

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

QZL

Support person present: No

Others present: No

### Background

1. My name is QZL. My date of birth is 1980. My contact details are known to the Inquiry. I went to secondary school at St Benedict's in North Ealing, London. I obtained 11 GCSE's and 4 A Levels. I left school in 1998. From June 1998 until June 2001 I studied at Oxford University. I graduated with a 2:1 Degree. Since then I have obtained a Master's Degree in . When I started at Merchiston Castle School, I did not have any teaching qualifications or formal experience as a teacher. My undergraduate studies did not include any learning in child protection or safeguarding.

### Employment with Merchiston Castle School

2. In August 2001 I started work at Merchiston School where I worked until July 2005. Leaving university, I didn't know what I was going to do with the rest of my life. I hadn't worked out a career path during my time at university. I was planning on taking a year out but my tutor, received a letter from FIH the Head of at Merchiston Castle School, advertising a job. My tutor had taught the Head of as well. They were looking for someone to teach with a particular interest in . That sounded of interest to me and I went for interview at the end of January 2001 and got the job.

3. I had to send a covering letter with my C.V. I thought the process would take about a month but within two days of sending my letter I was invited to interview the following week. I had never been to Scotland before. It felt like a really big deal, Scotland felt very far from home. I remember being at the airport and it was snowing. I remember saying to my mum on the phone that I hoped they didn't offer me the job because if they did I thought I would take it.. It would mean a significant move to the other end of the country which I felt would be a very big step and change of life for me.
4. I arrived on the Monday night and the Tuesday was a really full-on day. I had interviews with Andrew Hunter the Headmaster, Ken Houston the Deputy Headmaster, <sup>FIH</sup> [REDACTED] the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] the Deputy Head of [REDACTED]. There was also a tour of the school and I had to teach a lesson. I had some previous experience helping in a [REDACTED] support class at a primary school during my university days. I knew the [REDACTED] they asked me to teach the lesson on. It all came quick and fast between the hours of 9.00 am and 12.00 pm. I think I was asked to provide references in my C.V. My guess is I would have put my Tutor from university, my [REDACTED] Tutor from school, and the Head of the [REDACTED] I attended.
5. I got a call a couple of days after my interview saying that the Headmaster was interviewing for a lot of jobs and wouldn't be making a decision on any posts until after he had concluded all interviews. On 14 February at around 10.15 pm I had just come out of a theatre watching a friend's show. My phone was on silent but I saw it flashing. It was the Headmaster of Merchiston ringing to say I had the job. He realised that wasn't the best time to talk so we spoke at 9.30 am the next morning when he went through the specifics of the job. He said that he realised it was a big step and offered to let me think about it. He said to let him know by 4.00 pm that day. I spent the day talking to people about the job offer and at 4.00 pm I rang the Headmaster to ask if I could have more time to think and he agreed to let me think about it overnight. I phoned him the next morning and accepted the job.
6. I had intended to only do it for one year but I had a GCSE class, and an A Level class, which were both on two year courses and I was quite enjoying it which made me think I would stay for a second year to see the students through to the end of that

course. Then at the end of my first year they made me [REDACTED] so I took on another angle within the school. Being a private school they had lots of long holidays and I was doing more and more work in [REDACTED] during those holidays.

7. My title and duties changed during my time at Merchiston Castle School. My initial employment was as a teacher of [REDACTED]. In that initial employment they look at your extracurricular interests so I was identified to work with the [REDACTED] team, which was only one other person at that point, Emily Phillips. I was also employed to be a Resident Tutor so I would live-in in one of the boarding houses. That job changed in title to being a Resident Senior Tutor or Senior Tutor, but it was essentially the same job. I don't recall there being any differences.
8. Then, I think it was in my third year, the school decided they were bringing in a new post called Assistant Housemaster. They invited anyone to apply for it but all the Resident Tutors were strongly advised to apply for it. Again there was very little difference in the job. The pay scale went up but it didn't change the nature of the duties. It formalised things so that if the Senior Housemaster wasn't available to deal with something then it fell to you, but that's what happened anyway.
9. Life was pretty busy. At the end of my first year I also became [REDACTED] because the person who was in that post left the school. I stayed as [REDACTED] [REDACTED] for the rest of my time at the school. I was also President of the Common Room during my last year at the school. The Common Room was the name given to the collective roster of teachers as well as the physical area where we could take a break. The President was elected by the other staff members and acted as a liaising point between the staff and the headmaster, having regular meetings with him, and chairing the staff committee.
10. There were a few other teachers appointed at around that time, they arrived the term after I started, and they similarly did not have teaching experience. I think the school made a deal with the GTCS in that there would be an element of training for us within the school and then we would get a teaching qualification. As [REDACTED] [REDACTED] <sup>FIH</sup> [REDACTED] was really detailed in recording things to go towards this. Every meeting and departmental appraisal was logged on a document. I remember it

was pages long. I remember someone from the GTC coming in to talk to us about it. In terms of the teaching side, there was definitely an arrangement in place that it didn't matter that we didn't have a qualification and they had a way of dealing with it.

11. I do remember at some point, I think in my third year, there was an arrangement for new teachers of that year them to go to St George's, the girl's school that we did a lot of things with. They would go and observe lessons and the school decided that it would be good for me to do that as well as part of the training within the school towards obtaining the qualification from the GTC. I went in to observe [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] lessons and the person teaching [REDACTED] had started that year. I remember her having a conversation with me, asking why I was observing her when I had been at Merchiston Castle School for three years and I told her about the qualification I was seeking and that the observation was part of this.
12. By the end of my fourth year I think I had done everything that was required for me to gain this teaching qualification, I just had to pay the fee to get the qualification. However at that point I think I knew I was leaving and so I don't think I ever paid the fee because I wasn't planning on going back to teaching as I was going to be working in the [REDACTED] industry.
13. I don't know if my referees were ever contacted for references. I know that [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] definitely spoke about me getting the job but I don't know if that was before or after I was appointed.
14. My Line Manager was [REDACTED] academically speaking. In terms of being a Resident Tutor, I think it would have been whichever Housemaster I was with at the time. For the first two years I was based in Chalmers West boarding house which was the house with thirteen to fourteen year olds. For my first year the Housemaster was [REDACTED] but he left at the end of that year to work down south. Then the Housemaster was [REDACTED] [REDACTED] who had worked in the school for years and just moved across from Pringle boarding house. [REDACTED] took his place there I think. Then I moved to Rogerson East which was for fifteen and sixteen year olds. For those two years the Housemaster was [REDACTED] [REDACTED] who was new to the school.

