

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

FNL

Support person present: No

1. My name is FNL however I prefer to be called FNL. My date of birth is 1982. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before attending Fettes College

2. My biological father was however my mum divorced him when I was four years old. He signed away parental rights and my mum's new husband adopted me when he and mum married. At this time my mum would be known as which is the name I was now also known by. Mum and dad went on to have three other children. was four and half years younger than me, was six years younger and was ten years younger than me. We all lived together in Glasgow.
3. I started Carmyle Primary School in Glasgow and moved after the first term to Battlefield Primary School because we moved house. I remained at Battlefield for the remainder of primary one until the end of primary six.
4. If I was being diplomatic I would say my mum was not easy to get along with and this made relationships at home difficult. I believe the reality is that my mum has undiagnosed mental health problems and that is why she was so difficult to live with. These difficulties impacted on relationships between me, my dad and siblings. The difficulties with my mum have been a factor throughout my childhood and into adulthood. When my mum was pregnant with I had been sent to stay with my uncle in America. My nana had been ill and had had a couple of strokes so I was told I could go on holiday with her and be there to help her. This was from April to June

1991. I think the truth of the matter was my mum wanted me out of the house and out of the way.

5. I think there are different reasons I ended up going to Fettes College. What I remember is that I had been reading the St Clares and Malory Towers novels and I said to my mum that boarding school sounded amazing. I do believe that because of the difficult relationship between me and my mum there were discussions going on over my head. I think my parents wanted me to go and I was keen to go as I thought it was a great big adventure.
6. As a result I sat the entrance exams for Rannoch School and Fettes. I had never sat an exam before. My memory is that I sat the exam for Fettes in a room by myself but afterwards some of the kids from the junior school gave me a tour around. The exam at Rannoch was a much more of a social thing where other children were present and we had lunch together before being shown around the boarding houses. The reason I went to Fettes was that they offered a bursary. There was no way my family could have afforded the fees. Even with the bursary I don't really understand how they paid for it with three other kids to look after. We were not the kind of family who would go to private schools, this was completely out with our realm of experience.

## **Fettes College**

### *General*

7. I started at Fettes in September 1992 in the equivalent of primary seven which they called T Form. I remained at Fettes for two years all of which was in the junior school which was named Inverleith House. It comprised of T Form, First and Second Forms. After that pupils would progress on to senior school. My school number was [REDACTED]
8. The junior school building had the junior boarding house attached. The ground floor of the school building had classrooms, a kitchen and I think there may have been some offices. There was a set of stairs to the first floor which led to further classrooms and offices. At the top of the stairs was the junior school headmaster's office. At the end of

the corridor there were changing rooms at the bottom of some stairs and a door which led to an area where day pupils would be picked up by their parents. From this area it also gave access to playing fields. If you continued past the door to the pick-up point this led past the boys' changing rooms and then to a security entry door to the boarding house.

9. In the boarding house boys stayed downstairs and the girls upstairs. I didn't spend much time downstairs. Upstairs there was a corridor on different levels because of two small sets of stairs. There was a games room, a laundry room, a total of five dormitories, a bathroom, playroom, a tuck cupboard and a playroom with a Nintendo or something similar. Also upstairs there was a room with dookets and this is where we left and collected our laundry. This was also the room that the matron worked from. She had a flat attached where she lived and this was above Jon Glen's flat. Downstairs was more or less a mirror image. We called the social space upstairs 'heaven' and downstairs it was called 'hell'. In heaven we would watch movies and things like that where in hell was more for house meetings. In the mornings we would meet in hell to be told anything we needed to know.
10. I believe there were either fifty to sixty children in Inverleith boarding house and possibly four hundred pupils in total at the school. In my year group the children were aged from ten to eleven and in the Second Form they would be turning thirteen. We were very separate from the senior school but we did use some of their facilities like the art classrooms, the swimming pool and the science block. I do not know what the gender split was however they used to make a lot of the fact it hadn't been long since girls were allowed to study there. I think it may have been fifteen years approximately. The gender split didn't seem disproportionate but having said that as I was getting to the end of first form they were having to remove all the single beds and replace them with bunk beds. I think the school community was growing. They were starting to talk about building a new boarding house but I never saw that.
11. The house master also had a house in the grounds which is where he stayed with his wife and two children.

12. The school had day pupils who attended school and went home each day although some of them would stay for dinner. There was also weekly boarders who stayed through the week until after games on the Saturday. They would then go home and return to the school on Sunday evening or Monday morning. Boarders lived at the school.
13. There was not a lot of interaction between the junior and senior school, other than mealtimes. We could also watch some of the older kids playing sport so we knew who they were. I don't know what was done in the way of transition before leaving the junior school to move to the senior school.
14. There was definitely a sense that the ethos of the school was preparing pupils to be great contributors to the world. They were very proud of the fact that Tony Blair had been a Fettesian. At the end of term ceremonies they would always have an Old Fettesian come and give a rousing speech about how great young people are. The school was very proud of their role in not just Scottish society, they definitely had a global outlook. The ethos was definitely about preparing pupils for greatness. The other thing I would say is that the school was set up as a charity. William Fettes set up the school with charitable aims to provide education to the poorer residents of Edinburgh. It's interesting how little they actually spent on charitable endeavours.

