

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

BYJ

Support person present: No

1. My name is BYJ. My date of birth is 1961. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. My mother and father, and originally stayed in Glasgow but moved to India to follow my father's work. I was born in Calcutta. We moved back to Glasgow when I was eighteen months old. I have two brothers. is three years younger than me and is 10 years younger than me.
3. I had a very happy childhood with my parents. My father was absent a lot of the time as he travelled with his work but I had lots of other family relations nearby. The last school I went to before boarding school was Primary school. Up until then my life was just that of a normal happy young boy.
4. I know that it was very important to my father that I was given every opportunity to be as successful in life as he was. He had gone to Keil School, Dumbarton, which was a boarding school. His father also went to boarding school. We visited four or five different prep schools and it was decided that I would go to Aberlour House. I didn't have to do any sort of entrance examination.
5. When we visited Aberlour we met with Toby Coghill, the headmaster and the matron whose name I can't remember. I was shown round the school, at least all the good

stuff and everything seemed very pleasant, nice and fun. My parents decided that this was where I was going to go. I didn't really have a say in the matter.

6. We subsequently had a trip to Edinburgh where we bought all my uniform and kit that I needed. It was all put in my father's old school trunk and it still had his name on it. This trunk was sent ahead of me to Aberlour so it was there when I got there. I had just turned ten when I started at Aberlour in September 1971.

### **Aberlour House Boarding School**

7. Aberlour was the prep school for Gordonstoun. I had never been to see Gordonstoun but I was to find out that Aberlour was run very much along the same principle as the senior school. I think there would have been around eighty boys. The youngest boys were eight and they, along with some of the nine year olds, were kept together in the same dorm which was close to the matron. The other dorms were all mixed with boys from nine up to thirteen. Just before I left Aberlour about six to eight girls started living in Aberlour.
8. The building itself was a Georgian mansion house situated at the top of a hill. It was midway between Aberlour and Craigellachie. As you enter the main door into the main hall, on the right was the staff meeting room and the headmaster's study. On the other side was a common area and another big room where Sunday services and Scottish country dancing took place. There was a library and music at the back. Next was the dining room, matron's room and the kitchen.
9. There was a staircase leading up to the first floor which had a view looking out to the River Spey and on the opposite bank was a whisky distillery. Upstairs were around seven dormitories with twelve to fourteen boys in each one. In each dormitory was at least one senior boy who was the head of that dormitory. The bedroom windows in the dorms were kept wide open all night. The showers and baths were on this floor. There were six to eight baths along one wall. The sinks were in the middle and on the other side was a row of showers. The showers were not in cubicles and it was just an open

area. Also on this level was the photography room. Outside were outbuildings at the back of the main building, including stables, which were the classrooms.

10. The matron, whose name was possibly Miss Potts, was a nice smiley person. We could go to see her after breakfast if there was something wrong. Quite often we would make things up just so we could go to the sanatorium just to get some TLC.
11. Toby Coghill was the headmaster who also taught humanities at the school. This was like history. I would estimate there to be between twenty and twenty five teachers at Aberlour. Practically all the teachers either stayed in the building or in cottages on the grounds. The duty teacher would sleep in their own bedroom overnight, whether that was in the building or in a cottage. There would be somebody you could go to through the night if necessary but I can't remember who that was.

### **Routine at Aberlour House**

#### *First day*

12. My parents dropped me off at Queen Street train station in Glasgow to get the Inverness train. My father shook my hand, because he didn't do hugs, and told me to have a great time. Meantime my mother was in tears as I left. I was with six other boys who I didn't know. Three of us were going to Aberlour for the first time and we were crying. This was the first time I had been away from my parents like this.
13. A group of other boys who were from Edinburgh got on somewhere along the journey, possibly at Perth, and joined us. LAU [REDACTED] who was a [REDACTED] teacher at Aberlour was with them, and he travelled the rest of the journey with us. By the time we got to Aviemore, which was where we got off, I had got to know the other boys. We all then got on a bus and were taken to Aberlour.
14. I can't remember who met us when we arrived. I do remember that all the new boys were kept together and we were allocated one of the senior boys who showed us

around and who we shadowed for a couple of weeks until we learned where everything was, what the format was and what we were supposed to do.

*Mornings and bedtime*

15. We were woken up every day about seven o'clock by a hand-bell then the duty teacher would come round to make sure we were getting ready. The senior boy who was head of the dorm would also make sure we were getting ready. We all had to make our own beds with hospital corners. Every morning, regardless of the weather or the time of year, before we did anything else, we were made to put our shorts and gym kit on and go for a run outside. It maybe only took five minutes to run round 'the triangle' but it was their way to try and toughen us up. We then were made to take a shower, then a cold shower and get dressed and go for breakfast. We then had school classes through the day.
16. Bedtime was more or less straight after 'prep', possibly around half past seven or eight o'clock. The duty teacher would come in and tell us it was time to switch the lights off. There was no talking allowed after the lights went out.