15. I remember in my first appraisal which was about half a term into my time at the school, Graham Lane was the person who was spoken to about the pastoral side of my job. The person in charge of the boarding side of things was the Deputy Headmaster, Nigel Rickard. The SNR [REDACTED] at the time was QZA [REDACTED] QZA [REDACTED] he was more in charge of the academic side of things.
16. I didn't really have a Line Manager for [REDACTED]. When I joined the school [REDACTED] was quite neglected and forgotten. It was a very sports orientated school. There was a [REDACTED], Emily Phillips, who left at the end of term two of my first year at the school. I became [REDACTED] at the end of that year. Although [REDACTED] wasn't an academic subject it was treated as a Department and so Andrew Hunter would have been sort of my Line Manager but I essentially made all the decisions and once a year I would have a Head of Department review.
17. I don't remember having a probationary period as such. I had my appraisal after half a term. I don't really remember any further formal periods of review. At the beginning the job was only for a year but then I decided to stay on longer. I don't know if there was supposed to have been a review at the end of the first year.
18. I think there were regular check-ins, particularly academically. I can remember FIH [REDACTED] being really detailed in creating the document mentioned in paragraph 10 and every weekly department meeting was logged in this.
19. I remember people coming in to watch my lessons. There was a stage when it was generally announced to everyone that the core management team or core academic management team were going to go into everyone's lessons to observe them. I remember that caused a bit of a stir amongst some of the older teachers. When people came to watch my lessons, I did get feedback about it. I remember FIH [REDACTED] and one of the other [REDACTED] teachers coming in to watch my lessons and they did write something for that first appraisal. The pastoral side of things was also included in that appraisal with Graham Lane providing feedback on this. The culmination of that first appraisal was to go through the written feedback with either Nigel Rickard or QZA [REDACTED]

20. We had some inset days at the beginning of term for all the staff. Learning how to be a Housemaster involved working with the Housemaster you were with at the time. At the end of my second year I knew I was going to be moving in to Rogerson East and [REDACTED] as a new Housemaster coming in to the school was going to be having Housemaster training with Nigel Rickard. The Headmaster said to me, "I feel like you are a Housemaster in the making so we would like you to do this training as well. And it will give you a chance to meet [REDACTED] as you are going to be working with him." I can't remember how much was involved in that training process but it was more than once. Before I started at the school I came up for two or three induction days in June 2001. It was when I met my Line Managers, when I found out which classes and what material I was going to be teaching. You were talked-through a lot of the work so you had time to prepare. I reckon it must have been during the equivalent period for [REDACTED] that we did this Housemaster training.
21. The next year when we became Assistant Housemasters rather than Resident Tutors we definitely went on a one day or two day course during term time together somewhere. I think it was in Edinburgh. We didn't travel very far and we didn't stay overnight. There were lots of different parts to the course, such as Child protection, dealing with sensitive cases, and parents. It was all pastoral based and was guidance on things. I'm sure it was called something like a Housemaster's Course.
22. I came up to start work at Merchiston in the last week of August 2001. I had my 21<sup>st</sup> birthday [REDACTED]. We had the first few days as inset days. As well as a meeting of the whole Common Room I had a meetings with department, my boarding house tutors, and one meeting with an element of training.
23. For my first few weeks I was encouraged to spend a lot of time with my Line Managers. I don't think I was formally put on duty on my own in the boarding house for at least the first week, so that I could observe the processes and work with Graham. We did a few duties together and slowly he would retreat back until I did my first one by myself. Graham was also part of my appraisal in my first term as mentioned in paragraph 17.

24. The size of the year group always varied slightly. There were probably about 56 pupils in a year group. There were generally three classes. Each class would be around 21 to 24 maximum but some classes were smaller. They were predominantly boarders with a handful of day pupils. Each boarding house had six Prefects and I think four of them lived in. The others either boarded in the Sixth Form boarding house or they were day pupils.
25. The boarders in Chalmers West and Rogerson East slept in dormitories but there was also a base for day pupils in the boarding houses. Every child in the boarding houses would have a desk, including the day pupils, so at the end of the day they could go straight home or stay and make use of the prep time. Those day pupils would still be under your responsibility as a Resident Tutor.
26. The boarders moved boarding house as they got older so when I moved from Chalmers West to Rogerson East after two years, I was dealing with the same two year groups I had worked with in Chalmers West. I think there were four dormitories, two on each floor.
27. Rogerson and Chalmers buildings were on opposite sides of the campus. They were essentially two building joined into one. Half of Chalmers was Chalmers West, for thirteen to fourteen year olds. The other side of the building was Chalmers East which was for the next year group up. Both houses had a Housemaster's flat at the bottom. On the top floor, the middle bit was another flat. In Chalmers, I shared that flat with Freddie Main who was the Resident Tutor for Chalmers East. The flat had two big rooms so those were our bedrooms. There was a bathroom and a kitchen. Each of the bedrooms had a connecting room, and those connecting rooms led into the boarding house. We used the connecting rooms as our offices. It meant I could be in my office but I was still part of Chalmers West boarding house. There was also a direct front door into the flat. In Rogerson, the building layout was the same, I just didn't share the flat with anyone when I was in Rogerson and so my office and bedroom were both contained within the flat this time.
28. Around the end of my third year I knew I didn't want to stay in teaching but I didn't know what job I was going to do instead. In the autumn of 2004 I was offered a

professional [REDACTED] job in [REDACTED] from someone who had [REDACTED]. I handed in my notice to Merchiston at Christmas 2004, to take effect at the end of the school year. I have worked in [REDACTED] full time since then.

### **Policy**

29. I can remember as part of the inset days, on at least two occasions, we had an outside person come in and talk to the Common Room as a whole. I'm not sure if it was every year but I remember it happening at least twice. A woman came in to deal with child protection matters but I don't know where she came from. She talked to the group as a whole and we went into little groups to do exercises. I have a vague recollection of a hand-out quiz where you had to tick the box which represented the best solution to a given scenario.
30. I didn't have any involvement in forming policies for child protection. There were policies in place but I think they were in place when I went to work at Merchiston Castle School. I don't remember any policy changes when I was there. I think each boarding house may have had a copy of a policy book. The parents may have got a copy. Unlike other boarding schools, at Merchiston Castle School the boarders moved boarding houses every year. I think at the beginning of every year the Housemaster would outline the terms of the house. I think however that that sort of instruction would be about how to treat your peers.

### **Discipline**

31. The general or most frequent punishment at Merchiston Castle School was called a Blue Paper. I can't remember any other forms of punishment. A Blue Paper was a requirement for a pupil to write a given amount on a given subject. A Blue Paper could be issued for a pupil failing to do work, for some other academic problem, or for a behavioural issue. These could be issued by any teacher and by Head of House Prefects. It might have been that all Prefects could issue them, I'm not sure.



