Tuesday, 23 March 2021

(10.00 am)

LADY SMITH: Good morning, and welcome back to the evidence in relation to the provision of residential care at boarding schools in Scotland.

Before I invite Mr Brown to introduce the first witness for today, I just want to say a word about scheduling this morning. We are expecting the first witness probably to take no more than an hour, and may even be finished before 11 o'clock, but there is of course also due to be a minute's silence at 12 noon today in relation to the day of reflection. For those of you who don't know what I am talking about, you may remember it is 12 months today since the start of the first lockdown and we all, I am sure, have much to reflect on in relation to what has passed in the last twelve months, so I will be observing that minute's silence.

Rather than start, stop, start, and then maybe stop again, because of the time at which we would usually have the morning break, what I have decided to do is, after the first witness, break until 12.10 pm, once the minute's silence is over, and we will start the second witness, Helen Harrison, at that stage.

I hope that is not going to inconvenience anybody

but I thought it would be neater if we approached the morning in that way.

So Mr Brown, a witness I think.

MR BROWN: My Lady, I am obliged for setting out the plan for the day. The first witness is Professor Paterson who will take no longer than an hour.

LADY SMITH: Thank you. Good morning, could we begin by you raising your right hand, please, and repeat after me.

PROFESSOR LINDSAY PATERSON (sworn)

LADY SMITH: Please sit down and make yourself comfortable. Before we start, help me with this, what would you like me to call you? I am happy to use Professor Paterson or Lindsay.

A. Lindsay would be my preference.

LADY SMITH: Very well, Lindsay. You will see the red file has a copy of your report in it and you will also have the assistance of the screen in front of you. If you are ready, I will hand over to Mr Brown.

A. Yes, indeed. Thank you very much.

LADY SMITH: Mr Brown.

Questions from MR BROWN

MR BROWN: Lindsay, good morning.

A. Good morning.

Q. As her Ladyship said, you now have two copies of your report, one in the red folder and one you brought with

you yourself. It will also, for triplicate, appear on the screen in front of you as referred to by me.

If we could begin by scene-setting about you. You have provided us with a copy of your CV and we see there your background of a first degree in mathematics, and thereafter a doctorate in statistics?

A. Indeed.

Q. And also membership of the professional bodies, the Royal Society of Edinburgh and the British Academy as of 2013. You are currently Professor of Education Policy at Edinburgh University and have been since 1998, having prior to that worked at Heriot Watt and also -- at Edinburgh and Heriot Watt previously. You began life in the Scientific Civil Service in the 1980s?

A. Yes.

Q. In terms of research funding, one point you make at the outset is the most recent funding is a major research fellowship from the Leverhulme Trust, and that is appearing on the report you have prepared for today. Because the Inquiry, by way of background, asked you whether there was statistical data which would assist scene-setting the background of boarding schools within the Scottish education sector, is that correct?

A. Yes, that is correct.

Q. Am I right in saying that that dovetailed quite neatly

with work you were already carrying out for the Leverhulme Trust which is looking at reports and data for education in Scotland in the 20th century?

A. Yes.

Q. Because should we understand again that in relation to education in Scotland in the 20th century, there were significant changes beginning I think in the earlier part of the 20th century --

A. Yes.

Q. -- where obviously there was statute providing for education going back to the late 19th century but a changing view of what education should mean, is that correct?

A. That is absolutely correct.

Q. Could you briefly explain what that change was and why it took place?

A. Thank you. Yes, the major change that took place in the -- roughly the first few decades of the 20th century, from the late 19th century, was the development of the concept of secondary education. That was a fundamental change. We take it for granted that children go through primary, then secondary and then possibly post-school education subsequent to that, but at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries that really wasn't how it was conceived. They essentially were

thought of as being two separate educational experiences. One was for the vast majority of children that would go to school, and in Scotland the leaving age by then was 14, so they would leave school at 14 and then would go straight into the labour market, and they would never really get anything like what we now think of as secondary education. That was for 85/90% of children.

The other 10% or so of children would go through a process that would involve first of all preparatory school, and then a post-preparatory school which is closer to a secondary school, and then they would, most of them, go into a profession, and some of them would go into a university and then into a profession. But these were two separate streams, and essentially the revolution I think in attitudes that took place between about the 1890s and the 1920s was the expectation that all children would go through elementary education and all children would get at least two or three years of secondary education.