*Mealtimes/Food*

17. We had our breakfast, lunch and dinner in the same dining room. The tables sat six or eight boys. We were told where to sit and every week they changed tables around so you got to know everyone. A teacher sat at the top of every table and ate with us. The food was served to us at the table. Breakfast was usually porridge and toast, and possibly eggs. Lunch was things like sausages and eggs and there was a pudding. Dinner, like all the meals were basic but it was hearty Scottish food. I don't recall there being any issues if there was any food that you didn't like or if there was any left on your plate.
18. After our meal we took it in turns to gather up the dirty plates and cutlery and clear the tables. Every day after lunch we would line up in a queue as we were allowed to take

one sweet from the Quality Street tin. That was the only sweet really that we were allowed. The only other sweet we got was a reward for writing good letters home.

### *Washing/bathing*

19. We had a bath probably once a week. It was in an evening and must have been organised. The matron or the teacher would organise it all. Either the matron or the duty teacher would supervise us. The rest of the time we showered. We had a hot shower after sport at school. We were only made to take a cold shower in the morning after our run.

### *Clothing/uniform*

20. Beside our beds was a locker where we could store our clothes. There was another locker downstairs where the rest of our clothes were. This locker had to be kept spotlessly clean as did our shoes in there.
21. For school we wore a uniform of blue corduroy shorts, which we wore all year round, grey shirt and V-neck sweater.

### *Leisure time*

22. After lunch we were encouraged to lie on our beds for half an hour to rest. We could read a book if we wanted to. We weren't allowed to talk during this period. We would then get our sports kit on. What we wore depended on the time of year as to which sport we would play. It was cricket or tennis in the summer and rugby in the winter. Participation in sport wasn't optional. It was always team games we played and you were put in teams according to your physical ability.
23. After dinner we would have 'prep', which was homework, for around 45 minutes. We did this sitting at our desk in the classrooms. During the school week we didn't get any real 'playtime' or 'downtime' to do what we wanted. We didn't get to watch the

television. After prep we had to get ready for bed. It is fair to say that every minute of every day was accounted for.

24. On Saturday afternoons we had sports, as in games like rugby, cricket or whatever. Later on we may get to watch a film in the meeting room. On a Sunday afternoon we had games. Sometimes we would do outward bound stuff or get sent on a long run.

#### *Trips and holidays*

25. We were taken out very rarely. I remember at some point going on a day trip to Gordonstoun. I was in the choir so I got out quite often to sing at the church. We didn't visit museums or anything like that. The only other times I was out was when the [REDACTED] teacher, KME [REDACTED], took me out in his car and he abused me. Sometimes KME [REDACTED] used to take me out and we would walk his dog or he would take me into the village of Aberlour. He took me to Miss [REDACTED], his girlfriend's house which was in Aberlour.

26. I was at home over the holidays and I remember KME [REDACTED] would send me books to read. One was Wuthering Heights. I have never read it and never will. My mother once queried why he was sending books but I didn't know what to say.

#### *School*

27. We went from class to class depending on what subject we had. The teachers stayed in their class. I started in my third form. The form teachers were Miss Port who taught English and Miss Cochrane taught maths. They were okay. We had classes on Saturday morning too.
28. Before I went to boarding school I was often the top of the class in most subjects. When I got to boarding school that all changed for me. I think it was partly because the level of teaching wasn't as good and partly because I didn't enjoy school. The teaching at Aberlour was more about life and practicalities rather than a good basic education.

### *Religious instruction*

29. After breakfast we would go into the common room where there was a short religious service and we sang a hymn. The school was non-denominational but the theme was based along the lines of the Anglican church. I don't recall religious studies or sex education at school. On Sunday morning we had a church service.

### *Chores*

30. There was a rota of chores that we had to do through the week. We did sweeping of the floors and cleaning and other duties like that. I can't remember when we did these chores.

### *Birthdays and Christmas*

31. On your birthday you were allowed to choose seven friends and you had a birthday tea with them. It was just the usual main meal but cakes would have come from the bakers in Aberlour. This was the only time you got to eat something sweet like this. This was a real treat and there were tactics used in this process. I always chose boys whose birthdays were coming up soon, and didn't fall in the holidays. That way they would choose me to go to their birthday teas and I would get a cake.

