

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

QTW

1. My name is QTW. My date of birth is 1947. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Background

2. In 1969 I qualified from Southampton University with BSc(Eng). In 1976 I gained my PGGE at Sheffield Polytechnic and in addition in 1984 I gained my Dyslexic Institute Diploma and PGGE in Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia) at the University of Edinburgh.
3. I began teaching in 1977 and I was employed at School, Sheffield as a teacher of upper primary children, also giving support to dyslexic pupils. In 1990 I began working at School, Brettenham, Suffolk teaching dyslexic pupils. I worked at Keil School for nine years before taking up a position at Goudhurst, Kent from 2000-2007. I retired in 2007 and have not taught since.

### Employment with Keil School

4. I started working at Keil School in 1991 and remained there until 2000. I was general teacher of the which was primary seven children of the age of 11-12 years. I was also employed as a teacher pupils. After about a year I became a tutor to pupils within the secondary part of the school teaching children between 14-15 years of age.

5. I know that references were taken from my previous headmaster, Mr. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] School in Sheffield. There were other referees from whom references were asked for, I think one may have been Dr. Harry Chasty of the Dyslexia Institute. There wasn't a formal period of probation, but I was put on a one year contract to begin with which was made permanent a few months later.
6. I became a registered teacher by the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) with effect from the 22 June 1998, my number being [REDACTED]. I was the [REDACTED] school type teacher at Keil School until 1996 when a primary six class was started. In that capacity I did not have a line manager, although heads of department were monitoring the curriculum that I had set up for my class, and quite often had a definite input in establishing such.
7. There was no requirement on the part of Keil School for me to register with the GTCS. I understand that any teacher working within an independent school would not necessarily require to register with this body. However, had I worked in a state run school in Scotland I believe I would be required to register. I decided to register on my initiative when I became aware that I could become a member. It was a slow process of realising I could become a member and when I did I was very pleased. In England when I became a teacher I was registered with the Department of Education and Science and I think my number was [REDACTED] although I cannot be one hundred percent sure that number is completely correct.
8. I did not have a line manager as such with regard to my [REDACTED] work. I was appraised regularly, about once a year but I cannot remember very much about that process. There was a house system and as a tutor I was assigned to one. There was a house master and he was my line manager in that context.
9. With regard to training, I went on various conferences concerning such matters as the '5 to 14 Programme' that was being established in Scotland at the time when I started working at Keil School. The Programme was basically Scotland's version of the English national curriculum. Also I attended various conferences with regard to [REDACTED] I attended a Post Graduate Certificate course at The University of Edinburgh in Specific Learning Difficulties in 1999/2000.

## **Policy**

10. I am asked if I had any involvement in, or responsibility for, policy in relation to the care, including residential care, of children. My role did not include any such responsibility for school policy.

## **Strategic planning**

11. I am asked if I had any involvement in, or responsibility for, strategic planning in relation to the school and again in my role as a teacher I had no such responsibility. Neither did I manage any staff at the school.

## **Recruitment and development of staff**

12. I did not have any direct involvement in recruitment of staff at the school apart from being allowed to meet the odd candidate for a post that would have affected me directly and my opinion was sought. Beyond that I had no involvement in recruitment.
13. My knowledge of training and development at the school was that the management of the school were not especially proactive with regard to training and development of the staff. They were encouraging in those of us that wanted to pursue some development. They would pay for the costs of short courses and conferences and would expect a report from such. They also allowed for time off for these courses and conferences. They would insist that all heads of departments would attend courses to do with changes in examinations, their process and maybe the curriculum as well.
14. The staff were a mixture of men and women from the ages of thirty to retirement. I do remember the [REDACTED] OPR [REDACTED] was very keen that his staff attended courses in connection with the subject and which I was invited to

attend. I do not remember other departments such as English and sciences doing similar courses but that does not mean they didn't, I simply do not recall. I also requested to attend courses in my own speciality which was [REDACTED] [REDACTED] pupils.