*First Day*

15. I do not remember my first day. I remember the preparation to start the school but not specifically what happened on my first day.

*Staff*

16. The headmaster of Inverleith House was Mr Alexander and the housemaster was Jon Glen. His deputy was Carolyn Harrison and she was a French teacher. She had a

house near to the head masters house, at the other side of the car park. I think she started at the school the same year as me and she lived with her husband. The way I would describe their roles is that the headmaster was the academic head and the housemaster the pastoral head. Mr Glen was responsible for us as boarders but he was also a teacher who taught maths. There was <sup>SNR</sup> [REDACTED] of the [REDACTED] school, but we were distanced from him. I think his name was Mr <sup>CXL</sup> [REDACTED] or <sup>CXL</sup> [REDACTED] or something similar. I don't really remember seeing him other than end of term ceremonies.

17. As far as other staff are concerned there were loads. Mrs Glen, Mr Glen's wife, was there and always around although I don't know if she was formally engaged as a member of staff. Mrs Allan who was the matron. There would also be members of teaching staff on duty in the boarding house but it didn't feel like we were swamped with staff.
18. They also had Australian exchange students, I cannot remember if they were there for the year or just a term. I didn't see them as staff as they were more like relatable big brother and sister types.

#### *Dormitories*

19. When I first started I think the name of my dormitory was Whisky and there were five girls sleeping there. We did get moved around, say at the end of terms and times like that. There were wardrobes, we didn't have one each, we shared them. We had a wire drawer under the bed and a desk combined with a chest of drawers. I don't know if there was a reason we got moved dorms, my assumption would be the movement of friendship groups or the progression through school. It wasn't a case of all the girls from one form being together, we were all mixed up. As your time at the school increased I think there was an attempt to keep friends together or removing problematic relationships. Moving dorm didn't feel a punitive thing it felt like our social wellbeing was being considered.

20. There were very clear rules that boys and girls should not be in each other's dormitories. If we were acting up at bedtime then sometimes we were in each other's dorms but I was never aware of a time when a boy would be surreptitiously in a girl's room. We could stand at each other's doors and chat and that was acceptable.

*Mornings and bedtime*

21. In the morning a bell would sound to get us up. I think we maybe got up earlier during the summer and later in the winter. Although I cannot remember for sure I think we got up around 7am and got dressed. I am sure we went down to hell for a catch up and then we would walk over to the dinner hall which was in the main part of the school. I remember the walk seeming to be quite long, maybe ten or fifteen minutes, and a member of staff would accompany us there and back. After breakfast we would collect our schoolbags and go to our first class which I think started about 8.45am. Some mornings we would go to assembly first before going to class.
22. We would have lunch in the dining hall and return to class after that. Dinner was straight after the last class which I think was about 5.30pm. I cannot recall if we got changed before going for dinner although in the summer we definitely did as we would go out and play afterwards.
23. In the evenings we would always have homework to do then we would get our jammies on, polish our shoes and shower before bed. I think we went to bed at 9pm. As part of the bedtime routine teachers would come and check everyone was in bed and everything was ok.
24. Sometimes in the boarding house there was a point before bed when the kids would either behave or decide to go mental. That would consist of us jumping between dorms and running up and down the stairs. I think it was understood that every so often it had to happen and was a rush of excitable energy. There would come a point when the staff would say enough and we would go to our beds. On one occasion I was sitting on my pals bed when Mr Burns the Latin teacher came in. He was quite a gruff man and was quite strict which made me behave myself more around him because of the

standards he set. My friend said to me to pretend I was crying or we would get into deep trouble. I pretended I was crying and my friend said to him that I was really homesick. He put me to my bed and sat at the end of it talking me for ages telling me he understood how difficult it must be and showed me kindness. I do feel guilty but it is typical of how the staff supported us.

25. At the weekend I don't remember there being a lot of structure. We had these little folded cards which would have all the dates that were coming up and included things like recommended weekend leave which worked out roughly that every three weeks we would get home. It also showed the end of terms dates. Also included for the boarders was every term there was one day for each year group to have a special day. I cannot recall what it was called but it would be the responsibility of Mr Alexander to take the boarders out and do something fun and exciting. There were other things on this card. I remember some of the boarders going to Murrayfield to watch a rugby match. Other than that though weekends as I remember them were fairly loose and unstructured.
26. The other thing I remember is that on a Saturday night everyone would get their jammies on to watch a film. We would have hot chocolate and get our tuck out. I remember that being quite nice.
27. Sunday you were expected to tidy up and make sure your room was tidy. You also had to write home. That was about it though so Sunday felt more relaxed.

#### *Food and Mealtimes*

28. All meals were taken in the dinner hall. The food was good. For breakfast you could literally have whatever you wanted. The junior school had their own tables and you were able to sit anywhere you wanted in that area. Often there would be teaching staff having breakfast with us as well.
29. I was very unfussy so I was quite relaxed about the food. I do remember courgettes being a source of general hatred for everybody. I think there was a fair bit of care of

focus on what the junior school were eating. There was usually one or two members of staff on duty and I remember some pupils being chinned for not have enough vegetables on their plate and being sent up to get more. I don't think that was quite the case later on in the school but there was that kind of pastoral responsibility for good nutrition.