32. The first level would be two sides of blue paper, the next level would be four sides. You would set the topic the pupil had to write about. It might be about the topic they had failed to write about in the first place, or for other types of infraction it might be a requirement to write about the topic of respect. Any teacher could give this punishment of the Blue Paper and then the pupil would have to go to their Housemaster or the Tutor on duty to collect them. They would have to come to collect their Blue Paper and it had to be initialled by the teacher and written in a book. I think if you got a certain number of sides of Blue Paper in a term, there may have been another level of punishment but I can't remember what this was. I can't remember there being detention but there probably was.
  
33. There must have been more layers to the punishment systems of the school than I have referred to above, but the Blue Sides were the only punishment I could really give. If you had something that required more than just Blue Sides, you passed it over, it wasn't up to you to determine the punishment. Even as Assistant Housemaster anything further than Blue Sides was passed to the Housemaster. I think there was something written down about further layers of discipline. It may have been in the staff manual or up on the wall in the Housemaster's office. The pupils must have known what these layers were too. I am sure there was some kind of house booklet or something that the pupils got at the beginning of the year.
  
34. Prefects had the ability to give Blue Sides but I can't remember if it was any Prefect or just the Senior Prefects. I have a feeling it was any Prefect. However the pupil would still have to come to a Tutor to get the Blue Sides and so the Prefect could be over-ruled, but I think most of the time the Tutors would try to uphold the Prefects decisions. That was the only punishment the Prefects could give out but it would be monitored by the tutors still as only the tutor could issue the actual pieces of paper. The Prefects were involved in the running of the house. In prep time for example, there would be a House Tutor on duty every evening and there would also be a Prefect of duty as well, on a rota. The Prefects would go around during that Prep time to make sure everyone was working. The Prefects would also be involved when it was time for the pupils to go to bed. Beyond that, I can't think of any way the Prefects were involved in discipline.

35. I didn't really deal with any bigger breaches of discipline. I remember some of our Prefects got caught smoking by the Headmaster so he removed their Prefects' duties for a week. I don't really remember any bigger discipline breaches in our boarding houses. I worked with very specific year groups. I think the nature of things for which pupils got punished went up as they advanced through the school but because that would be in the years beyond the ones I was dealing with, that wasn't something I really experienced.
36. I think Housemasters were responsible for anyone under their charge. Then it went to a Deputy Headmaster or the Headmaster. I had no influence over discipline policy.
37. The staff manual I got when I joined the school probably had procedures for what to do if I saw a teacher doing something they shouldn't, about reporting it. There would definitely have been a child protection section in there I just don't have a specific recollection of it. On the Housemaster's course that I went on, one of the key principles was that you can't guarantee confidentiality to a pupil. If a pupil comes to you and says, "I need to tell you something." You would have to say that you might need to pass the information on. Each Housemaster had a locked filing cabinet in their office that would store confidential information. That is the kind of thing that would have gone in the locked filing cabinet.

### **Strategic planning**

38. I didn't have any involvement in creating any strategy for child abuse or anything else, there would just be the steps for me to follow. I remember for all the time I was at Merchiston Castle School the Child Protection Officer was Mrs Prini-Garcia, and Julia Williams who was the Librarian was the Deputy Child Protection Officer. They would have spoken about Child Protection at one of the training sessions for the whole Common Room. All teaching staff were Full members of the Common Room and all administrative staff were Associate members. That had significance when the Common Room were voting on something.

39. I feel like there was a document setting out the different steps of what to do if someone came to you with a Child Protection complaint. The document mentioned taking it to the Child Protection Officer of the Deputy Child Protection Officer. I can't remember any more details about it.

#### **Other staff**

40. I didn't manage any other staff as such. I was the [REDACTED] but for the majority of my time at Merchiston Castle School it was a one man Department, but there was someone to look after the technical side of things. Sometimes there was an [REDACTED] teacher who took on a [REDACTED] option. Technically I managed them and at least one of those [REDACTED] teachers was a new member or staff so I had to write an appraisal of them.
41. The Housekeepers were the other staff who came in to the Boarding Houses. They would come in would do washing for the boys, they were the main cleaners. Beyond that they didn't have any formal duties to be overseen.

#### **Recruitment of staff**

42. When I came to leave, they decided that they were going to replace me with two people because by the time I left the school [REDACTED] had grown and there was a [REDACTED] every term instead of every other year. They decided they were going to take on two [REDACTED] teachers with at least one of them to be involved in [REDACTED] if not both. I was involved in part of that interview process. I didn't select the candidates who came but I did see their CV's, to see if anyone stood out. They then taught a [REDACTED] lesson with me watching. I don't know what happened with checking their references or anything else. I just observed them and then there was a discussion between all the people involved in the interview process.
43. In the end they didn't appoint anyone who covered knowledge of or creation of [REDACTED]. There needed to be someone to take charge of the next [REDACTED]. The best

solution I could suggest was that the wife of the Housemaster of Rogerson East, the lower-sixth Boarding House. He had arrived the year before and his wife had quite a lot of knowledge of [REDACTED]. That is what eventually happened. The Housemaster was called Jonathan and his wife was called Victoria but I cannot remember their second name. There was also someone in the second year I was at the school who dealt with some [REDACTED] matters but I taught all the classes. For two days per week, for about two hours each day, [REDACTED] was available as one of a number of options to study. I ran it like an academic subject. Anyone was able to sign up to [REDACTED]. With the junior classes we worked towards a [REDACTED] that they were all able to contribute towards.

44. When I joined the school, the expectation of [REDACTED] was that there would be a [REDACTED] every second year, with a [REDACTED] by St George's school for girls on the years in between. Some of our boys would help with that [REDACTED] and some of their girls would [REDACTED]. St George's would also do a [REDACTED] but twinned with another school. There would be [REDACTED] for those [REDACTED] twice per week.
45. I also started a [REDACTED] for the middle school pupils. They did a [REDACTED] in the middle term. The junior school did something every two years in the summer term. There had been a tradition of the lower-sixth form doing a [REDACTED] which was their baby. They came up with the idea, they [REDACTED] it, [REDACTED] it, and [REDACTED] it all themselves. They had regular meetings with me and the Head of sixth form for guidance. Their [REDACTED] was in the middle term as well.
46. Every now and then there were talks about making [REDACTED] an academic subject but the academic team were against it because they felt that it would take away some of the most intelligent students from selecting other academic options other than [REDACTED]. I was also worried that it might mean anyone who wasn't academically gifted might be encouraged by the other academic teachers to choose [REDACTED]. Consequently, [REDACTED] never ended up being an academic subject.

### **Training of staff**

47. I was involved in the training of Alistair Barrie, the one member of staff who was the Administrative Assistant for [REDACTED] during his year at the school. He was a full-time member of staff. Other than that, I don't recall being involved in any staff training or personal development.

