis. He wasn't well and ended up in a nursing home and died from cancer. He told me I was the only person he ever loved.
125. My sister [REDACTED] died in 2014 and I found that out on line. She took the convent to court and saw the nun who abused her found guilty. She didn't go to prison because of her health and age. My sister [REDACTED] and I never really got on with each and I have not seen my brother [REDACTED] since I was twenty-two.

Reporting of Abuse

126. I didn't speak to anyone about the abuse until I spoke to two very close friends many years later and that was only after I spoke to the psychologist I saw through Future Pathways.
127. In the 1990s saw an article in Best or Bella magazine about children's care homes and practices in there. The details of Cameron Fyffe solicitors were in there. I phoned them and spoke to someone called Mandy who was lovely. She told me they had heard of Sister ^{LFL}[REDACTED]. I thought she only hated me, I didn't know there were others. I wasn't strong enough to be involved in a court case. I sent them two documents from my records. I never photocopied them. I contacted Cameron Fyffe years later as I wanted my pieces of paper back. I spoke to someone else who had a poor attitude and dealt with me very badly.

Records

128. I asked to see my social work records in the early 1980s, about 1983, and I got the names of the places I was taken to from there. I hounded a man at Edinburgh social services to get the records. Then I met with a social worker in London and there was very little in the records and what they had was hand written and very faint. Many of the finer details I have given in this statement about my early life have come from my reading of the records rather than what I can recall.

Lessons to be Learned

129. There should be no advance warning of visits to children in care. There should be every check possible on the people who work with children. There should also be personality checks of people who work with children. There is a risk that they put on a good face and impression at the start and it doesn't last. Big commercial organisations now expect their employees to take psychometric tests.
130. Other adults who work with children should speak up about their suspicions about the behaviour of staff like Mr FUW at my primary school. The other staff in the school must have known what happened when the best girl of the day went into his office.
131. The nun who abused didn't go to prison because of her age. The courts should have taken into account the age of the young, damaged children who were abused and the damage done to them at a vulnerable age.

Hopes for the Inquiry

132. These bad things should stop happening to children. People who speak up about bad practices need to be supported, instead they lose their job and treated badly. I have been invited to leave nursing jobs when I have spoken up about bad practices. I think

legalisation should be changed so the term 'whistle blower' is changed as I feel it is a damaging term. Abusers need to be tried in court and sent to prison.

Other information

133. 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. FWX

Dated. 10/9/2021