30. I thought the food was great but in hindsight I think I ate pudding every day and for two years no-one said a thing. There was no problem if you couldn't eat what was on your plate. I would say now as an adult I would be cognisant of, particularly of having lots of young girls together, eating disorders or disordered eating. When I reflect I cannot think of anyone whose eating habits were a cause for concern however that was probably because I was only ten or eleven.

#### *Washing and Bathing*

31. There was a bathroom across from heaven and it was a set of stalls and sinks. This is where we would wash our face and brush our teeth every morning. In the evening we would shower.

#### *Clothing/Uniform*

32. There was a regular uniform which was a grey skirt, white open neck shirt, socks or tights, shoes and heavy purple pullover. There was also a formal uniform which we wore to events and going to chapel. This consisted of a kilt, blue shirt and jumper. I think we wore tights under it. I cannot remember if I changed out of my regular uniform after school through the week but we definitely wore casual clothes over the weekend.
33. There was also a full sports uniform. You needed a swimsuit as the school had a pool and we had swimming classes as well as swimming for leisure. The swimsuit wasn't regulated. We had to wear gym pants which looked like unflattering granny pants with maybe a vest or a polo shirt. For games there was a white polo shirt with the Fettes crest across the front of it, navy joggers with Fettes down the leg then different boots



or shoes depending what sport I was playing. We had formal socks as well for sports which had garters so you could put your shin guards in them.

34. I remember before I started the school going to Aitken and Niven and getting quite of lot of my stuff there but the school had a second hand or swap shop and I know I got my kilt from there. There was a bit of a feminist movement in the junior school as the girls had these hideous pink sweaters but the boys had a navy hoody with a smaller crest. I got a navy hoody from the swap shop but this was new as it came in a bag so I don't know if they supplied it or acted as a conduit to provide uniform. My parents paid for all my uniform and equipment.

#### *Laundry*

35. Our laundry was sent out so we had a net bag with our name on it and on a Sunday afternoon we had to sit and document every piece of laundry in a book. Everything was meant to have our name on it, and I don't really remember but I am sure things like socks didn't have names on them. We would collect our clothes a few days later when it had been washed and ironed.

#### *Schooling*

36. We attended school every weekday and we also had school on a Saturday starting at 9am then had a morning break and afterwards go on to do games. Games was playing sport outside, such as hockey or lacrosse and PE was sport in the gym. Both games and PE were mandatory, you had to do hockey and you had to do lacrosse. As a result of there being so many of us we were streamed into groups based on capability. We had some form of PE every day however a Wednesday it was different as it was activities you picked yourself. Every day we would do homework for an hour, usually after dinner.
37. I thought the teaching was of a good standard. I remember feeling really engaged in the classes, even the dry subjects. I remember being taught by really passionate educators.

38. Even now I can clearly remember talking about the witch trials in Miss FGA's classes. The language she would use and the way she would evoke feelings of actually being there as we discussed how there was no way for women to win within that structure. I think that was probably the foundations of me being a feminist.
39. For end of term reports you were ranked on effort and attainment. Broadly speaking, in T Form anyway, I was performing really well. I looked back at my reports a couple of years ago and noticed there was a difference depending on the weather. I hated the winter term so there was no effort, no attempts to try and do anything so my attainment was impacted. This left me middling in terms of performance. In spring and summer I was always near top of the class.
40. I remember there was a teacher I was really terrified of because when he got angry his whole face changed colour. Everyone took the piss out of him because he had a really funny voice. I don't remember the contents of his lessons I just remember thinking I am never doing geography.
41. I think there was prefects in the school, like a head girl and head boy. I can only remember who was in Second Form while I was in T Form. I think they maybe did away with that as I don't remember there being another head girl after . There was no fagging and from the fictional books I had read before going to Fettes I had expected there would be.

### *Religion*

42. On a Sunday we would usually go to chapel which was in the school. We had to wear our formal uniform. I don't think we went every single week but when we did, it would be in the evening. I am pretty sure that the minister was a Church of England minister. I went to church when I was younger and it was Church of Scotland. I remember the sermons being really different, there wasn't any communion or anything like that. I don't remember it feeling uncomfortable, just different. I don't think I was aware, at that age, of any difference between any Protestant or Catholic faiths. I think the service

was broad brush Christian to try and capture everyone. I think it is fair to say that they tried to teach Christian morality without pushing specific Christian beliefs on us. For me, in reflection, I think what we were exposed to was appropriate however I don't think it would be suitable nowadays in a non-denominational school and it was certainly no different to what I experienced at schools before and after Fettes.

43. There was a hefty focus on Christianity and I think of that in terms of inclusion nowadays and was that the right thing? When I think back I don't remember any Asian students or anyone who might have been of a different faith. Predominately the students were white but there was a lot of international students from places like China and Japan. I remember a couple of students who were black British. There was no cultural provision but I don't know if it wasn't there because we didn't have those students or if we didn't have those students because that provision didn't exist.