Q. Thank you. Professor, one thing, you clearly are an enthusiast for your subject.

A. Apologies.

LADY SMITH: That was quite fast, Lindsay. And what you don't have as a reminder, that you would have had in

what we are now thinking of as the old days, is a stenographer here in the room eyeballing you. There is a stenographer, though, working remotely, so have sympathy for her.

A. Apologies to the stenographer. I am terribly sorry, I will slow down.

MR BROWN: Please don't be offended if I keep ...

A. My students do it all the time, I have to say.

LADY SMITH: I also don't want to miss anything you are saying. It is really interesting.

A. Thank you.

MR BROWN: You were talking about the change that took place, and you are a statistician and an educational statistician.

A. Yes.

Q. Again, just to set the context before we look at your report, what then are you looking at to provide you with the data that allows you to draw conclusions in the context of Scottish education and the change you are talking about?

A. Scottish education from the 1930s to the end of the 20th century is, I think, the best documented education system in the world in the sense of seeing or trying to see education from the point of view of the student and the pupil. There has been a series -- there was

a series of surveys pioneered. The first ever survey of an entire age group was done in 1932 in Scotland for people born in 1921, and that was repeated, and then from the early 1960s onwards there was a series of surveys of school pupils, school leavers, and then also not just as leavers but following people through the experience of senior secondary school, and that meant that there is an archive of surveys of pupils. That is important to emphasise: these are questionnaires that went directly to pupils, and they filled them in independently of their parents and of the school, and returned them confidentially, anonymously, to the people running the surveys.

There is no other country in the world with such a long series of surveys of pupils or a series of surveys that address such a wide range. It is not just about their attainment or just about where they go after school or about the jobs they go into or the university courses they enter, it is also about their attitudes, their experience of school, attitudes to the teachers and their fellow pupils. That was one reason I think why the Leverhulme Trust was kindly willing to fund me to do this research, but it is also an enormously valuable resource for researchers in the future, social historians as well as what I am doing today.

Q. Two questions: it started in the 1960s?
A. Yes.
Q. And up to when?
A. The most -- the series I'm talking about here came to an end with people who were aged 16 in 2002, so people born roughly in the mid-1980s. There had been some subsequent surveys, so this does continue, but not with the same frequency or richness as was during that roughly half century from the second half of the 20th century.
Q. Why has there been less regularity?
A. That begins to verge onto politics, it should be said, so I would prefer not to go down that road.

There is a technical issue here which is also a real achievement of these surveys. Across the world the response rates to surveys have been dropping. People are being less willing that take part in social surveys. When the surveys were being done in the 1960s and 1970s, typically 90% plus of people took part in them. That was already dropping to about 60 or 70% by the end of the series, and in the first decade of this century many surveys were lucky to get more than 50% participation. So there has been a problem with getting people to participate in surveys. That is one reason why they did come to an end although I think it is not the only

reason.

LADY SMITH: So are you going to do a survey into why people have become less willing to participate in surveys?

A. People have done that, actually. For example, my colleague Sir John Curtis at Strathclyde University, who is certainly Scotland's pre-eminent expert on social surveys, has been part of such surveys to try to work out why people don't take part in surveys. It is a real problem. I think it is partly a sense of not trusting that the surveys will be used for worthwhile purposes.

One of the remarkable things about these surveys is that they were presented to young people -- remember, these are people aged about 16 or 17 -- as being a way in which they could influence Government to improve the lives of young people, that was the kind of rubric, and people believed that. I'm not sure if people believe that any more.

MR BROWN: We have heard of policy fatigue. Is there survey fatigue as --

A. There might be a bit of that, yes.

Q. Thank you. You were talking about the sort of issues that are contained within the surveys, and again we will come back to that. Is that very much broader than simply education?

A. Yes.

Q. And does that reflect back to the transition in the earlier part of the 20th century of the vision for education, it was more than just learning?

A. That is right. Undoubtedly, the major reason for the change was to get more children engaged with more what you might call structured learning, ultimately leading to some kind of assessment, so that was certainly part of it and a fundamental part of it, the belief being that we could get a society where people were better educated and better able to understand things. And of course one has to remember too that, at that time, democracy was still a novel concept, we didn't have complete democracy in the UK until 1928, so that is happening at roughly the same time. And that is not a coincidence, actually, that people believed that in order to have a democracy that could work, you had to have a well-educated citizenry.