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

48. When I was [REDACTED] I did do an appraisal of the department as a whole at the end of the year. That did refer to everyone that might have been involved in any [REDACTED] but that was usually just a list of the staff who had been involved and what they did. It wasn't an evaluation of the work they did.

### **Living arrangements**

49. The Housemasters had a flat in the boarding house which was on two levels. On the ground floor was the living room, dining room, kitchen, and the Housemaster's office which had an adjoining door to the boarding house. There were at least two bedrooms in the Housemaster's flat, maybe three. The flats that I occupied were on the third floor, above the Housemaster's flat.
50. In Chalmers West House Graham Lane lived in his Housemaster's flat with his wife [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] In Rogerson House [REDACTED] was there with his wife [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]
51. As far as gaining access to the children's residential area is concerned, there was a code to get in to the boarding houses. It was the kind where there are several letters and numbers to press in combination with a lever to turn. You had to know the code to get in to the building. Each boarding house had a different code and the code was changed throughout the year but I'm not sure of the frequency. I would have had the

code to my own house but I can't remember if I had the codes for the other houses. After that, there weren't any security measures as such.

52. There were four dormitories, two on each floor, one on the left, and one on the right. The dormitory rooms had doors on them but there was no other security measure. There was always someone on duty in the house, apart from during the time for school lessons. This may be house specific in relation to the students I was with. In the sixth form they had individual rooms rather than dormitories but in the main house there was always someone on duty. That would generally be the Housemaster, myself, or one of four or five tutors who were Day Staff. They didn't live on the premises but they were allocated to a particular boarding house. The Day Staff generally had one evening a week when they were on duty. Day times and weekends were divided up between myself and the Housemaster.
53. With the two year groups I dealt with, Saturday was very much another school day. We had lessons in the morning and most of the school would be involved in a sports activity in the afternoon. Saturday evening would be a movie or something like that. With the school years who lived in Chalmers House there would always be an activity on Sunday, like a trip somewhere. When the pupils were in Rogerson House, there were fewer planned activities at the weekend as the children were older and required less supervision.
54. In my first year, [REDACTED] method of dividing the supervision work was that every Tutor was expected to do extra supervision on two weekends each term. Some of the weekend trips needed more than one Tutor, depending on the nature of the trip and the numbers going. When <sup>OPA</sup> [REDACTED] he made it much more about the Housemaster and the resident tutor so I was involved in all the weekend activities. It was very rare for one of the other tutors to do a weekend duty. <sup>OPA</sup> [REDACTED] was [REDACTED] and I was [REDACTED] so occasionally there would be a weekend when we were both involved in [REDACTED] or other activity and that's when we needed the other Tutors in to help on the weekends
55. With the trips, most of those were planned by the Housemaster or the school. I think in the first year I was at the school both the first Lord of the Rings film and the first

Harry Potter film came out. There was a trip to the seaside and there was something a bit more cultural but I can't remember what it is.

56. As time went on, I was involved in discussion as to what trips we might do and may have suggested some, but that was the extent of it.

### **Culture within Merchiston Castle School**

57. The culture of the school was that it was very sports orientated. Sport was extremely important and often took precedence above everything else. I think every pupil was expected to take part in that. There were an insane number of rugby teams. Connected to that, it was a very masculine school and built around that type of ethos. The majority of staff were men. There were female teachers but there were men in every department.
58. The person that was in charge of [REDACTED] before me, Emily Phillips, left because of feeling that she was treated differently by male members of staff, because she was a woman. I think there was a feeling amongst the staff that it was quite a laddish institution. As [REDACTED] grew at the school, the number of boys involved grew. With the [REDACTED] we would do a run of [REDACTED] on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Most of the parents came to the Saturday [REDACTED]. For the last [REDACTED] I did there, we had [REDACTED] 55 boys from across the school plus a whole load more involved [REDACTED].
59. [REDACTED] became the next biggest thing after sports in terms of the number of people involved at the school. I remember having a conversation with the Headmaster and the Head of Sports because there were some rugby games planned for the Saturday that was the [REDACTED]. I was really nervous because so many of the [REDACTED] would be playing rugby and if any one of them got injured that would scupper [REDACTED]. They had been working towards [REDACTED] and their parents would be coming. The Headmaster agreed with me and it was agreed with the Head of Sports that anyone involved in [REDACTED] would not have to take part in rugby that day.

60. The day before the [REDACTED] and those rugby matches, I came in to the Common Room to be met by 15 rugby coaches surrounding me and screaming at me in a very intimidating way. It turned out that the Head of Sports thought I was only talking about three [REDACTED] boys as opposed to the whole lot. All these rugby coaches were outraged that their players couldn't play and were outraged at me. That is an example of the very masculine nature of the school.
61. A lot of the ethos of the school was developing the pupils as people, so by and large they were very pleasant people. The school was not just looking at academia, they were looking to make the pupils well-rounded people.
62. The culture of the school staff was just to be very overworked the whole time. For teaching staff, the school day would start around 08.00 am and could easily carry on until 10.30 pm and you would then find that you still hadn't had time to do any marking or preparation for what you were going to be teaching the next day, and you would still have to do that. It wasn't so much a job as it was a way of life. Frequently, you had teachers reaching their limit and either having time off or taking a step back and some of their work taken away. At times it was a very frustrating place to work. During term time, there wasn't really an outside life. As soon as you thought you had everything under control, something would come along and upset it all, and that feeling was never-ending.
63. There was no hierarchy amongst pupils where some had to run after other pupils doing duties for them. There was a list of House duties and the rota of pupils to do them would change every week. This would be things like collecting the newspapers for the school, or tidying up the pupils' common room.

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

64. I was involved in the day to day running of the boarding house. I generally didn't have much involvement at the beginning of the day. When I was working with OPA [REDACTED] he might have [REDACTED] early in the morning so I might be involved in



getting everyone from the boarding house to the assembly. We would have lessons, and then at lunch time I might be on duty at the boarding house. One of the House Tutors would be on duty in the evening. More often than not I would be working in the boarding house in the evening, so I would be around too. Myself and the Housemaster would then take over from the House Tutor on duty.

65. At the beginning when I started I was shadowing whoever was on duty to get to grips with the whole system. From that, it turned out that one of my duties was always to help with that last phase of the day when we were cleaning up the house and sending the pupils to bed.
66. I am confident that had any child been abused in any of the boarding houses I was in, it would have come to light at the time. The boarding houses were busy places for pupils and staff. There was a lot of coming and going. It wasn't that there were quiet times when no-one was around. Also, almost every area was a communal area. The dormitories were not partitioned, they were open plan. I think if there had been any change in a child's behaviour that would have been apparent to myself and the other tutors. There was the Housemaster, the Housemaster's wife, myself, and at least four Prefects living-in and who were around every day. I might have only known a portion of a year group if I had not been living-in as not every pupil did [REDACTED] and I was not involved in any sports.
67. I feel that if a boy did feel disquiet that he could have come to me or someone else. There were enough of a range of people whom the pupils could talk to. The Housemaster was generally older, I was younger, and you had Prefects. So there were three different layers of people that pupils could approach.