### *Visits/Inspections*

32. In the first term that I was there from September to December my parents visited me once. They came to Aberlour village and stayed overnight. I was really upset when they left. Parents were allowed to visit once or twice in each of the three school terms. My parents came roughly in the middle of each term. They were allowed to come on a Saturday and take me out and return me on the Sunday. They would come on the Saturday and pick me up then take me to Carrbridge where they stayed in a house for a few days. They took me back to Aberlour on the Sunday. My brother [REDACTED] came with me and sometimes I was allowed to take another boy out with me.

33. Phone calls home were not allowed at any time apart from at birthdays we were allowed to call our parents. Every Monday morning, in the first period, the form teacher would make us all write letters home to our parents. In the third form, my first year there, Miss Cochrane and Miss Port told us that if we wrote a good letter and our parents replied saying it was a good letter we would get a Crunchie or a Mars bar. This meant they would have to read the letter. I suppose it was their way of reading what we were saying.
34. I am not aware of any official visits by anyone doing any kind of inspection of the school or for any other similar official business. It may have happened but out-with my knowledge. I was certainly never asked how I was getting on at the school by any adult.

*Running away*

35. After my first Christmas holiday at home from Aberlour, when it was time to go back I really didn't want to go. I was only ten and I was in a bad way. I went back and later decided to write my mum a letter. I wrote it in red ink and I told her that if they didn't come and get me by the next Saturday I was going to run away. I sneaked out of the grounds and posted it in Aberlour so the staff couldn't read it. My parents didn't reply and didn't appear on the Saturday morning so when classes were going on I got on a bike and cycled away. I wrote down what I was planning on doing in my 'Oor Wullie' annual. My intention was to cycle to Aviemore, hide on the train and get back to Glasgow.
36. I got about fourteen miles away on the bike when Toby Coghill caught me and drove me back to Aberlour. On the way back he told me that I had ruined the day for all the other children and the teachers because they had all been out looking for me. He never asked me why I had run away. When we got to Aberlour I was paraded in front of the whole school and I was made to apologise for what I had done. Coghill told me that on this occasion he wasn't going to beat me. It was when he said that he wasn't going to beat me that I became very frightened.



37. Coghill then took me into his office and called my mother and father. My mother was in tears. I spoke to my father and he asked me if I wanted him to come and take me home. Coghill was there and listening to the call so I just said that I would be alright. I learned that they hadn't seen my letter that day as they had been out. Nothing much else was said that night.
38. I was aware, on occasion, of other boys running away and I believe one boy got as far as London.

#### *Discipline*

39. Mr Coghill had three canes which he kept in his study. There was also the chance that you would get the slipper from him. There was discipline in the school classes, particularly from OPQ [REDACTED], the [REDACTED] teacher. Most of the teachers would use the canes. It didn't happen to me very often. I was never caned by Toby Coghill and never saw it happening to any of the other boys, but I know from the other boys who were caned that it did happen. Caning would happen in his office.

#### *Bed Wetting*

40. If you needed the toilet through the night there was nothing to stop you getting up and going to the bathroom. Some of the younger boys however did wet the bed. The staff were mostly compassionate in the way it was dealt with and the boys weren't ridiculed or made to feel embarrassed about it. These boys had rubber sheets on their mattress.

#### **Abuse at Aberlour House**

41. Aberlour was a completely alien environment to me. I had been brought up in a very loving home, although being Scottish it wasn't too touchy-feely. After the occasion when I ran away and Toby Coghill made me apologise to the rest of the school that was when I started to build the wall around myself and learn how to protect myself.

42. **KME** was an [REDACTED] teacher and he abused me. He lived in his own house at the end of the drive. It all started probably before I was eleven. He would have been in his thirties and was English. His girlfriend, Miss [REDACTED], was the [REDACTED]. The first time anything happened was in his classroom. He asked me to stay behind after a class. He was at his desk and asked me to stand next to him. He was always very warm and friendly. I think that first time all that happened was he hugged me. To be honest I didn't think there was anything wrong with this. It progressed after that.
43. **KME** also taught photography so had access to the darkroom where the photographs were developed. That was where the abuse really started. There were virtually no lights in there so it was almost completely dark. This was where he started touching me and it continued for a couple of years. Initially it was outside my trousers but it progressed and he actually touched my naked penis. He was always very nice to me, gave me sweets and he allowed me to walk his dog. He was someone who gave me a lot of love and attention. Something I didn't have. The abuse probably happened once every week after it started. He abused me in the darkroom, in his classroom, in his house, in the car and on camping trips. It was always the same thing that he did to me in these places. He touched me but never asked me to touch him.
44. There was one time when I was in the sanatorium for around a week or possibly two weeks. I had pneumonia probably from when we were canoeing and I capsized. **KME** came to visit me in the sanatorium and he again put his hand under the covers when I was in my bed and touched and abused me.
45. He would come into the dorm, sometimes during the day and sometimes it was in the evening and just tell me to go with him. As far as I remember it was mostly in the evenings. That was when he took me into the dark room which was on the same floor as the dorms. Any of the teachers could come into the dorm for no particular reason. I saw other teachers come in to the dorm and they took other boys out. I think this was usually in the evening. I can't remember who these teachers were or who the boys were. I can't say if it was the same boys that were picked out. I am sure all the boys

knew what the teachers were doing but we didn't openly discuss it. I wasn't abused by any other teacher and I didn't see any other boy getting abused.