*Contact with Family*

44. Every Sunday we had to write home. I don't think any of the letters we received were censored. Whenever any letters were sent in to any of the residents the letters or packages were put on a piano in hell. It was the first thing I did when I came in from school. I would run through and see if anyone had written to me. I remember this being a source of friction between me and the other girls as I would be so excited for them that I would pick up all their mail and take it up to them. They would say that they would want to collect their own mail.
45. I remember writing a blistering letter to my mum as she hadn't written to me. It was actually quite traumatic. I said things like I hate her, that she obviously doesn't love me as she never writes or calls me and that I couldn't believe she sent me to Fettes and was not keeping in touch. I had been upset writing the letter and I showed it to Mr Glen who read it but he didn't stop me sending it. He challenged if this would be the best way to deal with the situation but he didn't stop or discourage me from sending it. I cannot be certain that every letter I sent was read by a member of staff as the only time I remember it happening was when I showed Mr Glen.

*Leisure time*

46. Before I went to boarding school I sat in front of the telly and I watched a lot of the soaps or if the weather was good I would be out playing with my pals. I was dead keen not to be in the house. At boarding school I loved reading, but I don't remember anything being wildly different. I remember there was a pool table up the stairs. I was rubbish at playing pool but I loved the atmosphere of other people playing it. There was always music on, longwave radio Atlantic 252 is what I remember playing on a big record player sitting in the corner. I loved being around the music, the people and the chat. There was also one Nintendo for sixty kids so your time on that was pretty limited.
47. I do remember Mr Alexander bought me a long stitching kit. I recall on one of the Wednesday classes they were doing cross-stitching and I thought it was fascinating. I said as much to Mr Alexander and I remember thinking what a generous gift and that he was so kind. Then I went home and my mum was complaining about the bill she received for all the stuff including the long stitching kit. It occurred to me that maybe it wasn't such a nice gift after all.
48. I have always been into arts and crafts activities and very much focussed on literature. When we came back from the spring term and it was lighter in the mornings there was an expectation that after you had your dinner you would go out and play beside a field near to Mr Glen's house. I think it was called 'big side'. It had a wee stream that ran through it and there was a little bridge over it. I spent many a summer night just jumping from one side of the stream bank to the other.
49. I had a particularly good relationship with one of the members of staff in the Senior School. On Wednesday afternoons you got to choose different things to do and one of those was shooting. Fettes had its own shooting range and I remember going along and trying it and I was good at it. The guy who ran the shooting range was Sergeant Major Willie Ross and he was from Castlemilk. We used to talk about areas in Glasgow and I knew a lot of the areas he would talk about. I thought the absolute world of him. I remember him coming to the Burns Supper, the school made a big fuss about things

like that. He did the Immortal Grace and when he finished he came back and sat at my table with his wife. I just remember having the loveliest of nights because I got to connect back to Glasgow a wee bit. As much as I loved it all I did feel a bit of a disconnect with my extremely wealthy peers with some of the things they would talk about and what their lives were like.

*Trips and holidays*

50. If you wanted you could go to the rugby at Murrayfield you could be taken to see an international and also to Merchiston to watch the school's rugby team play.
  
51. The first weekend after I started at Fettes the new pupils were taken to the cinema. There were three different films and you got to choose which one you wanted to see. I cannot remember which one I watched but afterwards my group were out first. I had made a pal who was watching one of the other movies so I found a seat to go and wait for her. I remember there was a lot of chattering noise and then I became conscious there was no chatter anymore. They had left me at the cinema and hadn't realised I was missing for the return trip to the school. I went to the cinema desk and asked if they could help me. There was no mobile phones in those days. They managed to get hold of Mr Alexander who, anecdotally as I heard later, came to a screaming handbrake stop in front of the bus on the way back to the school. I don't remember them picking me up but I do remember feeling scared that I had only just started at this school and I was going to be in so much trouble. The reality was I think everyone was just mortified that they had left a pupil behind and the child protection issue of that situation.
  
52. We did a massive project on the Second World War when I was in T Form, I think it was the whole school but definitely all of Inverleith. We went to Haig Poppy Factory where we learned about how they raised funds for a care home for ex-servicemen.
  
53. We also did the West Highland Way but did it in relays. My team did a ten mile stretch and then we camped. Mr Alexander also took us camping to The Kyles of Bute.

54. We also went to the Loire Valley in France at the end of T Form. I have no idea how my trip was funded. I think the school may have helped. I just remember when my mum was casting up the cost of my schooling she would say that they took credit cards to help. I know that my grandparents helped with that so I am assuming they would have played a role in it. Although I had an individual passport we travelled on a group passport. We all travelled together and we went with pupils from Clifton Hall School as well. I don't know how many went but there was enough for us all to fit comfortably on a coach. I was able to sleep across two seats on the coach so it wasn't full.
55. I remember going to Moffat as [REDACTED]'s father was [REDACTED] there. The whole boarding house went and it was a really nice day.