But there was, also along with that, a sense that traditional ways of doing schooling were not very child-friendly and there was a growing -- at that time the international body, campaigning body that furnished this idea was called the New Education Fellowship, and Scotland actually was one of the pioneers in the New Education Fellowship, and believed schooling should become more focused on the child. The great Chicago

professor, John Dewey, had a wonderful metaphor for this. He said it was like a Copernican revolution. Previously the centre of focus had been the teacher, like the centre of focus had been the earth, and now we have shifted to the centre of focus being the child, as Copernicus had shifted the centre of focus to be the sun. He said "We are going through a Copernican revolution in education where the focus shifts from the earth to the sun, teacher to the child".

And although that is quite a romantic way of putting it, you can trace -- some of the research here takes the tail-end of that -- you can trace the gradually increasing degree of child-centredness right from the 1920s through to the end of the century.

Q. Thank you. One thing that you haven't touched on but I would like to ask you very briefly about. We have heard last week or seen copies of inspection reports going back to 1920s. I think it is a matter of -- well, it is not disputed that statutory provisions certainly from 1946 and the Education Act introduced the idea of inspection of private boarding schools, which is obviously the focus of our interest, but clearly boarding schools were being inspected --

A. Yes.

Q. -- for the previous 20-plus years. There's some

suggestion that that may be under earlier Education Acts, from 1878 for example. Is this something that you -- have you looked at these early inspection reports?

A. Yes, I am not a legal scholar so I don't fully know under what auspices, and certainly some of the inspection earlier on took place under what we would now call child welfare legislation rather than under educational legislation. But what I have looked at is the inspection reports relating to what was then called the school Leaving Certificate, what we now know of as the Highers, and when a school wanted to present students for the Leaving Certificate -- I should say the Leaving Certificate was created in 1888, so Scotland is actually another pioneer there, it's one of the older systems, half a century before England -- to present students for the Highers, you had to have the courses approved by the Inspectorate, they had to be at the right standard that you would give your students a reasonable chance of gaining a pass. And so that is one of the ways in which inspection would be justified, was inspecting the courses that were preparing students to sit the Leaving Certificate.

You certainly find in the files, the files in the National Archives of Scotland in Edinburgh, you find

inspection reports on schools that didn't receive any public money but which were presenting students for Leaving Certificates.

Q. You just talked about public money. Grant assistance --

A. Yes. There were two kinds of independent school in Scotland. There were so-called grant-aided schools, and this is in the public domain so I can mention schools. Examples of that would be George Heriot's or George Watson's or Glasgow High School or Dundee High School or Robert Gordon's in Aberdeen, these schools, and they received a public subsidy in exchange essentially for providing relatively inexpensive places to a range of pupils. These schools, I think, in popular idea, were indistinguishable from the well-known Local Authority schools. If you take the city of Edinburgh, for example, you have Heriot's and George Watson's and Mary Erskine as it is now called, and a few others, that received grant aid of that kind. I think in the popular mind they were thought of as being in the same kind of category as schools such as James Gillespie's High School or The Royal High School which were wholly funded and managed by the Local Authority.

So the grant-aided schools, as they were called in Scotland, were really just part of the old high status secondary system. Then separate from that were schools

that didn't receive public money, and some well known schools in Scotland in that respect would be Fettes or Loretto or Glenalmond or Strathallan, and St George's in Edinburgh would be another example of that, actually, which at that time received no public funding. They were wholly independent.

So the term "independent school" in Scotland, until really the 1970s actually, the term "independent school" strictly speaking means those schools that received no public funding, and strictly does not include the word "independent" at that time, does not include schools that were grant-aided, such as Heriot's and Watson's and Mary Erskine's.

Q. It might be useful to turn to look at that period, because that is really around the turn of the reporting you were studying to provide our report. And if we could go to the report --

A. Yes.

Q. -- which is "Student Experience of Scottish Boarding Schools 1970s to 1990s". We are grateful to you for providing that.

If we can go to page 1 of the text which begins with introduction and acknowledgements, then it sets out the background and reference to the Leverhulme Trust. But if you could just talk very briefly about the sources of

data, because we see this is from a number of surveys that went on, and you have alluded to them already, but if can you just explain in a little more detail?