46. We occasional went on camping trips at the weekend. There could have been six to ten other boys on these trips who might have all been in the same class. I do not know who organised these trips. **KME** came with us. There were probably other staff there but I can't really remember. **KME** took me into his tent and abused me. The abuse was the same as what happened in the darkroom. He was very clever when he was abusing me in respect that there was never anyone else there. It was always just him and me. He never really spoke to me when he was touching me.
47. Some of the teachers would come into the dorm and if you were caught doing something you shouldn't they would bend you over, pick up a slipper and hit you on the backside over your pyjamas. I can't remember the names of any of the teachers who did this.
48. There is nothing concrete to say that any of the other teachers were abusing any of the other boys. It was just my intuition that told me they were. None of the other teachers ever abused me. When I was living in that environment with **KME**, who was abusing me and I was starting to protect myself and emotionally building a wall around myself I could see the signs of it. There are two teachers **OYE** who taught **LAU** and **LAU** who taught **LAU**. **LAU** lived with his two sisters in Edinburgh and for some reason he was very friendly with my mum and dad. He taught me **LAU** but I never liked him. I believe **OYE** and **LAU** were abusing other boys but I cannot say why.
49. Even although I knew what **KME** was doing wasn't right, it wasn't something I would ever talk to anyone about. Some of the boys talked about it because it almost became competitive to try and get the most attention and get the best treats from him. There was almost jealousy. We never openly spoke about the actual abuse.
50. A few days after the one time that I ran away **OPQ** slapped me across the face with an open hand. This was in the classroom in front of all the other boys.

Apparently I had wasted his Saturday afternoon because he had been out looking for me and he had been sent the wrong way. I just remember being embarrassed getting slapped in front of the whole class. The embarrassment was worse than the pain. Hitting in class was pretty uncommon. I don't remember being hit by any of the teachers at any other time.

51. Aberlour was cold and unloving. It wasn't an environment conducive for young children to learn. There was nothing about that school that was particularly positive. I imagine that life at Aberlour boarding school was like living in a borstal.

### **Reporting of abuse at Aberlour**

52. I never told anyone what [KME] was doing to me when I was at Aberlour. He never told me not to say anything to anybody and I knew it wasn't right but I couldn't share it with anyone. I just knew I couldn't. The warmth and attention that I was shown by [KME] was positive for me but the abuse from him was negative. I was very afraid although he never said anything to make me fear him. After I left Aberlour for Gordonstoun I never heard from or saw [KME] again.

### **Leaving Aberlour**

53. I didn't enjoy my time at Aberlour. I disliked it before the abuse started. I didn't know before I went to Aberlour what the expectations were after Aberlour. When I was there I was to learn that the natural move was to go to Gordonstoun to further my education. Aberlour was the feeder for Gordonstoun. There was a common entrance exam to get into Gordonstoun but because of the relationship between Aberlour and Gordonstoun you could fail the exam but still get to Gordonstoun.
54. I was thirteen when I left Aberlour. I was delighted and happy that I was free and could leave it all behind me. As far as I remember, I left Aberlour in December 1974 and after the holidays at home and started at Gordonstoun in January 1975.

## Gordonstoun Boarding School

55. There were boys and girls at Gordonstoun. The age of the children was from twelve or nearly thirteen up to seventeen or eighteen. There were two houses for girls and seven or eight for boys. When I arrived at Gordonstoun I was put into Hopeman House which is where the newbies, as we were called were put. I was there with a few boys who had been at Aberlour. There would have been about fifty children in Hopeman. Most were twelve or thirteen but there were also some seniors in there to basically look after us. The housemaster for this house was **DFN**. We didn't have dorms any more, we had single rooms.
56. Hopeman House was on two levels and was H shaped. The boys were on one side and the girls were on the other side. Mr **DFN**, the housemaster had a study upstairs. There was a bungalow on the other side where the lady responsible for the girls lived. All the houses were different. After I left there when I was older I went to the house called the 'round square'. In my last term I was one of the senior boys in Gordonstoun House. Part of our duties were to look after the young boys and make sure they knew what they were doing.
57. There were a lot of English and some international students at Gordonstoun. If children didn't get into Eton or Harrow the parents seemed to send them to Gordonstoun. I would guess that eighty per cent of children were from the south of England.
58. Everything was just much bigger than at Aberlour and there was a feeling that we were more grown up. I had a much better feeling about Gordonstoun and it felt like a new beginning and that I could leave everything behind me from Aberlour, close the door and start afresh. Gordonstoun was very similar to Aberlour because Aberlour took their routine from Gordonstoun. The only difference was that we were a bit older so we were treated as such and had more freedom. It was a much more enjoyable experience. It was far warmer and in general a more inviting place. I felt a part of something special rather than being institutionalised. You were expected to look after yourself and expected to participate in things going on at school.