#### *Healthcare*

56. There was a chiropodist who I think was the wife of a teacher at the school who used to come into the house. I have vague recollections of being in my jammies and dressing gown so it was probably a Saturday night. I didn't know what a chiropodist was I just thought it was nice to have a lady come and talk to you while doing my feet. We all had verrucas from the showers and swimming pool.
57. I don't remember going to a dentist and I think that was something you were expected to do when you were at home. When I think of the vaccination cycle I don't think I would have been due anything while at Fettes. I think I got my BCG when I was back home.
58. I got shingles when I was in First Form and had to go to the sanatorium which was basically a small hospital on the campus. I had to stay there for a few days with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] who also had shingles. The care was fine but the room looked like something out of a 1960's mental hospital with white wrought iron beds and crisp white sheets with hospital corners. We got punted out after about three days when the nursing staff became fed up with me and [REDACTED] arguing and throwing jugs of water from the window over passing students. There was a matron but it wasn't her who looked after us in the sanatorium as there was nursing staff who worked there.

*Work*

59. We had to polish our shoes and make our beds and I have vague recollections of emptying my own bin from my room. After eating you would take your own plates up, scrape them and put them up so they could be put in the dishwasher. I had no other chores to do such as helping prepare food and cleaning the communal rooms.

*Christmas and Birthdays*

60. I went home for Christmas but there was a build up to it like singing Carols and stuff. I remember at Christmas in the boarding house singing the Twelve Days of Christmas and the French teacher was very drunk. She wasn't in charge of looking after us, she was just there. I know as far as child protection is concerned, this is perhaps not a great anecdote, but at the time it just felt funny just like a family event. I remember there being Christmas trees, doing Christmas activities and really building up to the holidays before going back home.
61. I know I was there for at least one birthday. I don't remember it being celebrated when I was at school but I do remember my family coming through to Edinburgh and taking me out. We went to Fat Sams in Edinburgh which I think no longer exists. I think that might have been my first birthday there which would have been my eleventh birthday.

*Visitors / Inspections*

62. At the start my family used to come and pick me up from school and take me home at the end of term. I said to my mum that [REDACTED] who was the year above me, lives in Glasgow and he gets to get the train home. When she realised she didn't have to come through to Edinburgh, Jon Glen would put me on a train at Haymarket and she would pick me up at Queen Street. I think she only picked me up from Fettes the first

or second term and then I was travelling to and from school having to carry all my stuff. I was never left at school during a recommended break, so I was home for every break, half term or holiday. I maybe never went to my home as I sometimes went to stay with my nana and grandpa.

63. I have a recollection that my auntie came to see me once but I don't remember why that was. She might have been dropping something off. I remember talking to her for a little while.
64. I was never aware of any official visitors or inspections taking place and don't recall anyone ever speaking to me in that capacity.

*Personal Possessions*

65. I read constantly and I ploughed through books but I wonder if there was a library or something. Books were always available but I cannot remember where from. I think there was a general black market for comics and magazines. I read, amongst other things, the Reader's Digest. I got that delivered at home and would bring in a couple of copies when I returned to the school. I remember [REDACTED] who was in Second Form when I was in T Form would get his delivered to the school. I also think people got stuff posted into them and then it would be shared around.

*Pocket Money*

66. I never had pocket money. At the start of term or when you came back after recommended leave you would return with your tuck box full. You were not allowed it during the week so only got it at the weekend. It had to last until the next time I was going home.



### *Running Away*

67. I never ran away. Firstly I didn't like running but in any case it would never have occurred to me to do so. That was a bad person thing to do. Despite the fact as an adult I am a disruptor to bring about change for good, back then it would never have dawned on me ever to run away. I don't remember anyone else ever running away. I do remember during the spring and summer, [REDACTED] who was the year above me and is now a massive [REDACTED] waltzed out one day to go to her grandparent's house. They lived very close to the school. She came back a short time later with a full face of make-up and I don't remember anything being made of that.

### *Bed-wetting*

68. I wet the bed a few times when I was at school and I would wash myself in the bathrooms opposite heaven. I think it was easy for me to work out a time to go so no-one saw me. I don't know if anyone else wet the bed. I would say, as much as they could be, the staff dealt with it in as dignified a manner as it could be. I think it would be Mrs Glen and Mrs Allen. I didn't have a history of bed-wetting before I went to boarding school and I remember the first time it happened being absolutely horrified. Whichever member of staff was helping told me not to worry about it. I was just to strip my bed and put it in front of the washing machine. The thing I was aware of is that we changed our bedding every two weeks so it meant that for however long I had a different duvet than everyone else. Nobody made a thing of it so I was fine. I remember the second time I did it I didn't tell anyone I just put the soiled bedding in front of the washing machine. I remember a member of staff speaking to me. They were asking that if I wet the bed to make sure I tell a member of staff and not to just leave my bedding at the washing machine. I think that was legitimate and fair. I don't remember anyone ever making a thing of it other than I was okay and that the bed was cleaned.