A. The Scottish Education Department at that time was the branch of the Scottish Office which was responsible for school education. It had been running administrative surveys of school-leavers basically to make sure they counted correctly the portion of the age group that was getting Highers, and that was partly in order to forecast the demand for education. They had been doing that in the 1960s but there was no -- there was nothing more than just a survey of attainment. Two groups of researchers thought that this could be enhanced. The major influence came from the Centre for Educational Sociology at Edinburgh University which was founded in 1972 by Andrew McPherson --

Q. Again, please slow down.

A. Thank you, yes. The major source of these was the Centre for Educational Sociology at Edinburgh University, founded by Professor Andrew McPherson. Professor McPherson had the idea that you could form a partnership between academic researchers on the one hand interested in the wider social context of learning, a partnership between these researchers and Government civil servants doing their

more attainment-focused survey.

To simplify a complex story, that is essentially what happened. The funding came in part from academic sources such as what was then called the Social Science Research Council, now the Economic and Social Research Council, funding from that to do the sort of academic side, and some funding from the Scottish Office, as it then was, but also some local authorities to make up the whole package. But it is important to emphasise that the remarkable thing that Andrew McPherson and his colleagues achieved was complete independent control of the surveys. So they had got money from Government and these other bodies to run the surveys independently of Government, and were therefore able to guarantee, I would argue, the integrity of the surveys as sources of independent evidence on how policies were working.

So the surveys run by the Centre for Educational Sociology then contacted the school leavers directly and, as I mentioned earlier, the communication questionnaires went to the school leaver directly, and came back to an office at Edinburgh University for collating anonymously into the --

LADY SMITH: Did that mean there was wholly independent drafting of the questions in the survey?

A. Yes, absolutely. That's right. It was -- the entire

questionnaire development was done by staff at the Centre for Educational Sociology.

LADY SMITH: Because that is very important, isn't it?

A. It is indeed, yes. That is right. They would listen -- they would send drafts of the questionnaire to various bodies, but they had ultimate control of the questionnaire.

LADY SMITH: Thank you.

MR BROWN: I think, as you set out, these surveys were biennial.

A. Yes.

Q. And starting from 1976 up to 2000, they seemed to go under different labels. So we have the Scottish School Leavers' Survey from 76 to 82, the Scottish Young People's Survey from 84 to 90, and the Survey of Young People in Scotland thereafter?

A. Yes.

Q. Were there material differences --

A. Not enormously. Essentially, the change in 1984 was when they shifted. Up until then they surveyed everybody who left school in a given year, which in Scotland by and large means leaving from the fourth, fifth or sixth year in secondary school. In 1984 they changed to doing a survey of everybody in the fourth year in a given year, and then they returned to these

people over the following two years so they could get a full record of their school experience.

That meant that effectively, instead of surveying all leavers in a given year, you're surveying everybody aged 16 in a given year and then following them up for two years after. But looking back over the history of it, it is giving you the same kind of information about trends over time. You can reconstruct the leavers series by going to the follow-up suites of the survey of fourth year people.

Q. I think, looking at the next page of your report, you explain that everything was anonymous?

A. Yes.

Q. That was important.

A. Indeed.

Q. And samples were randomly selected from secondary schools in Scotland --

A. Yes.

Q. -- across the entire --

A. Across the entire range of schools, both Local Authority schools and independent schools, including grant-aided schools.

Q. I think in terms of the three schools, and we will come to this when we look at the specific areas you have looked at, there are really three sectors --

A. Yes.
Q. -- to be considered: independent boarding schools, which is obviously our focus of interest, other independent schools, and the remaining secondary schools, presumably the state system?
A. That's right, they're all in the state system.
Q. Education --
A. "Education authority schools" is technically the term that legislation gives to them, yes.
Q. Again, you make the point that sample survey response rates varied and the numbers involved varied over time, this is the second --
A. That is right.
Q. -- of this page --
A. Indeed.
Q. You say:

"The surveys had response rates for the relevant suites ranging from around 80% for leavers between 1976 and 1982 to around 65% from 1984 onwards. The achieved sample sizes then ranged from about 3,000 in the 1990s to over 16,000 in 1976 and 1980."

A. Yes, that is right. It should be added in there that the original -- so there is not only a drop in the response rates, there is also -- there was less money around. So there was -- the target sample in 1976,

for example, was nearly 40% of the entire school-leaving population, whereas the target sample in the 1990s was only about 10% of the school-leaving population.