### **Concerns about the school**

68. I don't think the school was ever the subject of concern to any external body or agency, or any other person, because of the way in which children and young people in the school were treated. I know that within my time at the school we had an external welfare inspection. I remember taking part in that. I don't think I was ever

involved in an OFSTED inspection as there was one just before I joined the school and another just after I left.

### **External monitoring**

69. The welfare inspection I was present for involved a team of inspectors coming in to the school. I can't remember the name of the inspecting body. They interviewed a broad range of pupils. They interviewed every resident member of staff. I think they came to observe us in the boarding houses. Their inspection was very much of the pastoral side of things. A cross-section of boys were interviewed. I can't remember if the pupils were interviewed in a group or individually. I don't know if there was a member of staff present when the boys were being interviewed. I think there were probably some questions about the routine and the structure of that. Beyond that I don't really remember what kind of things they were asking. I think there was an inspection report that they issued to the Headmaster afterwards. All the staff got taken out for a meal afterwards so I presume it was a good outcome. I think parents would have been made aware that there had been an inspection, but I don't know if they would have been informed before we had the outcome of the inspection.

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

70. There may have been a complaints policy in the manual but it's not one that I knew very well. Generally, a parent's immediate source of contact was the Housemaster, that was the person they dealt with most often. I can't really remember anything else about the complaints process. I remember the Housemasters had a book which things like complaints would have to go in. I remember getting telephone messages for the Housemaster in the evenings and writing them in that book. I didn't take any messages specifically to do with complaints though.

### **Trusted adult/confidante**

71. If a child wanted to speak to an adult about any concern they had, they could talk to Mrs Prini-Garcia who was the Head of Child Protection. Both her and Julia were named as the Child Protection Officers in the termly calendar that every pupil and member of staff had. I assume that they were advertised somewhere as being available for people to talk to confidentially. There was the school nurse who might have been available to speak to. Each pupil had an Academic Tutor as well. Within the boarding houses, even the Day Tutors had a proportion of the boarding house as Tutees. They would have been people pupils could have gone to as well.

### **Abuse**

72. I can't remember if the school had a written definition of abuse. There was a written Child Protection document and I'm sure it would have identified a few different types of abuse such as emotional or physical. I can't remember the specifics but I would think there were some definitions. That manual was there for staff to refer to. Every member of staff had a copy. I think it would have been reiterated at any of the inset days. There was a payphone in each boarding house and I know that they had Childline stickers next to them. The payphone was in a private cubicle in the boarding house but I can't remember if there was a door on the cubicle. Outside the Housemaster's office there was a board saying who was on duty and I think there was something about Child Protection there too. Perhaps I am just thinking there should have been something there.
73. There would have been information in the staff manual on how children should be protected from abuse or ill treatment from staff or fellow pupils. That was definitely talked about in the inset sessions at the beginning of term. In these sessions, I can remember the way in which we spoke to children being important. Because the school covered from 8 to 18 years old, we had to be aware of the differences in children at different ages and the way we spoke to the younger children was different to the way we spoke to older children. I can remember talking about the use of sarcasm and how to avoid that. I remember that we talked about trying to avoid

being alone with someone, or if you were, to have a door open. These were the discussions where we had to say that we could not guarantee confidentiality.

### **Child protection arrangements**

74. If a child reported abuse or ill-treatment you were generally passing the information along. Your Housemaster was the person you spoke to most frequently. Unless someone came to me with something really trivial, I wouldn't be able to deal with it, I would have to pass it along. I might be asked for my opinion or some input in how to deal with it but the matter would be out of my control. I think the Housemaster probably had more flexibility. In terms of ill-treatment I would just have had to pass those on, I wouldn't have any authority to deal with such a matter, other than by passing it on. However I didn't have any reports like that made to me.
75. To reduce the chances of abuse, teachers were encouraged not to be alone with pupils, and if they were, to have their door open, or to be in a public place. Beyond that, I'm not sure if there was any other advice. It was a busy place, it was difficult to be alone. The only incident I was aware of was towards the end of my first year there was a boy in Chalmers West House who started getting little presents, like a crème egg left in his locker. This continued into my second year but by this time the boy had moved into the next boarding house. It was obviously from another pupil but there was very little to go on in finding out who it was.
76. The school eventually uncovered who it was. It turned out it was a Prefect in our boarding house. He was a Prefect in Chalmers West in my second year. He had been in the lower sixth before that. [redacted] dealt with it, mainly. Very few people knew about it but he told me because I would be most frequently there for duty and one of the consequences of how [redacted] dealt with it was the pupil remained a Prefect. He was a day pupil so he wasn't boarding. He was allowed to carry on with his duties as a Prefect but he was never allowed to be involved in the end-of-the-day duties of putting all the boys to bed. That was the reason why [redacted] told me, so I wouldn't ever put him on those duties. That was my only knowledge of the matter and how it was handled. I wasn't involved in the investigation or in the decisions on how to deal

with the matter. I found out about it in Graham's time, as in being told to watch out for these gifts to this boy. I only knew more after the Prefect responsible had been discovered. The younger boy remained at the school as well as the Prefect. That's all that happened as far as I am aware. I don't even know if the young boy receiving the presents got to know who they were from.

### **Record-keeping**

77. We were given a Mark Book and kept records of each pupil's marks. In the Housemaster's office there was a duty log where you recorded any Blue Papers you were issuing, that way it didn't matter who was issuing the Blue Paper, the details were always kept in the same place. I think there was probably some kind of thing for more confidential matters that might come up. Rather than any teacher being able to access that, that was under the Housemaster's control. If we had anything of a confidential nature we would discuss that with our Housemasters. Those records would then be locked in the Housemaster's cabinet. At the end of the academic year, the Housemaster would have a handover with the Housemaster of the next boarding house to go through anything important regarding the boys

### **Investigations into abuse, Reports of abuse, and civil claims**

#### **– Personal involvement**

78. I was never involved in the handling of reports to, or civil claims made against, the school by former pupils, concerning historical abuse. I am not aware of any police investigations into alleged abuse at the school. I understand the Inquiry has received reports in relation to some members of staff at Merchiston Castle School.