### *Discipline and Punishment*

69. There was no physical discipline at all. I think it was broadly a consensual basis for discipline as in you will do what I say and we as pupils complied. That served well to

the very regimented and structured day to day living. I don't remember there being bad girls or boys who were getting in trouble. I remember getting absolutely bawled at on several occasions for what I would describe as meaningless stuff like forgetting jotters or not doing homework.

70. I was never witness to anyone being hit so that for me was something that just didn't happen. I am aware there was circumstances when disciplinary matters arose. For example when I attended Fettes to sit the entrance exam it was a girl called [REDACTED] who showed me around the school. She left after the first term because I believe it was her brother, [REDACTED] who was in the senior school and was expelled for smoking cannabis. For me the message was that he did that and here is the consequence. If you do something stupid like that the same will happen to you. I remember thinking this incident felt like a big deal, it was spoken about as such amongst my peers. It didn't make sense to me then that [REDACTED] had left because [REDACTED] left. I only understood in later life that their family felt his punishment was disproportionate.
71. Physical exercise wasn't doled out as a punishment that I remember. I don't remember doing lines and don't remember witnessing anything where someone else was disciplined in that way. I think that extra homework might have been used instead.
72. I feel like there would have been some code of conduct but I don't recall if I saw it. I don't know if I would have had my own copy and it could have been contained within other paperwork such as the events list but I was more interested in when recommended leave was. I think for me it was a case that you knew if you broke the rules because you would have been very quickly instructed otherwise. I think it was a case of you knew when you all got up, when you should be where and suchlike so it was structured into the way of life in school. I don't want to convey that it was like a militarised environment, it was nice but it was structured.

### *Bullying*

73. I would say there wasn't much in the way of physical bullying however in the interests of full disclosure I do remember an episode I am not particularly proud of. There was an incident in my dorm where I was pulling someone's hair, scrapping and cat fighting with her.
74. There was the way girls can behave with other girls, particularly hormonal girls, cat fighting and bitching. All the low level niggling stuff I tended not to notice until I started to get hormonal and that's when it became more obvious.
75. I do remember one night when I had to have my mattress dragged down to heaven for me to sleep there because there had been a game of dares in the dorm room and someone had kicked off about something. I was very incensed that someone wasn't doing the dare they were supposed to and [REDACTED] kicked off some emotional drama that I was forcing her to do something she didn't want to do. It wasn't anything like that but I remember feeling terrified that I was going to be in so much trouble in the morning and get expelled. It was nothing like that, nothing was said. I think it was a case of Mr Glen and Mrs Allan just trying to get us girls to bed.
76. I don't remember there being a culture of bullying, I am not saying it didn't happen, I was just unaware of that sort of thing.

### **Abuse**

77. From my perspective and my interaction, broadly speaking, I don't think there was anything that could be termed as abusive behaviour between staff and pupils.
78. There was inappropriate behaviour between peers. There was definitely situations where there was inter-peer behaviours and sexual exploration between young people. Looking back now I think this was at a younger age than might have happened outside of that school environment.

79. The first time it happened to me was with another pupil in my year group. His name was [REDACTED] but we called him [REDACTED]. He was from [REDACTED]. It was like we were going to be boyfriend/girlfriend and then he touched me in places. I didn't really understand how to set any boundaries. I have struggled myself to define if this was abuse and I reflect on whether others might define this kind of interaction as normal sexual exploration. It didn't feel right to me.
80. When [REDACTED] started at Fettes he couldn't speak English and after maybe a term two other [REDACTED] boys started in Second Form and they couldn't speak English either. They were called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. They were encouraged to spend time together as [REDACTED] had started to pick up English. I remember that when you came in the front door of the school there was a room with a piano. I didn't get piano lessons but I wanted to learn and I used to go in there and play on the piano. On one occasion [REDACTED] came in with the two [REDACTED] guys and they were talking to each other in [REDACTED]. Then [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] started feeling me up. My feeling at the time was that [REDACTED] had deliberately set the situation up in order to afford himself some protection. They did the same to me on a few different times. Not just in that room. There was a big warehouse at the side of the playing fields where they kept crash mats and athletic equipment. I remember them cornering me in there and touching me but I cannot recall why I was in there but there was other people around outside. I remember [REDACTED] was quite small but these other two boys were massive in age comparison.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

81. I didn't tell anyone about the abuse at Fettes because I felt absolutely mortified and still do. I felt dirty and complicit. I haven't ever told anyone. When I told my husband I would be talking to the Inquiry I just said stuff happened but I didn't go into detail. I feel really embarrassed. I am mostly embarrassed as I think other people would have written it off as what kids do but when I heard of the Inquiry I started to feel more and more uncomfortable when I remembered these experiences and I am still not comfortable with it. What I have really struggled with is understanding whether what

happened to me is what young people do when they are exploring their own sexuality but that's not what it felt like. I was not at that level of maturity. I probably could have reported this to someone at the school but I didn't because it felt like something naughty or something bad. I have a photograph taken at the school and I think it has all these boys names on it.