The key thing about a survey, any social survey, is what matters for the purpose of reliability is the size of the sample. So you can, generally speaking, get a pretty reliable estimate of anything if you have about 1 or 2,000 cases. The only reason for going for a bigger sample, such as the 16,000 in 1976, is to be able to get information about small sub-samples. This matters for the purposes of the present exercise because clearly the independent boarding sector was very small, it was about 1% of the entire school-leaving population. We will probably come on to this, but it's the reason I have had to group together adjacent years in order to get a reasonable number of school pupils from independent boarding schools so that we have a reasonably reliable estimate of the percentages in there.

So that is the reason for going -- if they had all been of size 16,000, we could have done it year by year, but I had to group years together because of the later rather smaller total sample sizes.

Q. I think you explain later on in your report at page 3 that you wanted a sample size of at least 70 --

A. Yes.
Q. -- and that's why you grouped them --
A. That's why I grouped them, yes.
Q. -- and we will see that reflected in the various tables?
A. Indeed, that is true.
Q. You have talked about anonymity. Is it possible -- I think you say that all the schools that we have particular interest in --
A. Yes.
Q. -- were included in surveys, but you can't go any deeper than that?
A. No, I can't. I have listed the schools I have classified as independent boarding schools, they include all the schools that are explicitly in your remit at present, but I can't go into any greater detail than that.
Q. Yes. I think you have put 19 (overspeaking) --
A. Yes, that is right.
Q. The other factor, just for clarity, is: categorise a school as a boarding school?
A. Yes.
Q. Obviously you had to be satisfied there were enough boarders?
A. Yes.
Q. And as I think your report makes plain, you categorise

that: if at least 25% of the survey respondents from the school replied they had been boarders?

A. Yes.

Q. But actually 25% might seem a little low --

A. It does.

Q. -- but numbers didn't change --

A. It didn't matter. You could set that level higher and you got exactly the same group of schools. So essentially what you have in Scotland is the vast majority of schools have no boarding at all. A small number have fewer than about 5% of boarders. Some of the big city-based independent schools have a small number of boarders, I think George Watson's, for example, has that because they cater for parents who are abroad. And also some schools in the Highlands used to have hostels, although that is less so now that there have been more schools opened up in the North-West Highlands.

So we want to exclude them. They are not, I think, colloquially or informally thought of as boarding schools, so we have to think: would defining the threshold as being 25% be likely to pick up the schools that in everyday thought are regarded as boarding schools? And given that it didn't matter if I set a threshold of 25% or 75%, you ended up with the same

group of schools, that suggests to me that there is a reasonably coherent definition of what, within statistical terms and in popular colloquial terms, would be thought of as a boarding school in Scotland. It is not as hard and fast a category, to be honest, as popular terminology might imply.

Q. You also make mention on page 4 of your report about something that you will be at home with, but I suspect perplexes the rest of the world, statistical weighting. In layman's language, what do you mean by that?

A. We are trying to get the results reported in the tables to be as accurate a reflection of the reality in society as we would want it to be. So let me give an example of one aspect of the weighting here. Typically -- this is true of all social surveys -- girls in these surveys, women in adult surveys, are more likely to respond to surveys than men and boys, slightly more likely. That doesn't mean there are no boys in this, of course not. There are many, many thousands of boys and there are many thousands of girls, but the girls are slightly more likely to respond.

So in the weighting, you take account of that fact by giving slightly greater weight to the responses from boys and correspondingly slightly less weight, relatively speaking, to the responses from girls, so

that in the reported results they would show you what it would be like if the response rates were the same for boys and girls, in other words about 52% female and about 48% male.

Q. So it balances --

A. It balances out, that is right. It should be said in more -- maybe more familiar terms that this use of weighting has become absolutely standard in opinion polls and so on, and we have seen in recent general elections in Britain and across the world that the weighted samples, the weighted survey results, are far closer to the eventual election result than the unweighted results. That is quite a good public test of the validity, because you have a real world outcome -- a General Election in 2019, for example -- and you have the surveys immediately before that, and the weighted results of these surveys were closer to the actual outcome in December 2019 than the unweighted data. That is again because the propensity to respond to these surveys is slightly higher in some groups than it is in other groups.

Q. Thank you. If we can now move on to the survey itself. In your report you provide a summary, comment and tables. I think it might be simplest to stick to the way you have collated particular surveys together under

different headings.