### Specific alleged abusers

DXP [REDACTED]

79. He was the [REDACTED] at the time I was at the school. He was quite a senior figure amongst the staff. [REDACTED] also taught [REDACTED] at the school. He was there all four of the years I was at the school but I'm sure someone else joined the [REDACTED] in the final year I was there but I'm not sure if the job title was transferred. I didn't really have much to do with DXP [REDACTED]. He wasn't attached to a particular boarding house, so he didn't have any Tutees. I think he may have taught a [REDACTED] class but I only really knew of him leading [REDACTED]. He was a very nice man, I am surprised to hear there have been allegations made against him. He was quite jovial, kind and considerate. During my time we had a boy with a brain tumour and another boy whose father died and I recall DXP [REDACTED] as being a good person to deal with those sort of things. I don't remember any friction with the boys or any of them being against DXP [REDACTED]. I never saw DXP [REDACTED] discipline or abuse any child. I never heard anything to the effect that he had abused any child.

### James Rainey-Brown

80. I kind of knew him. He was there during my time but I don't think he was really a teacher. He coached rugby and was always dressed in a tracksuit. I believe before I started, that he taught the lower end of the school. Below Chalmers West there was Pringle which was first and second year pupils who were ten to twelve years old. Below that were classes called J4 and J5 for eight to ten year olds I think. He taught one of those years'. The year that I started there was a new building for J4 and J5 pupils. Another teacher, Fiona, started at the same time as me specifically to teach them as I think that age group was expanding in the school. As a result, I don't think Rainey-Brown taught any lessons during my time.
81. Rainey-Brown taught rugby and I want to say he was an advisor to those junior Houses. He lived on site, not in a boarding house, there were a bunch of staff houses but he moved out of those half way through my time at the school. Because

J4 and J5 were expanding, more teachers came in to teach them. I didn't have much to do with him. My dealings with him were limited to passing in the corridor, if that. He seemed quite pleasant. I think he was the longest serving member of staff. The calendar we got each year listed all the members of staff in order of who had been there the longest and he was at the very top. [REDACTED] had been taught by Rainey-Brown. I didn't really ever see Rainey-Brown with the children. I didn't have much to do with J4 and J5 so it was very rare for me to see people interacting with them. I think he was fairly strict as a teacher, I remember other staff comparing his teaching style to Fiona's. I never saw, heard, or heard of him abusing children. Since leaving the school I am vaguely aware of cases coming to light. I didn't read much about it but it seemed to be historic, and not relative to the time I was there.

[REDACTED]  
QZA

82. He was SNR [REDACTED] of the school, [REDACTED] QZA [REDACTED] was also known as QZA [REDACTED] looked after the pastoral side of the school and QZA [REDACTED] looked after the academic. QZA [REDACTED] was SNR [REDACTED] for all the four years I was at the school. He taught [REDACTED] he was within the [REDACTED] Department. We would have weekly department meetings. [REDACTED] lessons for Pringle Year 2 were split between two teachers. I shared a [REDACTED] class with [REDACTED] one year and with QZA [REDACTED] the other. QZA [REDACTED] and I also shared the lower sixth Higher [REDACTED] class.
83. As SNR [REDACTED] QZA [REDACTED] would also be the person you would see for cover if you couldn't take a class because you were ill, on a course, or absent for some reason. I can't remember what QZA [REDACTED] was like with children. We shared the classes but taught them separately which meant I didn't see him teaching and being SNR [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED] he didn't have much direct involvement in any one boarding house. I didn't directly witness much of what he did.
84. As part of the SNR [REDACTED] team QZA [REDACTED] was kind of in charge of the rules of the school. He had a sense of fun as well. The first term I was at the school, the

██████████. He appeared in that as the ██████████. I didn't see him discipline any children individually. I would have seen him talk to a year group or a class firmly in his role at SNR ██████████ but I don't remember any specific discipline incidents. I didn't see him abuse any children, I didn't hear him abuse any children, and I didn't hear of him abusing any children.

FQY ██████████

85. FQY ██████████ was around my age. I'm not sure what his formal role was when he first became part of the school. He was an ex-pupil. I think he was involved in Combined Cadet Forces or rugby. He was involved in extra-curricular activities. In my second year he became more involved in the school and as time went on was in charge of ██████████ that the school had. He was one of two people who worked on those. He started teaching ██████████ or ██████████ I think and then he took over my flat from me as Resident Tutor but for Rogerson West, the Sixth Form, rather than Rogerson East. I was there as Resident Tutor for Rogerson East and there wasn't a Resident Tutor for Sixth Form initially. FQY ██████████ was definitely the Senior Tutor for the Sixth Form during my last year at the school. He worked with Jonathan, the Head of Sixth Form. We socialised within a group. At around that time there were between six and eight of us all around the same age and all living-in. I didn't really see FQY ██████████ with pupils. I saw him around the place but a lot of his work was with the upper end of the school rather than the lower end. I never saw him abusing children, I never heard him abusing children, and I never heard of him abusing children.

### **Matters referring to myself**

86. I was aware that a complaint was made about a blog that I had published but I didn't know who had submitted it. After I left in July 2005, I came back to the school a few times. I was invited back for a Carol concert and the school play. Near the end of the academic year in 2006 I had said that I would go back for the Leavers Ball for that year as the year group who were leaving were the year group that I had in both



Chalmers West and Rogerson East. [REDACTED], now [REDACTED], my successor signed me up on the list to go as her plus one.

87. Then things started to get a bit cagey. I was told people were no longer able to have a plus one and that I wouldn't be able to go. Then one day as I was about to go into a meeting, I got a call from an unknown number. It was the school secretary who said she was putting me through to the Headmaster. He said that he was going to read something out to me and that he didn't want me to say anything.
88. He read through a list of numbered points which included an allegation that I had undermined the new [REDACTED] teacher by going to [REDACTED]. Then he said that he was aware that I had written a blog which had a number of references to Merchiston Castle School staff and pupils in it. I can't remember all of the specifics from the call but he said something to the effect that it suggested that I was too close to pupils. I very much argued against this, I said that wasn't the case at all. We spoke for about 30 minutes. He said he would have a think about things and that we would speak again in a few days but he requested that I remove the blog and let him know when I had done so. I let them know that I had removed the blog later that day.
89. The Headmaster telephoned me again the following Monday. He said he knew how committed I had been to my job. When I left the school I had the highest number of Tutees of any Tutor at the school. One of my Tutees was the [REDACTED]. All of my appraisals and even the speech when I was leaving referred to my commitment to my pupils. In his phone call the Headmaster mentioned all of this and said that he didn't think there was anything sinister going on. He went on to say that I should come up to say goodbye to the year group I had dealt with but as the atmosphere was a little charged at that time, he said I shouldn't attend for the Leaver's Ball but should see them the next day. That's what I did.
90. It seemed like everything had been resolved at that time. I don't think the passage of time has affected my memory of what happened but the phone call was a bolt from the blue. I wasn't able to take any notes on what was being said and there was nothing followed up in writing. I completely disagreed with what he said about the blog and his other points. I don't know where I was going with the blog. I was writing

it for me and it was intended to be musings on different topics rather than a daily journal. When I created it, I didn't put my name on it and I didn't mention Merchiston Castle School so you wouldn't be able to Google Merchiston Castle School or my name and get to the Blog.