82. As far as a designated person is concerned I am sure we had form tutors who would be there and who would look after a group of children. I guess it is the same as pastoral care now. I am still in touch with Jon Glen and Janet Allan and I feel that is because I am very fond of them. Putting myself back in my shoes then I don't think there was any institutional barriers to stop me talking to them about this abuse. The barrier was that I didn't understand what had happened was not okay. I feel what would have been good is if the boarders had a key pastoral care person who looked after their wellbeing as a boarder. I know child protection has moved on substantially in the last 25 years.

### **Police Contact**

83. I am aware from newspaper reports that there were allegations made against the swimming teacher, Bill Stein, and I was contacted by the police about him. It was Jon Glen who gave them my details. It was about five or six years ago and I am not clear if they were specifically asking if he had abused me or about more general things. He was my swimming teacher and I only every remember him being super passionate about his sport. I am not making a judgement call on other peoples experiences which are absolutely valid and absolutely real but it just wasn't my experience. I always found him really supportive and kind. I couldn't swim when I went to Fettes but I quickly learned because he was a patient teacher. I have vague recollections of him coming into the changing rooms, which were cubicles, after lessons but it felt like a dad coming in making sure you had your clothes on. I think this was when we were half way dressed and getting our stuff together to leave.

### **Leaving Fettes**

84. I left when I was twelve. The reason I left Fettes was because I phoned my mum in the middle of winter term in First Form and told her that I didn't want to be there any longer and wanted to leave at the end of that year. My mum said okay. The reason this stands out to me is that my mum was never one to do things on the basis of what I asked her to do. I know now that my dad was laid off about a year after I moved home. I think they were aware that redundancy processes were starting. Although we were not paying full fees there definitely was a financial implication for the family. When I said I wanted to leave that was a good thing in terms of what the family's financial situation was going to be. I think me asking to leave was a low blip in an otherwise generally good experience. When you lock up a bunch of kids and they are all together all of the time there is always going to be times that that got quite intense. I look back on most of that time fondly.
85. I enjoyed being treated as an equal to other people because at my first primary school I was bullied really badly. I had prominent buck teeth and didn't fit it and was thought of as a wee bit weird. I was living with the consequences and ramifications of living with a mum who wasn't very well in a time when that kind of stuff wasn't really understood. I remember going to boarding school as a very positive experience for me as I was away from the really toxic stuff. I had a really good group of friends at Fettes, we were a really close group. I loved the structure and I loved the routine, that worked really well for me. I also loved all the extra-curricular stuff, all the sport like hockey. I was rubbish at it but I still loved all the outdoors. I so appreciated the opportunity to see and do things that had I been living in Glasgow just wouldn't have happened. For me school was really positive. I think where the blips happened it was stuff like homesickness. Much as home wasn't great it was still home. Much as I didn't miss my mum I remember fiercely missing my wee sisters and brother.
86. Once I left Fettes I never felt like I got my pace back up and my grades didn't translate. I didn't have the structure, everything is so structured at boarding school. There was time to do your homework for an hour and you did it as you had no choice. I didn't find the self-directed learning as easy.

### **Life after Leaving Fettes**

87. I went to Craigholme which is another private school in Glasgow. I started in second year. My relationship with my mum was still pretty strained so I went back and forward between my mum and my nana's house. We had a total family breakdown as I turned sixteen which was S5 year. I ended up leaving the house and going into homeless accommodation. That was in the May, the day before my Higher English exam and the day after my Higher maths. I was in the homeless system for about a year until I got my own flat. I sat five Highers, failed two of them and the rest were Bs. It would have been enough for me to go to university if I wanted to but I just wasn't in that space. I was really working to build my own independent life. I had a job and I used the wage to make the flat nice. I felt the chance to have a baby of my own would give me the chance to live a nice family life. In fairness I probably would have left Craigholme at the end of S5 in any case as I hated it there. As it was I wasn't going to have the conversation about who was going to pay my school fees and all that.
88. The homeless accommodation I was living in was supported accommodation. At that time the benefit system was that I could have stayed on at school or went on to further education but if I went to higher education the housing benefit would have stopped. It seems bizarre to me that I could have worked and I did which didn't affect my benefit but I couldn't go to university. I spent a couple of years working in call centres dealing with customer services. I then got a better job working with a bank who had created a new mortgage product. I ended up training as a Mortgage Processor which was a pretty good job. I then got pregnant with my oldest son and had him when I was nineteen. I split up with his dad about eight months later and was fed up being skint.
89. I went to Uni in 2002 and completed first and half way through second year however my grandpa died in the January of 2004. My gran had had strokes years beforehand and was disabled but we hadn't realised how much care my grandpa had been providing until he died. I disengaged from Uni and took this time to be more present to help my nana and at the same time to have a bit more of a social life for myself. My son's father was a committed dad so I cared for our son through the week but at the weekends when he was with his dad I was able to really go out and have fun as a young person for the first time. I did that for about six months which was good fun.

90. I then met [REDACTED] towards the end of 2004 and felt I was ready to settle down. We had a baby in 2006 and another in 2007. We got married in 2008 and then had another baby in 2009. We were both working but it was around that time the global financial crash happened around the housing market. [REDACTED] and I were made redundant and spent about a year and half trying to run our own business. We gave that up and we both returned to higher education. We both now have fulfilling professional jobs.

