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RAN

St Ann's Complaint

LK

Meeting with Allan Dooley and Jane Swift

Wednesday 31st October, 2001 at 10.30am at the Catholic Education Office.

Allan explained that this was a first contact meeting.

LK began living in a flat in REDACTED in about 1980 and was there until 1985. REDACTED was where Brian Perkins lived.

LK had seen a photo of Brian Perkins at yesterday's meeting and she remembered him. Sometimes the bus was late and LK rang the school to ask why the bus was late. LK thinks she rang if the bus was very late – ½ an hour or more. She spoke to the secretary. She used to say that the bus had probably broken down or there was a problem with a child on the bus.

A few other parents commented that the bus was late.

LB came in contact with Brian Perkins on the bus. Brian Perkins also helped at the school with woodwork.

LK noticed the bus being late more after 1986 when the family moved to REDA REDACTED. Then it reached the point that LB would not go past the boundary of their family home. They moved from there in 1993 because LB would not leave the house. LB's communication had started to really drop off. He had loved Santa Claus. He got to know one particular Santa Claus. Then LB changed and would not go at all.

LK thinks the drivers changed busses at one stage.

LB can deaf sign. He had some hearing difficulties. He has 48% hearing in one ear and 50% in the other.

LB went away with Brian Perkins on weekends on 2 occasions that LK can remember. LK remembers LH also went on weekends; he was a happy child. LB was like this too, but gradually changed.

This was about 1991. If anyone LB did not know came to the house he would go and hide. Alarm bells rang for LK. LB had a fear of showers. LK took kids away to the caravan park at McLaren Vale and LB freaked out and was scared of showers. The current house LK and LB live in had to have a bath put in because LB would not use the shower.

LK said that Brian Perkins used the school bus to go away for weekends. This could have been in 1989 or 1990. Brian Perkins approached LK and LL and asked permission for LB to go away. He spoke to them personally when he

dropped LB home once. LK and LL thought that it was okay because the school was allowing Brian Perkins to take the school bus.

LB has Downs Syndrome and Tourette's Syndrome. He was previously diagnosed as ADHD but this was incorrect.

LK thinks LB went to Brian Perkins' home. On one occasion he had a sleepover at his unit as part of a group, or they would have said no to this.

Brian was very friendly and seemed to be trustworthy. There was no reason to suspect. But then there were alarming signs in LB's changed behaviour. He got fearful in crowds. This happened about 1989 or 1990. Some of it was gradual but the major stuff like hiding began around then. LB became clingy to LK. He has a fear of hospitals.

Claude rang LK and LL and said there was a matter they needed to discuss concerning LB. LK blurted out, "He is molesting my son isn't he?" Suddenly it clicked. Claude's tone of voice was hesitant and uncertain. Claude said he couldn't talk about it over the phone and that LK and LL needed to come to the school to talk about it.

At the meeting there was someone from Catholic Welfare, a police officer, Claude and another person.

LK and LL spoke to Claude first; she thought Claude said there was a suspicion that Brian had been interfering with some students and that LB might be one.

They were told practically nothing. Claude chaired the meeting.

LK was told Brian was asked to resign. Her husband LL said Brian couldn't be sacked unless you hear his side of the story. There was a great deal of shock for LK and LL so some minor points are hard to remember. LK and LL wanted to know what would happen to LB.

The meeting was 1 - 1½ hours. Notes were taken. Both the welfare person and the police made notes. The room had chairs and a coffee table. LK thinks they were asked not to discuss it. They did not know what other parents were involved.

LK continued to be worried about LB. He would not relate to some family members that he had previously been relating to.

LK had no subsequent meetings with Claude. LK thinks that they were told that the police were still investigating. There was then discussion about where LK and LL could get help for LB.

In 1991 - 1992 they went to Child Protection REDACTED and Mental Health Services REDACT. At the latter place, LB took all of the toys out of the cupboard and climbed in. The employee said that LK and LL were the problem.

LK then spoke about LB's recent experience of being upset. When he went to Community Access that day LB was his normal self. LK explained that

intellectually disabled people need routine or can become difficult: they find it hard or cannot problem solve if change continually happens.

Currently some of [LB] 's behaviours have calmed down but not all. He come out with Brian's name frequently. Children who are abused can often dissociate.

[LB] had two imaginary friends, one of whom was Brian, the Mean Bad one. The other one did not have a name. They always did the naughty things. He now has three imaginary friends and an imaginary chicken. One of the three is Brian the Mean Bad One.

[REDACTED], his respite care worker, has known [LB] since he was 3. He is a good family friend. [LB] has always liked [RED] and he brings out the best in [LB]. [REDA] was astounded by the change in [LB]. Something has triggered a memory for [LB] and it seems to have come back in full force, and [LB] is having trouble dealing with what is normal socially. He knows he has been hurt. [LK] does not know if he has been subject to physical hurt but she knows he has been emotionally hurt.

[LK] wants a psychiatrist to work with [LB].

[LB] now says Brian is bad; Brian is naughty. Brian is the imaginary friend he does not like. [LB] says no don't hurt my bum.

[LB] appears to make room in bed for someone next to him. He says bad man hurt.

[LK] has had no further contact with Claude over the years.

[LB] has come out with other weird sexual stuff and [LK] and [LL] are very careful about what he watches on TV and at the movies.

[LB] needs to get help and his independence back. He was starting to learn again so he could do some sort of work.

Learn more about what is going on in [LB] 's mind and therefore know better as parents how to react to them. It's like we are being hit all over again. It's about us healing as well.

We also need to be helped as a family, especially the two younger children.

[LB] needs more stimulation than in the past at home.

I would like to know exactly what happened to [LB]. Was he a bystander or participant?

I would like Brian Perkins to be convicted.

Why and how it was handled as it was in 1991?

I would like to see him in a program that he will benefit from, not just socializing.

I wish [LB] could move out of his current program into something more stimulating - particularly now that the new location has been found.

I believe Claude may have been trying to do damage control. He was out of his element trying to save face, didn't want a lot of talk of gossip. He kept it quiet and swept it under carpet.

Person from Catholic Welfare didn't offer anything.

Why were we not told as much as they could tell us?

In 1991 we weren't interested in blaming. We just want to help LB.

Signed LK _____

Date 13/12/01