91. What happened across that term was the pressure of work did get to me. At the end of January I was put on anti-depressants, I was signed off work before the end of that term. I was off for two weeks, I was not well. Writing the blog had been bound up with all the things going on when I became ill so I abandoned it. I didn't think it would be found. I used to put entries in the Blog with my Quote of the Day. My whole life at that time involved working at that school so some of the quotes did come from pupils. The main reason the school wanted the Blog taken down was that near the end of it I was talking about some of the processes within Merchiston Castle School. I know I talked about the process of appointing my successor and my frustration at the lack of a dedicated [REDACTED] teacher. I know I criticised Andrew Hunter the Headmaster, who I referred to as a certain person. I could understand why they wanted it taken down. From the information provided to me by the Inquiry, I am pleased to see that the school concluded there was no material for concern in the blog.
92. I should also say that [REDACTED] who submitted the complaint about the blog was my ex- girlfriend. She taught [REDACTED] at the school and the year after I left the school I came out as gay. I know that was not something that went down very well with her. The allegation was made after I had left the school. [REDACTED] and I were together from October 2002 until May 2003 and stayed friendly until I left the school. We continued to work together.
93. I was recently made aware of another matter, a suspicion that I had sexually abused [REDACTED], one of the pupils at Merchiston Castle School. Until I was made aware by the Inquiry, I had no knowledge of the matter. I had no knowledge of my referral to the police by the school. In June 2006 I had had the telephone conversation with the Headmaster where he said that I should still come up and see my former year group before they left. In June 2007 <sup>FIH</sup> [REDACTED] the [REDACTED], invited me to the end of year dinner for the [REDACTED] Department as a surprise guest. I came up

to Edinburgh for two days and went to this dinner in an outside restaurant. I was there with five or six other members of staff. The next day I arranged to meet one of my successors for lunch. I came back to the school with her and I thought I would pop in and see [FHY] the Housemaster I lived with.

94. While I was there [FHY] received a call from the Headmaster or the Headmaster's secretary saying I shouldn't be there and that I needed to leave the premises which felt like a mammoth bolt out of the blue as I thought we had resolved the matter of the Blog. I didn't know what was going on. I was very upset and could not understand why this was happening. Five minutes later I received a call saying I was going to be working on my first [REDACTED]. It sounds like such a small detail but it shows I remember the incident. It was a very confusing and upsetting afternoon.
95. I left the school and that evening I went with [FIH] to have dinner with two of my ex tutees together with their parents. I went back to London the next day and I was still processing it all. I should have followed it through and inquired more about it, to ask why I was not allowed on the premises but at that time my father was dying so there were bigger things going on than clarifying what the school were talking about. My father died in May 2008.
96. In July 2008 Robin McPherson was getting married at the school during the holidays. Just over a week before the wedding I felt that I had to phone up to ask if it was ok for me to go to the wedding. I don't know why. I got the reply back from the Headmaster, or his secretary, saying that yes, of course I must come to the wedding. At the wedding Andrew Hunter spent a long time talking to me and he apologised to me for the way things had been. I can't remember his exact words but he intimated that he was caught between a rock and a hard place. He then started talking about the prospect of me coming in to talk at the school about working [REDACTED]. I was relieved by his comments to the effect that the earlier matter had been resolved. I took this to be a reference to the Blog. Because I didn't have an awareness of the enormity of the matter I didn't question it any further. I have only been to the school on one further occasion which was the next year, and I go to Edinburgh every year for the festival. I think either Robin was leaving the school or had left and was back for a couple of days. I went in to a barbeque with Robin and another couple of

members of staff during the school holiday and I remember leaving feeling like I didn't ever have to go back there again. I had no idea about any suspicion concerning a pupil.

97. From what I am now aware of, it is suggested that I was sent a letter about the suspicion at the time but I did not receive such a letter. I had no idea that other parents of pupils were written to about it. If I had known any of that I would have addressed it at the time because it is all completely false. I understand that such matters need to be investigated. However, I can't understand how someone can make an allegation like this, for it proved to be not worth pursuing as it didn't happen and is completely false and yet the school can still go on and decide to ban me from the premises and try to prevent me from having contact with other people. On top of that, that the school can write this in correspondence to other people about me without speaking to me at all about this allegation and for me to find out all these years later.
98. Even if they did write this letter surely they require some confirmation from me that I had received it, that I understood the allegation being made. I don't understand how this could have happened without me being asked about it. For the avoidance of doubt, the address I gave to the school for correspondence after I left was my parents' address as I knew this would stay the same regardless of where I was living.
99. I understand that the suspicion of abuse of [REDACTED] was communicated to the school by his father who was [REDACTED] and was heavily influential in the school. I taught [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] for two years and so had a few encounters with his parents at Parent's Evenings and so on. Additionally, I saw his father around the school in his capacity as a [REDACTED].
100. It has been suggested that I was friendly with some of the Prefects. I taught [REDACTED] to a lot of the Prefects and a lot of them also took [REDACTED]. Many were also Prefects in the boarding house I was living in. Although I taught [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] during his sixth form time he was not involved in [REDACTED] and I didn't Tutor him. He was friends with some of my Tutees but I don't think there was much more that I saw of

him as a result of that crossover. In terms of the other Prefects generally, I don't think I was overly friendly with them. If they were my [REDACTED] Student, taking [REDACTED] and Prefects living in the same house as me, that's three areas of life that I would inevitably be spending a lot of time with them.

101. Also, you were encouraged to get to know your Tutees. In the staff manual it is specified that you can offer them a drink, to make it a more informal thing. When I joined the school I thought that was a weird thing. I remember when I was arranging my Tutee meetings I had to talk to their Housemaster and I remember John O'Neil telling me to arrange the meetings in the evening, give them a beer, and have a chat in an informal setting. It was a thing from the beginning of the sixth year.
102. I never went to the pub with any of the Prefects. I can remember one occasion where a group of staff members were out and went into a pub and saw some Sixth Formers and so we left immediately. In the school we were encouraged to treat the sixth formers as young adults and, by the nature of a typical Merchiston day, there would be a lot of times that the staff would speak with them outside of lesson times and in a more social setting, but always within the school. Despite that, you were still able to maintain a Teacher/Student boundary with them. The Prefects living in your house were in positions of responsibility and you had trust in them to fulfil those positions of responsibility. Once a week the Housemaster would have a drink with me and the Prefects.
103. It wasn't as simple as just me teaching the pupils a subject. The school was so much more than that and required more involvement. The students were the ones who would be involved in going on school trips, the ones who were interested in [REDACTED] would be organising the Lower Sixth [REDACTED]. I would be meeting with them to make sure things were going o.k. and giving them guidance. Generally my Tutees were people that I taught and had an interest in [REDACTED]. They got to say at the end of the Lower Sixth which houses they wanted to be in. A lot of them were applying for [REDACTED] in different universities so there was a lot to talk about.
104. I understand that [REDACTED] parents suspect that I had sexually abused [REDACTED] [REDACTED] in October 2002. That is not true. I cannot recall a single moment we would

have been alone together. I cannot think of anything that could make that seem like a possibility for them.