15. I was not involved in training and/or personal development of staff.

### **Supervision/staff appraisal / staff evaluation**

16. In relation to supervision, staff appraisal or the evaluation of staff, I can confirm that I was not involved with any of these processes.
17. There was a practice of appraisal. I can remember being appraised by the headmaster one year, but I have very little memory of how all that worked. Although I cannot remember the structure with regard to supervision there were many times that I remember when there were discussions about various matters and advice given by senior members of staff. Some of those discussions might have been informal but nevertheless important. I think that although my memories are vague about staff evaluation and appraisal what happened at Keil is comparable to other posts I have held.
18. We did have various inspections by HM Inspectors. I remember the one at the beginning of 1992.

### **Living arrangements**

19. In my first year at Keil School and for a part of the second, I lived in a room in one of the boarding houses but quite separate from the main body of the house. Although there was access to the rest of the house and access to pupils, I was careful not to get involved with them as I wanted to have my own space. I was not involved in the running or the supervision of the house and the pupils. That was the prerogative of the housemaster and the deputy. My room was under the accommodation of the

housemaster and his family. Sometime during the second year I bought a house in a neighbouring small town, about fifteen minutes drive away from the school and I moved into that house.

20. Most members of staff lived outside the school. There were the boarding staff who lived on site, the housemasters and the deputy housemasters. Most were married and had young families and teenage children. There were some single people who were the deputies.
21. The house staff had access to the residential areas of the pupils for supervisory purposes as did the cleaners and workers. There were coded locks for the houses so it would have been difficult for an outsider to get into the houses.

### **Culture within the school**

22. The culture within Keil was marked, in my view, with a degree of positive respect and regard between the staff and pupils. Obviously there could be tension between miscreant pupils and members of staff which had to be worked out, but there remained that trust, confidence and friendliness. Generally pupils were very supportive of each other and indeed protective should that have been necessary. For example the older boys were protective of their younger counterparts. It wasn't necessary to discipline pupils heavily. Almost all accepted the code of conduct expected, and they were very willing to give help when a member of staff needed it.
23. Fagging did not exist in Keil School at the time I was there.

### **Discipline and punishment**

24. Children were disciplined in the main by the teaching staff, usually by placing them into detention or putting pupils onto Natural History (NH) where the pupil would be expected to do jobs around the school for two hours or so. Prefects were called

Chiefs and they had some discretion with regard to punishments but I cannot remember quite what.

25. There was an NH book kept in the staff room where a member of staff could put the name of the pupil he wished to place in detention or on NH.
26. There was some discretion given to senior pupils to place pupils on some punishment, but I cannot remember very much about how that worked. Members of staff could modify punishments given by senior pupils. I was not aware of a formal policy with regard to punishments.

### **Day to day running of the school**

27. In relation to the day to day running of the school, I was not involved with that.
28. Generally, I would have thought it would have been very difficult for abuse and ill treatment to have taken place. Pupils were very talkative and if something were to have taken place it would have come to the ears of someone. There was a school matron, Evelyn McLean, who was very highly regarded and pupils, indeed some staff, would have confided in her. Also day school parents would have heard and would have reported such matters. Having said all that, I am aware though that abusive behaviour can slip under the radar. This is a conclusion I have come to since retiring having seen various television programmes on the issue and in discussion with other people.
29. There was also a child protection policy being drawn up, and the child protection officer was the headmaster. It would have been drawn up by the headmaster in discussion with other people. I cannot be specific when this was being done however I think it would have been the latter half of the 1990s. I cannot recall any training I received in connection with the child protection policy. There was an anti-bullying policy and a statement about bullying not being tolerated. There was also a Child Line telephone set up in the school.

30. To summarise, the school was working to develop policies and practices to prevent any sort of abuse in the school. The school was regularly inspected with regard to the care of boarding pupils, and came out of such with very positive comments.

### **Concerns about the school**

31. When I was at the school, I was pretty certain that the school was never the subject of concern on the part of any other body or agency, about the community of the school, because of the way in which children and young people in the school were treated.