59. I finished off in Gordonstoun House where in my last year I was one of four senior boys. Prince Andrew was the Head of the house and the housemaster was George Brown. He was a geography teacher.

### **Routine at Gordonstoun**

#### *Mornings and bedtime*

60. Just like Aberlour we had to get our gym kit on when we got up and go for a short run then have a cold shower afterwards.

#### *Mealtimes/Food*

61. We had our food at the refectory. It was a self-service buffet so you could pick and choose when and what you wanted to eat. The food was to a good standard and there were no issues with it. When I first arrived the refectory was within Gordonstoun House however in my time there a separate purpose built one was opened.

#### *Washing/bathing*

62. We were responsible for our own hygiene so we could wash and shower as and when we wanted.

#### *Clothing/uniform*

63. We didn't have to wear shorts. We could wear long trousers or our kilts, although not many wore kilts.

#### *Leisure time*

64. Outwith class times we were allowed out of the grounds more or less when we wanted. They actually encouraged us to do other things. Sometimes we would go into Elgin at

the weekend. We had great freedom which didn't exist at Aberlour. Outward bound was a huge part of the school environment. We did things like mountaineering and canoeing. In fourth and fifth form we were encouraged to become part of the local services. This might be as a retained fire fighter, so 'bleeps' had to be carried and be ready to go at any moment to the fire station in Elgin. I joined the Air Training Corps.

65. There was regular organised sport. It depended on the season as to whether it was rugby, hockey, cricket or tennis. Everyone was expected to participate but no one was forced. We had radios in our room so we could play music. There was a television in Hopeman House which we could watch.
66. When I was about fifteen, myself and another boy bought an old Vauxhall Viva car for £15. We hid it in the woods and we worked on it and got it going. We made money from the other kids by taking orders for cigarettes and booze and we would drive down and get it for them. None of the staff at the school knew about it. We had a good little business until one day the car disappeared.

### *School*

67. Historically I have to say that children weren't sent to Gordonstoun because they were clever. It was a school that you went to because it was worldly, outward bound and it made you a man. It wasn't the sort of school that was highly thought of for its education or for preparing children for Oxford or St Andrew's universities. A number of children came from families with lots of money so they felt they didn't have to do anything and their life was planned for them.
68. The classrooms were dotted all over the place. The bell would ring at the end of each period and you made your way to the next class wherever that was. When I arrived at Gordonstoun I went into third form. In the following years I did fourth and fifth form. I didn't get many 'O' levels so for the next term I was in 5B rather than sixth form. I didn't stay at school for 'A' Levels. I left with six 'O' levels but didn't do any 'A' levels. We didn't get any form of sex education at Gordonstoun

69. Again we had prep, which was our time to do homework, every night between half past seven and half past eight so there was nothing else arrange between these times. I enjoyed my education at Gordonstoun. I made many friends and it was much more fun than at Aberlour.

*Senior Pupils*

70. As a senior boy you were given responsibility but there were different levels. Most was to look after the junior boys. Senior boys could not punish or discipline the younger boys. If something happened the senior boys would report it to the housemaster who would decide if there was to be any punishment.

*Boy / Girl contact*

71. Outwith our houses we were not discouraged from any sort of contact with the opposite sex. Often school dances and things like that were arranged which both sexes went to.

*Healthcare*

72. There was a sanatorium which was run very professionally. I don't really recall having any significant health issues.

*Religious instruction*

73. Gordonstoun was multi-denominational but Anglican is what was preached so it was Church of England. It wasn't forced down anyone's throat. Everyone sung a hymn in the morning before classes and then we had a church service on a Sunday. I can't remember if this was optional.



### *Work*

74. We didn't really have any chores to do. Cleaning ladies came in and did all that sort of stuff. All we had to do was keep our studies clean and tidy.

### *Visits/Inspections*

75. There were no real restrictions of how often my parents could visit. They came two or three times every term.

### *Discipline*

76. I can't really say I experienced any boy getting disciplined. I never saw anyone getting caned. They could withdraw some privileges, get sent home for a week or two or at worst get expelled. Any bad behaviour in the classroom may have resulted in boys getting sent out the classroom and made to stand in the middle of the square which was nothing more than embarrassing because everyone could see you. There was no violence or inappropriate level of punishment. I never experienced any bullying when I was at Gordonstoun and I am not aware of any of the other boys being bullied. The senior boys never used the younger boys to clean their boots or do any of their menial chores. We all did those ourselves.