A. Yes.

Q. So there are I think 15 --

A. Yes.

Q. -- surveys about pupils, teachers --

A. Yes.

Q. -- and families, and then finally schools under two broad headings --

A. Yes.

Q. -- 16 and 17.

If we can keep them together, just looking at the surveys on students, it would be simplest perhaps to put up the tables and you can comment on them as we go through --

A. Yes.

Q. -- report. If we go to page 11 of the report, which starts with table 1, which is looking at people who stayed on in school beyond aged 16. Table 2, I'll just run through them, serious truanting. Table 3, last year at school was worthwhile. Table 4, various student experiences. Table 5, attended more than one secondary school. And table 6, corporal punishment.

Taking them in order, please.

A. Yes. Would you like me to talk through what they show?

Q. Yes.

A. Indeed. If we first of all take table 1. The striking thing here is that the rate of staying on, which is some indicator of satisfaction with the school, is far higher in the independent schools, both categories of independent schools, than it is in the education authority schools. That is true in every one of the periods that are grouped here.

The gap reduces because staying on rates have been rising in Local Authority schools, education authority schools, during this period of time. But it still remains far ahead. The major explanation of that -- I should emphasise throughout this whole thing, this is not an evaluation of the independent schools as how effective they might be as educational institutions, that would require a different kind of design. The intention here is to describe what it was like to be at an independent school or at a boarding school, what was the experience like. So we can say the typical experience of a young person at either of the categories of independent school was to stay on beyond the minimum leaving age, to stay on beyond age 16.

However, it has to also be said that the major reason why the education authority leaving rates were -- at an early stage were much higher, in other words staying on rates were lower, was because amongst

children with well-educated affluent parents, the chances of staying on were much higher than children who were not in that sort of family circumstance. And since most of the children we saw -- we can see in later tables at the independent schools did have well-educated, affluent parents, that is one of the major reasons why they stayed on.

Nevertheless, whatever the reason may be, the important thing is the experience of going to an independent school normally entailed staying on beyond aged 16. So that is the first thing about table 1, and it is what the psychologists would call a behavioural measure. If someone was deeply dissatisfied with what was going on in a school or dissatisfied with any claim that the school was relevant to their lives or to their future lives, then it would be less likely that they would remain in that institution beyond the point at which it was possible to leave. The vast majority of children in the independent schools did take advantage of that further opportunity.

Another version of that question about behavioural attitudes is table 2. There has been extremely low levels of serious truanting in the independent schools compared to Local Authority schools, although it has to be said that serious truanting is not an enormous

problem anywhere, but typically only 1 or 2% of pupils were guilty of serious truanting from the independent schools, and that is the dominant message from table 2.

Q. Across that table there seems to be a gentle reduction in truanting --

A. That's right.

Q. -- and in particular local authority schools --

A. Yes, education authority schools. Yes, part of the story here is the Local Authority schools, education authority schools, have become more child-friendly and more congenial for children over this whole period of time. The major focus of this report is of course not on these schools. I gave a footnote to a published -- a paper that was published in the second half of last year in which I looked at that for Local Authority -- well, all schools, but Local Authority schools therefore predominantly, and the general message is schools have become more child-friendly, more welcoming places to be, more attractive to young people to stay on beyond the minimum age. So that was table 2.

Then the rest of the tables, apart from the ones about parental characteristics, are really about pupils' attitudes. Of course we are then -- this is one of the things that is always a challenge when you are doing retrospective social analysis. I wasn't involved in the

design of these surveys, I in fact was still at school for the oldest of them and -- so therefore you have to make do with what the survey researchers at that time chose to ask about, so that is the major reason why some of the tables stop at a certain point. Of course, with historical interest that is less of a serious problem.

So in table 3 we are looking at the sort of general question: was the last year at school worthwhile? But we only get that from the late 70s and 1980. Again we can see very high levels of satisfaction expressed by young people with the independent schools, 82 to 90% at that time.

In greatest detail then, perhaps the most relevant table here for this is table 4, and we can -- this looks at a variety of different measures of people's experience of what it was like to be at one of these schools. If I might start at the right-hand end rather than the left-hand end to start with, which is about teachers. There is really a remarkably high level of respect for teachers, around 80% of people respected teachers in the independent schools, and actually that is about double, slightly less than double, the level of respect shown by students in independent schools -- in local -- sorry, in education authority schools. I should say, these are not -- this wasn't a question that

asked: did you respect your teachers? This was asking young people, as it were, to be social observers: did you observe that pupils in your school generally respected the teachers?