### **Reporting of complaints/concerns**

32. As far as I was aware there was no formal complaints procedure in place. I find it difficult to say if any child in the school, or another person on their behalf, wished to make a complaint or report a concern if there was a complaints or reporting process in place.
33. Complaints were received about abusive behaviour between pupils. I myself received one such concern from a boarding school pupil who had used racist language which had upset another pupil. I spoke to the headmaster about the matter and he asked me to resolve the issue. I have no memory of speaking to either of the parents of the boys and I think I passed it into the hands of the house staff. The perpetrator of the abuse left school shortly afterwards partly as a result of the incident and also because of the tension between him and the other boy.
34. I do not know the procedures for the recording of complaints as I was not involved in such situations.

### **Trusted adult/confidante**

35. The matron of the school at the time I was at Keil School was called Evelyn McLean who is now deceased. She was the one person that pupils would go to if they had concerns, particularly the girls. It was not a formal arrangement though. So far as I know there were no other persons who had that sort of role within the school. There was, after one inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate 1992, a telephone installed in a sound proof booth to allow a pupil to phone Child Line or some such organisation.
36. Apart from the installation of the telephone booth I have previously mentioned the school did not make any further changes, as far as I am aware, in relation to a trusted adult or confidante either within or out with the school being available for children to report any concerns.
37. I know that there were conversations between the matron and pupils, but apart from that I have no knowledge of children raising any concerns by any other means.

### **Abuse**

38. As far as I remember there was no such definition of abuse that was applied in relation to the treatment of children held and recorded by the school during my time in employment at the school.

### **Child protection arrangements**

39. I was not a part of the residential boarding staff so I was not involved in any discussions or guidance in relation to instruction on how children in care at school should be treated, cared for and protected against abuse, ill-treatment or inappropriate behaviour towards them whether from staff, other adults or fellow pupils. I have no memory of receiving guidance on the care of children residing at the school.



40. There wasn't any sort of instruction or training given to staff about the handling of complaints or concerns of pupils, although towards the end of 1990's child protection policies were being developed. I do not have much memory of this other than at a staff meeting I did raise the issue with regard to child protection and the school policies with regard to such. I believe that I had started to become aware of the need for child protection policies through some of the courses I had attended and conversations I had with friends working in other schools. The headmaster, John Cummings, did say that I was quite correct to say that we needed to develop such policies. I have no awareness as to whether these policies were developed or not. However, I remember the headmaster did say once in an assembly that the school did have a policy of zero tolerance in respect of bullying.

### **External monitoring**

41. There were inspections of the school with regard to the teaching and the curriculum etc, and also with regard to the boarding facilities. As I was not a member of staff within a boarding house I was not involved in the proceedings. Pupils were spoken to by the inspectors and without staff being present. The school was given feedback which was positive but I never knew the details.

### **Record-keeping**

42. The only records that were kept included plans of lessons, record of grades and marks attained by individual pupils, all kept by individual members of staff. There was a book in the staff room where a record was kept of pupils having some sanction imposed for bad behaviour etc. The records kept by members of staff must have been of a good or high quality because no negative comments were made by Her Majesty's Inspectorate. I do not recall there being a formal policy with regard to record keeping.

### **Investigations into abuse and civil claims**

43. I had no involvement in investigations on behalf of the school into allegations of abuse or ill-treatment of children at the school or into inappropriate behaviour by staff or others toward children. Neither was I involved in the handling of reports to, or civil claims made against the school by former pupils concerning historical abuse.

### **Police investigations/ criminal proceedings**

44. I am not aware of there ever being any police investigations into alleged abuse at all when I was working at the school.
45. I have never provided a statement to the police or the Crown nor have I given evidence at a trial concerning the alleged abuse of children cared for at the school.