### *Bed Wetting*

77. I am not aware of anyone having any issues with bed wetting. I don't think anyone I know wet their bed.

### **Abuse at Gordonstoun**

78. Within two weeks of being at Gordonstoun, probably between eight and nine o'clock at night, a senior boy came into my study and told me that Mr Kemp wanted to see me. Mr Kemp was the headmaster of Gordonstoun. I knew Mr and Mrs Kemp because

I was friends with their son who had also been at Aberlour and I had actually stayed with them overnight on occasion. I would still have been thirteen and it was January. I walked the half a mile or so in the cold and rain to his house. When I arrived Mr Kemp told me that Toby Coghill, the headmaster of Aberlour, was in their drawing room and wanted to see me. Mr Coghill told me that he wanted to know what had went on with myself and Mr **KME** when I was at Aberlour. I told him all about Mr **KME** touching me. Mr Coghill thanked me and left.

79. About two weeks later, after lights out in Hopeman House, a senior boy came into my room and told me that Mr **DFN** the housemaster wanted to see me. I put on my dressing gown and went to his study. He took me in and I sat down. Mr **DFN** told me that he had something to show me and he handed me a letter which was from Toby Coghill to Mr **DFN**. It read that I had been involved with a teacher and that I was probably a homosexual. He wanted Mr **DFN** to know so he could keep an eye on me.
80. When I had finished reading the letter Mr **DFN** asked for the letter back, then holding it up said that he would probably never tell anyone about this. I immediately knew what was going on and I felt very uncomfortable by what he said. It was common knowledge in Gordonstoun that Mr **DFN** had abused other boys. By common knowledge what I mean is that a lot of the school boys talked about it. No one actually said they had been abused, it was just general chat. I told Mr **DFN** that I knew who and what he was and that he wasn't to come near me and if he touched me I would make sure that everyone got to know. After I said that I got up and left. He never did touch me and nothing was ever said again about it. I had only been in my new school for two weeks, I had made new friends and was excited looking forward to the future and here I was thinking, 'here we go again'. Throughout the rest of my time at Gordonstoun there was an ever present fear that Mr **DFN** would use that letter against me in some detrimental way.
81. I think it was horrific that Toby Coghill wrote such a letter to Mr **DFN** but even more horrific that Mr **DFN** would present that letter to me, at only thirteen years old, with the intention of abusing me. After that incident everything was

fine between myself and Mr DFN [REDACTED]. I would say that we had an understanding, because I also knew about him, and we never discussed the letter again. I was never physically or sexually abused by him or anyone else when I was at Gordonstoun. This period of my life should have been fun but it wasn't. I felt I had something to hide and I had built up a wall to protect myself and I couldn't let anybody in.

82. After the horrific abuse I suffered when I was at Aberlour and the incidents in the first few weeks at Gordonstoun involving Toby Coghill and Mr DFN [REDACTED], I didn't suffer any more abuse at Gordonstoun. Mr DFN [REDACTED] was always there but nothing was ever said about what had happened. Mr DFN [REDACTED] was also my [REDACTED] teacher and he was with me throughout my education at Gordonstoun. I did quite well in [REDACTED] I suppose I had a fairly normal time at Gordonstoun after that.

### **Reporting of abuse at Gordonstoun**

83. I never told anyone else apart from Toby Coghill about KME [REDACTED] touching me or anyone about Mr DFN [REDACTED] approaching me, when I was at Gordonstoun.

### **Leaving Gordonstoun**

84. I left Gordonstoun in 1978 when I was seventeen. I was not sad to leave.

### **Life after boarding school**

85. I was not particularly academic and didn't go to university. I initially worked in a bank for two years then became a stock broker. At the age of 24 I joined the family business in America. I would say that is when I started having a normal life. I realised by that time that I was gay and I had told my parents and they were absolutely fine and supportive of me. I still work in America.