105. In autumn 2003 [REDACTED] came in to school the day before he went to university to say goodbye to his teachers. I gave him a card saying good luck at university, as I had with several pupils that were leaving, it literally said that. It had a picture of The Village People on the front which was very much [REDACTED] sense of humour. The next week [REDACTED] asked to see me and said that he had been summoned to Mr [REDACTED] office in town. Summoned was the specific word [REDACTED] used. He said that Mr [REDACTED] was outraged by my card and wanted me reprimanded, he wanted there to be consequences. [REDACTED] didn't really know what to do and didn't think there was anything to reprimand. There was no real upshot from that meeting but I remember coming downstairs from that meeting with [REDACTED] I came down into the Common Room and [REDACTED] was standing there and it was the two of us in this very enclosed room and he was quite intimidating.
106. I have no idea why this allegation was made. There is absolutely no truth in their allegation. From the information I have been given by the Inquiry, I am very pleased that it was concluded that the investigation did not need to be pursued as the allegation was completely false.
107. I do not think it is reasonable to consider that I was overly friendly with [REDACTED] I really don't remember in those years that I taught him ever having much to do with him outside of the classes. I remember that [REDACTED] and I occasionally would do joint Tutee social events, and [REDACTED] was one of [REDACTED]'s Tutees but these were very rare.
108. After [REDACTED] left the school he met up with my former Tutees during holidays. They would invite a handful of us out for drinks. This is after they had left the school. In the summer of 2003 four or five of them helped out with my [REDACTED] at the [REDACTED] by helping with [REDACTED] of it.
109. For the avoidance of doubt, I do accept that if a teacher were to engage in sexual activity with a pupil that would constitute sexual abuse.

110. I am bemused about how this suspicion of sexual abuse could be discussed without me having any knowledge of it until informed by the Inquiry eighteen years later. During the phone call with the Headmaster in June 2006, one of the things he mentioned was pupils having my telephone number or vice versa. At that time, mobile phones were not as prevalent as they are today. There was no policy in the staff manual on mobile phones. In the first year I was at school, another member of staff gave my number to a Prefect on a rugby tour. I don't know why they did that. At the beginning of my second year at the school I was back in London for a couple of days for my graduation. One of the boys in our house had an [REDACTED] for something so F1H [REDACTED] gave him my number so I could speak to him about that. As a new teacher you take your lead for how things should be from what you see around you, so when two teachers have given out my number when it was needed then I thought it was o.k. to do that, particularly as there was no written policy on mobile phones stating otherwise. There was a school trip to a beach or something. The pupils were going to be separated into two groups so we gave the Prefects my number in case of emergency, as I had been led to believe this was acceptable.
111. In my third year one evening Gayle Cordiner came to me and said that Jon O'Neill had asked her to speak to me to say that we can't have anyone having each other's numbers or pupils' numbers and we were to delete them and ask the boys to delete them as well. I questioned why John hadn't come and told me about this himself but I deleted the numbers I had and asked the boys to delete my number. In that same academic year, about a month later, I went on a university open day with Paul Williams and about 20 boys from the lower sixth form. I didn't know until we were on the trip and got a call from one of the boys, that Paul had given my number out to all of the boys as an emergency contact. I thought that was a bit strange as I had been asked not to give my number out to pupils and now someone else was giving it out.
112. In my last year at the school in the October half-term we took a trip to America. F1Y [REDACTED] was in charge of it and in the information going out to parents they had an emergency number but they needed a second emergency number. F1Y [REDACTED] asked if my number could be used as the second emergency number, so it went out again to all the boys on that trip and all their parents. All throughout this time there still wasn't a mobile phone policy at the school.

113. Near the end of my time at school the school did get one mobile phone for use in emergencies, but with only one phone available to be used they still asked for a second number for emergencies on the trip to America. Also, the school phone was there if you wanted to use that number, but it wasn't compulsory.
114. There was so much in the ethos of the school about getting to know the pupils and spending time with them. The [REDACTED] and the Headmaster's Prizegiving speech for the year that I left both wrote how committed I was to my Tutees, and how I knew their interests and needs. That was what they pushed for, that's why I had the greatest number of Tutees of all the staff. That commitment doesn't just appear; it took a lot of work to achieve the depth of knowledge of my tutees. In July 2005 this was being praised yet a few months later, it was being interpreted as a negative thing.
115. With the benefit of hindsight, if I was in the job at Merchiston Castle School now I would do more to protect myself and prevent others from incorrectly interpreting my dedication to work. I threw myself into that job completely. I wanted the best for the pupils whether they were pupils that I taught, pupils in my house, or my Tutees. It was a job that required you to be working seven days a week, for most of the hours of the day, not a job that you got to clock in and out of. That is why I burnt out and had to have time off school. I remember feeling bad when I got offered my first [REDACTED] job, because I would be leaving a GCSE class and an A Level class half way through their two year courses.
116. I don't remember the staff manual evolving or changing in the four years I was at Merchiston Castle School despite changes in the world. With the growth of the use of mobile phones as more and more pupils got mobile phones I can remember it causing problems. Previously, pupils' use of the internet could be monitored as it would be access via a computer in the school. As more got mobile phones they had internet access on their phones. That was causing some problems and people didn't know how to deal with that because there wasn't any policy in the manual.



117. When I say I would protect myself better now, I don't think I failed to protect myself at the time. I followed all the rules, such as don't be alone with pupils or if you are leave a door open. However I think I was quite naïve. I think things would be different now that I have had more worldly experience. There were inevitably pupils that you spent more time with because of where they lived or what they were studying but that doesn't mean they were given any preferential treatment over other pupils.

**Lessons to be learned**

118. I think of the practice of the school was set up quite well, the layout of the buildings helped that. However I think there could be more training. I feel like I got a lot of academic training but I feel there could have been more formal training of the pastoral side of things, rather than picking things up from observing people around you which is what my recollection is of how things happened.

119. 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.....

Dated..... 09 November 2020 .....