### **Convicted abusers**

46. There was a colleague, Bill Bain, who was convicted of sexual abuse at Keil School in about 2015. That was fifteen years after the school closed. When I was told that this had happened I was stunned and shocked as were other colleagues. I had always thought that the school had done an excellent job in the teaching of, caring for, and the preparing of pupils for later life. I am certain that many pupils after they left the school had and have many positive memories of the place. To know that there was such activity going on when we all tried to look after and care for pupils was very disappointing to say the least.
47. He was a colleague that I saw almost every day, and had conversations with him about various matters of common interest such as concerns about pupils, aspects of our teaching and mundane everyday conversation about things like the weather.
48. Bill was highly intelligent, he had a Ph.D. in what I believe was metallurgy. He seemed to have an encyclopaedic knowledge about almost everything. Once the

term started he had no involvement with anyone outside the school. Keil School was his life. I found that puzzling. He never spoke about friends or family outside school or of any activities he engaged in during the holidays. This did not make him particularly strange in and of itself. There were some very tiny signals coming from him and his situation that were strange, but nothing that one could have acted upon in those days. We have to bear in mind that we are viewing what happened then through the prism of the present. Bill did have looser boundaries with regards to pupils, for instance he would have this open house where pupils could visit his small apartment after homework sessions and he also allowed pupils to use his phone in his room to make calls. This was all known by some of the staff including the senior members as Bill did not hide this behaviour. I cannot explain why I had tiny signals about his behaviour perhaps it was intuitive. I never saw him behave inappropriately with children.

49. I assume he was recruited by the school in the normal fashion. An advertisement would be placed in the Times Educational Supplement, he would have responded by applying for the post, references would have been sought by the headmaster from his previous school and employer. Assuming they were satisfactory he was appointed. Certainly that was the procedure followed when I applied for the post at Keil School in 1991. In addition I know there were conversations between <sup>SNR</sup> [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED] Keil School [REDACTED] CGC [REDACTED], and my previous SNR [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] School in Sheffield. CGC [REDACTED] died some time ago.
50. I don't think Bill had any child care qualifications and I don't think there was any formal training during his period of employment at the school. I also think it unlikely that there was any formal monitoring or supervision of the individual.
51. There were no previous allegations of abuse by this person.

**Specific allegations of abuse made against me for which there has been no internal or criminal investigation or conviction**

52. I have been advised that a member of staff has reported that they took a call from a parent regarding me inappropriately touching their son. In late May early June 1998 I was asked to go to the headmaster's office to see him. It was the beginning of the afternoon and the headmaster had arranged cover for my classes. This was unusual and I was very concerned. When I arrived the headmaster, John Cummings, and Tom Smith the deputy headmaster were present. Mr Cummings advised me that there had been a complaint made about inappropriate physical contact between me and a pupil. He didn't provide any further details about the pupil or the complaint. I did say that on one occasion there was a boy, [REDACTED] who was upset when he was standing at my desk in the classroom in front of the rest of the class. I cannot remember his surname at all. I explained I put my hand around either his shoulder or waist to comfort and calm him. I then asked John Cummings to look at my track record and that I had never been subject of a complaint of that nature while I was at Keil. He seemed to take it on board. He then said to go back to the classroom but told me not to go on a witch hunt about who had said this about me. He told me just to leave it and I think he said I was to forget it. I think I made the assumption the matter was finished and I never heard any more from him about this.
53. Tom Smith said later that day that it was strange that the complaint had been made now when the incident supposedly took place in the autumn term 1998. I spoke to a colleague, Elspeth Brown, and she reminded me about a time when my class were using stethoscopes and this required the children to bare a part of their chests discreetly to each other. The boys and girls practised only on their own gender. She suggested that that might be a possible explanation for the matter.
54. I have thought about the matter a great deal, particularly over the last few days and I give this explanation as best as I am able bearing in mind that it was 21 years ago. I had occasion to correct the same boy I had tried to comfort earlier in the academic year (Autumn 1997). In May 1998 at the end of one teaching day, I was dismissing my class. I was giving instructions and reminders of various sorts and in the process he spoke across me to another child. I remonstrated with him saying quite definitely

'for five minutes of your life be quiet and let me finish what I have to say'. I was angry that he should have interrupted me in this way. He did not respond to me verbally, but I did see that he was unusually angry with me for the telling off. My remonstrations were understandable, and he may well have been annoyed, but it was the type of anger registered in his face that was strange and I thought to myself that I hadn't heard the last of this. I think he then started to manipulate the situation to persuade his parents to take him out of the school and let him go to Dumbarton Academy where he wanted to be at the beginning of his senior school career. He wanted to be with his friends that he knew around the area he lived. I believe that precipitated the accusation.