## Impact

86. A positive impact on me from being at Gordonstoun was that it left me with the ability to go into any situation with anyone and even if I was anxious I would be comfortable. I am very comfortable around people regardless of gender, ethnicity or race. When I came back to Glasgow at eighteen I probably came over as big headed and pompous but this was just because I was given the ability to be comfortable around people and confident.
87. Because I have been through therapy I am now able to say, because I am able to understand why, I actually looked forward to the abuse because I was getting attention. I know now that the abuse wasn't my fault. I didn't do this. I was only a child and wasn't the abuser. I was being abused and I was one of many at Aberlour.
88. From a very young age the abuse made me build a wall to stop people from getting close to me and to protect myself. That barrier is still there to this day and has affected my ability to form relationships with people. I have never felt that I want to settle down and be very family like and have children and a dog. I know that this goes back to my time in boarding school. My sexual relationships have been affected by my experiences in boarding school. After I left Gordonstoun I took risks that I shouldn't have, partly because I wasn't able to form normal lasting sexual relationships. Sex was easy to get at this time because I wasn't looking for anything lasting, it was just physical contact. I felt guilty and I knew what I was doing was wrong and I shouldn't be doing it, just like I knew it was wrong when I was abused at Aberlour.
89. For about ten years, following this period where I took risks, I was worried that I could possibly have HIV and it was only when I eventually plucked up the courage to go for a test did I get relief when I found out it was negative. I am lucky that I came through that period in my life healthy and well.
90. I think my education would have been better and I would have left with more qualifications had I gone to the local comprehensive school. My education was

affected too because I was constantly trying to protect myself in that environment and hide.

91. I try not to think too much about the abuse I suffered in boarding school. If the topic comes up in conversation I don't avoid it and I will talk about it. I don't go out my way to tell people that I have been abused.

### **Treatment / Support**

92. I was about 27 when I first went for any kind of therapy. This was all about me accepting that I was gay and building up to tell my parents. When I told them, both my parents were very accepting and my father said that he knew anyway.
93. The last time I had therapy was about two years ago and this continued for around eighteen months. By the end I felt I had told my story too many times and I had received more than enough therapy so I stopped it.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

94. I have never reported any of what happened to me to the police. I am not aware if my mother ever reported any of the abuse or what she had found out to anyone in authority.

### *Disclosure to parents*

95. When I was twenty seven I heard about a therapy event in Chicago called Landmark Forum for people with personal issues. I went to this three day event where we all had to stand up and share our issues with hundreds of other participants who were all basically strangers to me. I invited my parents to come over to Chicago for the last day of the event. On this last day all the participants stood up individually and relayed their stories to the audience. My parents flew over, with absolutely no idea of what they

were coming to. They heard me speak for the first time about what happened to me and this was the first they were aware of the abuse that I had suffered at Aberlour. They were horrified.

96. As part of this therapy we were told, following the event, to write a letter to the person who had affected our life and to forgive them. I wrote the letter to Mr Coghill. In the letter I explained how I had been left by my parents in his care as a child and had been abused by **KME**. I further went on and talked about the time when I was at Gordonstoun at Mr Kemp's house and I told him all about the abuse and a week later when Mr **DFN** showed me the letter from Coghill advising him that I was probably gay as I had been involved with a male teacher. I also described my disappointment that he had never passed on any information to my parents and of his lack of compassion. At the end I said that I forgave him and Mr **KME**. I have given this letter to the Inquiry.
97. My abuse had a massive impact on my parents. My mother was annoyed at my father for sending me to boarding school to be abused. They both felt guilty that they had sent me away from a loving family home to somewhere that I was obviously unhappy and subsequently sexually and emotionally abused. My mother could have had a far more extravagant lifestyle had she not sent her children to boarding school. Her life was changed when she heard about my abuse and she obviously spent a considerable amount of time and more money in tracking down my abusers.

## Records

98. After hearing about the Abuse I suffered in Aberlour it appears my mother made it her mission to find out where **KME** and **DFN** were and seek some kind of justice. To one letter she got a reply from Toby which stated that he had looked through Aberlour school records, to try and find any information to help jog his memory. He stated that the records were 'slimmed down' for storage to bare statistics and could not find anything to help him. I have never asked to see any of my school records.

## **Lessons to be Learned**

99. I hope that by coming forward it may give me some form of closure for me. I also hope that if, by sharing my experiences, it stops one child from experiencing what happened to me in boarding school then it will have been worthwhile coming forward. I want this to help not only people who have been abused but also help parents and other people and children to prevent them from going through what I have or at least enable them to step back and question what is happening. If it is talked about amongst children then hopefully it will teach them that what happened to them is wrong and encourage them to speak out.
100. Had the environment I was in been more warm, loving, caring and open then I would have been more willing to go to an adult and share what had happened to me. It was cold and too disciplined, for example making us the run outside first thing every morning and the cold shower afterwards, and with every minute of every day accounted for. It wasn't a loving environment conducive to sharing any information like that.
101. I am not sure how the abuse that happened to me can be stopped from happening to others. One way I suppose to reduce the likelihood is by having much more stringent checks on staff and teachers. It can't be assumed an unmarried male or female teacher is going to be an abuser, that just wouldn't be fair. There may already be more involved checks in place now which weren't available back then. I don't think abuse in these kind of places can be stopped but hopefully at least it can be reduced. If it is made easy for abusers to get into these sorts of positions then abuse is going to continue to happen.
102. I don't agree with same sex schools and they shouldn't be encouraged. It is not normal for sexes to be separated and they should grow up together from the earliest possible age because the chances are they are going to interact and live together for the rest of their lives.