You could argue that if we ask: who are the best witnesses for what it was like to be in a secondary school in Scotland in 1978? In many ways the best witnesses are the young people themselves, and that is what we are asking in that question: did you observe that your fellows -- your fellow pupils in the school respected teachers? And the answer was about 80% of people thought that, generally speaking, their fellow pupils respected the teachers in the independent schools.

We can see some reasons why that might be the case, if we move from right to left on that table. So the context in which that respect took place. There was a perception that there were problems in the schools, so it is not as though there was a -- it's not as though these young people were incapable of observing problems. So if we ask: why would we believe them when they say that teachers were respected? One reason to believe that is that they were pretty realistic in recognising that there was bullying going on, for example, that there was harassment going on. So they had their eyes

open, these young people weren't naive. And if they are willing to say there was bullying going on but nevertheless they respected their teachers, that I think gives greater credibility to the perception that teachers were respected.

And perhaps consistent with that, then, is the third column, column number 3, that the schools, when they punished people -- the punishment question wasn't specifically about harassment or bullying but that would be part of it, of course -- there was a feeling that punishment was fair. There was no widespread perception amongst these responders to the surveys that punishment was arbitrary or vindictive or cruel, but rather that it fitted the crime.

LADY SMITH: I take it the survey didn't analyse what was meant by punishment?

A. Not specifically there. All of the surveys -- that survey is from the 1990s, so at that time there weren't specific questions about punishment. Earlier surveys asked about corporal punishment, but not these surveys, unfortunately not. That would have been a ...

LADY SMITH: Just to interject for a moment, because you moved from bullied to punishments. There is a line that deals with students were harassed. Are you coming back to that?

A. Yes, student --

LADY SMITH: I was just wondering what you picked up as being meant by "harassed", from looking at the survey.

A. That is an interesting question. I too am puzzled by that, actually. That was a question which was in the surveys, and I reported it here because it is there along with bullying. It is in the same suite of questions. If you want, I could show you the layout of the questionnaire.

LADY SMITH: I see you have quoted "pupils sometimes got harassed".

A. That is right, that is the actual wording that appeared in the survey. I find it myself difficult to distinguish between harassment and bullying, but on the other hand, clearly people were doing so, insofar as there is a greater perception of bullying than there is of harassment. But to understand the distinction that people might be drawing between bulling and harassment would require a different kind of evidence, more ethnographic, you know, talking -- interviewing individuals about what they meant by that kind of thing. Unfortunately that is much more difficult to reconstruct 30 years later.

There is also -- the first two columns of that table, there is a sense of generally there being

a lot of pupils in the school who took school seriously, so there is not a sense that these individual respondents thinking they are surrounded by people who are disaffected from school, and that there is a perception in the independent schools that most pupils weren't causing a lot of trouble. So the portion saying there were a lot of troublemakers in the class is relatively low. In independent boarding schools, in fact, only about 1 in 7/1 in 8 pupils said that there were lots of troublemakers -- too many troublemakers in their classes.

So the overall picture, this is from the 1990s, is that there is a context in which, realistically, the pupils are recognising there are problems of bullying and, whatever they mean by it, harassment, but there is also an assessment that although that is present, it didn't seriously lead to disruption in the class. And above all, there is a sense that the teachers were to be respected, and that any punishments that they carried out were justified.

So that I think gives a sense of -- a realistic sense of what it was like to be a pupil in a school. There is no -- there is no illusions about the school being an absolutely happy environment. But there is therefore, for that very reason, good grounds to believe

that when they report that punishment was fair or that teachers were respected, these young people are also being realistic about these measures as well.

MR BROWN: Thank you.

Her Ladyship mentioned punishment, and that was obviously in the context of 1990s. One of the changes, part of the educational transformation in the 20th century, ultimately was the removal of corporal punishment.

A. Indeed.

Q. Which of course we know later came later --

A. Yes.

Q. -- in theory at least, in the boarding sector.

A. Yes.

Q. Our table 6, if we can jump to that, which is from 1980, that is illuminating in the sense that corporal punishment was something that took place more consistently in the education authority schools than in the private sector --

A. That's right.

Q. -- both boarding and non-boarding?

A. Yes, that is right. Yes, indeed, because the Local Authority sector had ended corporal punishment by about 1983, and it was outlawed by a European ruling shortly after that, the surveys didn't ask about it

unfortunately after that, so we have no evidence about corporal punishment in the independent schools after that point, even though, as you say, it was still technically legal for that to happen until the 2000 Education Act. Nevertheless, the evidence here is that it was a lot more lower level than the independent schools.