### **Impact**

91. I would say in terms of everything my family life has been the thing that has been the defining factor in where I have managed to get to in my life. Growing up in a somewhat dysfunctional family situation has made me really resilient. The reality of the situation is I managed to get through some really difficult times.
92. If someone had said I could go back to Fettes a year after I left I would have gone back. I would say, other than the experience with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Fettes was a generally positive experience for me. Being at Fettes did not have a negative impact on my life but neither did it have a massive positive impact. I would say if you are a parent who is looking to send your child to private school I believe the rationale for that is to buy them privilege and personal connections to see them through life. I definitely don't have that but what I did have was a sense of what the world could look like if I made it happen. I think that that has been a positive thing for me especially when times have been tough, I have had the knowledge to know I can fix it. I don't think that is something I would have gleaned without going to Fettes.

### **Records**

93. It never occurred to me they might be available but I don't know if I would want to see them. My gut reaction is that I wouldn't want to read bad things about myself. I still see myself through that prism of being bad. I know this is because of the way my mum dealt with me. I am still working on building a more accurate reflection of myself.



94. I have a photograph of the whole of the junior school whilst I was there.

### **Lessons and Hopes for the Inquiry**

95. I have thought about what, if anything, Fettes could have done to prevent such abuse. I have had to do all sorts of child protection training and you have to be aware of what your responsibilities are to young people who are not really sure of themselves and what their hormones are telling them to do. I also trained in early years education as well. The thing that is really stark to me is that no-one ever had a conversation with us about relationships and sex education. What was never discussed with us is how you conduct and comport yourself in relation to your peers. With the benefit of hindsight the way that things are structured now with sex education are far more robust and far more positive and understanding that hormones are a thing and young people want to explore. In the early nineties it wasn't there and I think it is a different thing to talk about these things in an educational setting than when you are living with other people. I am not sure Fettes could have prevented the first instance of abuse but if there had been some sort of structure which empowered pupils to know what was and was not okay I may have realised this was wrong and how to report it. I don't remember there ever being a conversation at any point about acceptable boundaries and relationships.
96. I definitely think there are some things that could be changed. I am pretty sure now that Fettes take children even younger than when I was there. Possibly eight year olds who are maybe away from their parents or formative care givers for the first time. An important piece there is about relationships and healthy relationships. It's a really heavy topic to unpack that idea of abuse with children. I have knowledge of this because of my involvement with the voluntary sector. To ensure children know what is and what is not appropriate, couched in language that they understand.
97. Reflecting on my own experiences there is definitely something missing for me there, how that entry into boarding school life is managed. It cannot be a wee chat on a first weekend when kids have just started. It needs to be a programme that is reinforced constantly covering more than rights. It's about relationships and appropriate behaviours and I think that was missing when I was there. Structures and processes

which I guess will be a theme about what the Inquiry is doing as well as reporting processes. Making sure kids are empowered to know what is and isn't healthy and that they know what to do in situations that make them uncomfortable. A boarding school environment is so intense when you are living with people all the time so it is not a regular pupil teacher relationship. Those staff need to take on a pastoral, borderline parental, role. It is a difficult space to occupy to maintain that line that remains appropriate and doesn't become a child protection or safeguarding issue. It should be in the school's interest to do that just from a governance perspective protecting themselves from litigation at a later time even if they don't look at it through the prism of what's best for the kids.

98. My hopes for the Inquiry is a difficult question to answer as my understanding of the work of the Inquiry is only understood through the prism of what I have told the Inquiry. My experience is arguably small and at a very low level of the things the Inquiry will be hearing. From an individual perspective there is an awful lot of investment into the Inquiry from a justice perspective. I don't mean criminal justice I mean justice for the person who has been through abuse in whatever form. That is where I think the Inquiry is at most pressure I would expect, making sure it gets things right for individuals.
99. There is a bigger piece about the future and it's something really ironic for me. I really liked my time at boarding school but I also fundamentally believe that private schools should be abolished. However, whilst we still have private schools there has to be structures in place. Moving forward, there has to be recommendations from the Inquiry, to ensure that children's safety and well-being is absolutely paramount to any decisions that are being made about any facets of their life. That would include education and physical fitness, it has to be about keeping kids safe and making sure they are kept well. In terms of how the Inquiry will be received it has to be the work of the Inquiry to make sure there is never a need for another national multi-year inquiry into historical child abuse and how it is allowed to perpetuate without people stepping in. I know this may not be the best example and in no way do I want to minimise the Holocaust but I went to Auschwitz a few years ago and the person taking us round talked about how you get to the point where you have a camp full of people who are being industrially murdered. She talked about the part everyone played, the guards

said it was not their fault people died, the train driver saying he was just driving the train. They all said they were just doing their job and just doing what they were told, that kind of stuff. I appreciate it may not be the best correlation, and I in no way mean to draw the same inferences, but actually when you are talking about child protection it is because it is everyone's responsibility to keep kids safe. I am not totally sure that is how it was approached in my time at school.

- 100. 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..........  
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26 November 2020

Dated.....