## Other information

103. Around three or four years ago when my mother and father were moving house I found a file compiled by my mother. Within this file were documents and letters between my mother and other parents, solicitors and Gordonstoun school. I realised that after I had told my mother she took it upon herself to find the people that had abused me. She even employed private investigators to try and trace them. I put the file away and had to find it when I knew I was coming to speak to the Inquiry. According to the file **KME** **KME** was traced to Thailand in the mid 1990s. It would appear from notes in the file that my mother made contact with him and warned him that she was watching his movements. She also wrote to other parents of boys who were at school with me.
104. Within this file are also copies of letters my mum sent to various people and their responses. One of the letters is to Mr Kemp, the headmaster at Gordonstoun, written by my mother and dated 23 November 1994. In the letter she details how she found out about me being abused at Aberlour and excerpts from the letter I sent to Mr Coghill dated 9 November 1994. Part of the excerpts include my meeting with Mr Coghill at Mr Kemp's house where I disclosed to him the abuse by Mr **KME** when at Aberlour.
105. The response to this letter from Mr Kemp is dated 27 November 1994. Mr Kemp states he cannot recall Mr Coghill coming to his house to speak to me, and believes that Mr Coghill had a very difficult task of dealing and dismissing Mr **KME** which he was able to do thanks to my help. I am sure that Mr Kemp must have been aware why Toby Coghill came to see me at his house just after I had arrived at Gordonstoun. He would definitely have been aware as in a letter from Toby Coghill, Mr Kemp was present when he was interviewed about the allegations.
106. There is a further letter dated 27 April 1995 from My father, **[REDACTED]** to Toby Coghill mentioning the letter from me dated 9 November 1994 and expressing concern as to what steps were taken in relation to both **KME** and **DFN** **DFN** and if they were still currently involved in teaching.



107. Toby Coghill, in response, wrote in a letter dated 2 May 1995 that he knew absolutely nothing about me being involved in the **KME** episode and even stated he was surprised to hear that I was. He denied having received my letter dated 9 November 1994. He states that he was aware of three boys who claimed they had been abused by **KME** but I was not one of them. He confirms that he interviewed **KME** in the presence of Mr Kemp but **KME** denied the allegations, however he was later dismissed by Coghill when he received confirmation from other sources. Coghill stated that **KME** name was passed to the Scottish Education Department and other necessary agencies to ensure **KME** name was on a confidential list of people who should not be appointed as teachers. He also stated that he could not recall Mr **DFN** other than a name of someone who was a temporary housemaster.
108. There is a further letter dated 26 May 1995 from Toby Coghill acknowledging receipt of my letter re-sent by my father. He again denies any knowledge of me being involved in the **KME** episode blaming his poor memory. Mr Coghill wrote a further letter on 14 July 1995 stating he had tried to look through records to try and jog his memory but had found nothing that could assist him.
109. There is a letter from my mother dated 28 July to **KME** who appeared by that time to be in Thailand. She indicates the massive impact his abusive actions had on both me and my family, especially breaking my mother's heart.
110. Another letter of significance is one my mother wrote to Toby Coghill on 5 December 1995. She expresses her belief that he has negligent in his post as headmaster at Aberlour and how he very conveniently appears to have lost his memory.
111. Also within this file are a number of letters between my parents and solicitors Biggart, Baillie and Gifford which relate to my mother's requests for them to locate the whereabouts of **KME** and **DFN**. Attached to the letters are investigation reports compiled by Grant and McMurtie private investigators. I passed this whole file, compiled by my mother to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

- 112. I do not believe that any civil action has been taken by the solicitors against anyone from Aberlour or Gordonstoun by my parents. I am sure that if there had been I would have been aware of it.
  
- 113. My younger brother [REDACTED] didn't go to Aberlour. He went to Cargilfield School in Edinburgh. I was home by that point and even his school seemed like it was lots of fun and everything was great, but when I spoke to [REDACTED] about it he told me that there was abuse there too. That just confirmed to me that just because the place was warm and friendly didn't mean there wasn't abuse.
  
- 114. I heard about the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry a few years ago so I went online and read about it. I decided that what had happened to me was over and done with and I wanted to leave it all in the past. My brother told me last year that he had received an email from the Inquiry asking him to come forward. I read the email and decided at that point that if it helped any child in the future from experiencing what I had, then I would speak about it and I contacted the Inquiry.
  
- 115. 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.....  
DocuSigned by:  
BYJ [REDACTED]  
Dated.....  
24 July 2020