

Scottish Sunday Mail March 20, 2016, Marion Scott

## **“YOU CAN TELL US, PLEASE TELL US”**

**Investigators leading a huge Inquiry into child abuse are to urge witnesses and victims to come forward. Cases flood in after time removal.**

Susan O’Brien QC who is chairing the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, will encourage individuals and institutions to contact the probe.

At a meeting in Glasgow on Wednesday, she will detail how evidence can be given. Some sick and elderly victims who have lodged complaints have been interviewed for the Inquiry, which is expected to take several years. The investigation will cover sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse at children’s homes, residential schools, secure care units, schools, borstals and young offenders institutions until December 2016.

The Inquiry officially started in October. O’Brien said: In February we started taking evidence from people who were elderly or seriously ill, and we continue to do so. She said more details will be given to the public at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Glasgow at 10.30am.

Meantime a new law scrapping a controversial three-year limit on when historical child abuse victims can sue could affect more than 2000 people, according to experts.

The Scottish Government last week announced a draft bill which will remove the restriction-known as timebar-on victims who were abused on or after September 26, 1964 seeking damages.

Ministers say the Limitation (Childhood Abuse) (Scotland) Bill shows their commitment to adult survivors of child abuse.

One legal firm have received over 1000 inquiries from victims who want to raise civil actions against organisations who’s care they were under. Jim Fraser, 63 of Dundee, says he will now proceed with a civil action for abuse he claims he suffered at St Ninian’s residential school in Gartmore, Strlingshire, where he was taught by the De La Salle monks. He said; “We’ve waited decades for this day to come so the truth can finally be heard”.

Lawyer Cameron Fyffe of Drummond Millar, who has been contacted by more than 1000 victims, said: “The new timebar ruling gives historical abuse survivors their first real chance to have their cases heard in court”. “Now the only restriction will be if a case breaches human rights law- and I cannot see that being an issue.

### **Survivors praised by MSP, Educational Secretary, Angela Constance**

Educational Secretary, Angela Constance has been a driving force behind the Inquiry, and she praised victims for helping her understand the complex issues involved, She said: “They have given me a better understanding of what support is needed and will make a real and tangible difference to their lives. “These discussions are what convinced me that an independent statutory public inquiry into the abuse of children in care was needed in Scotland.