55. In the next academic year, possibly in the Spring or Summer of 1999, I had taken some pupils down to the leisure centre in Dumbarton using the minibus. [REDACTED] came up to me and greeted me as if I was a long lost friend. He had left the school at the end of [REDACTED] 1998 and I hadn't seen him until that little meeting.
56. The only other suggestion I can give is as a gesture of friendliness I tickled his chest for about two seconds. My fingers may have gone in between the two parts of his shirt but I do not remember. But if that had happened it would have been in front of other children in the class as well. One point to remember, it was a part of the uniform to wear an open necked white shirt and a green Keil School jumper. The only time the pupils were given permission not to wear their jumper is when the weather became warm, i.e. in summer. This incident happened in the autumn term when the weather would have been cooler. Wearing such an item as they had to, it would have been difficult to do as I was accused of doing. I was never on my own with him. I do not think any contact I had with [REDACTED] was inappropriate but it may not have been wise. I want to be careful about refuting the accusation totally. In my experience children rarely concoct a story out of the blue for whatever reason. However, they can be selective in what they say (indeed may embellish) and they will not tell of the wider context, and this will give a distorted impression. Nevertheless, I think that behind such there will be an element of truth, although I cannot remember any such incident that may explain this accusation.

57. I did not know the exact nature of the complaint until 24 November 2020 when the Inquiry sent me details. I really don't know who made the complaint however I do strongly suspect it was [REDACTED]
58. I do not know if there was any record kept of this complaint but my only thought is if I were a headmaster I would want this recorded and kept in my file.

### **Helping the Inquiry**

59. There is one point I would like to establish, if only to myself. We may look at the way things were done in times past and may be very surprised at what seems to be a casual or amateurish approach taken to matters and of the procedures adopted. We must be careful to remember that we are looking at the past through the prism of the present. Of course we can learn from the past and draw upon experience with regard to the care and well-being of children.
60. With regard to boarding schools in general, I have been concerned about residential staff who are single. They have duties as other members of staff that will be quite time consuming and, being single, they will be expected to put on extra activities for pupils particularly over the weekends. After all they are single and accommodation and meals are provided at no extra cost to them. At the same time schools do not seem to make much effort to look after such staff in a social capacity, and it can seem quite lonely for such staff as a result. It can be quite difficult for such members of staff to have a life outside of school, that can be true of day schools as well for not dissimilar reasons, and I do feel that they must be encouraged to do that. In my particular case, as a Christian, I would find a church that I would enjoy worshipping at and in that way get to know people. Similarly I could meet people when playing the violin or viola. I would join an orchestra and then once getting to know people, play in quartets and other chamber music groups.
61. In my view there must be ongoing training of teachers and staff involved in the care of children. In this way people will recognise patterns of behaviour on the part of children that may indicate abuse, and indeed on the part of the perpetrator. Also, it

will encourage such staff to speak to those in authority when they suspect something may be wrong, as so often, without that training people may feel that they are the only ones. There may also be a fear that they may be completely misreading the situation and in doing so have concerns they may be ruining a colleagues career. Of course the management will have to be very sensitive as to how they handle the situation as there may be malicious allegations on the part of staff and even children themselves.

- 62. My final thought is that notwithstanding robust policies and procedures being put into place by a school or home a determined paedophile will be able to keep his behaviour under the radar for a long time.
- 63. 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..... QTW [Redacted Signature] .....

Dated..... 04 December 2020 .....