I should say this is a question about whether people ever received corporal punishment. The same question can be reported in a different way, which is whether you were punished "often" or "quite often". There were hardly any that were punished "often", but the "often" or "quite often" percentages could be added to the table, so it was 18 -- there wasn't the same enormous difference, actually, so let me give you these numbers which could be added to the table. So in boarding schools it was 18%, in non-boarding independent schools it was 5%, in education authority schools it was 15%. So that would be 18, 5, and 15 going down the column.

You see less of a difference there, actually, and you also see a much lower incidence of being punished often as opposed to having corporal punishment at all at any point during your school life.

Q. So the boarding sector is where it happened most often --

A. That is right.
Q. -- Although not a great deal more than others --
A. Yes, that's right. I suppose what you might infer from that is that infrequent corporal punishment was more common in the education authority schools than in the independent schools, but frequent corporal punishment was about the same. You could interpret that in the light of the previous table from a later period, that punishment was regarded as fair, that serious infringements of the kind that at that time were judged to be punishable with the belt or the cane, they were equally common in the boarding schools, in the other independent schools and the Local Authority schools, but that --
LADY SMITH: Sorry, Lindsay, I have just lost you. Explain that again.
A. We find that the frequency of being punished often was similar in the independent schools and in the education authority schools. Sorry, I should have said ...
LADY SMITH: The incidence?
A. The incidence, yes. I am not sure, sorry, maybe I should take that back. That is more of a speculation. There are not really grounds in this for saying serious infringement was more -- was equally common in the two sectors. I think thinking on my feet is not a good

idea, so I would take back that comment, I think, actually.

LADY SMITH: Thank you.

MR BROWN: The table we haven't touched on but I don't think we need to dwell on is table 5, which is "attending more than one secondary school".

A. Yes.

Q. The incidents of more secondary schools is higher in boarding independent schools?

A. Yes.

Q. And may that tie in, in part, with some of the facts in tables we are now going to turn to, in families 7 to 10, because again perhaps, reading short, it is more common for parents to move jobs and, therefore, move school?

A. Yes, indeed. That is right. That is right.

Q. Because I think again, taking matters a little more shortly in these regards, in terms of social classes, your findings were that the boarding schools tend to be the higher social classes?

A. Yes, that is right. That is right. Because they are expensive. That is the major reason.

Q. It might be thought to be fairly self-evident. And likewise with non-boarding?

A. Yes.

Q. It's the same thing?

A. That is right.
Q. Although do we see some change as one goes down the social classes that would be understood in the survey world?
A. Yes, on table 7?
Q. Yes.
A. Yes. Okay, so what we can certainly see is that, in each of these periods, the proportion from the professional and managerial classes, which is 1 and 2, are -- the proportions are far higher, all around 80 plus per cent, usually around 90%, far higher than in the Local Authority schools, and that largely reflects the cost of sending children to the independent schools. It is interesting that there is not much of a distinction between -- in fact, there is not very much reliable distinction at all between the boarding schools and the non-boarding schools, even though the cost of sending a child to a boarding school is always higher than the cost of sending a child to a non-boarding independent school. So it is not just about cost, but I suspect that above a certain threshold it is not much about cost and, up to that threshold, it simply can't be afforded.

On the other hand, of course, the proportion of young people whose families are in classes 1 and 2 in

the education authority schools has been rising, and that is partly -- in fact mainly reflecting a change in the character of our society. We live in a more -- what some people have called a more middle class society. The proportion of families who are in fairly comfortable circumstances, whose parents work in a professional job or a managerial job is in general higher now than it was even in the 1970s and even more compared with earlier than that. So that is the major explanation of that there. The percentage rising in the education authority schools, but it is interesting that it did not lead to any change in such percentages in the independent schools. That remained pretty stably high at 80 plus per cent. That is that table.

Q. And is the same true in table 8?

A. Table 8 just reflects the same kind of thing. Although it is interesting of course that the percentages at the top half of the table there are lower. Now, at that time, if we think what do we mean -- why the threshold of 17 or older? Let's go back again to remember what these surveys were; they were questionnaires to young people about their circumstances. So it wouldn't -- and we -- it was -- the young people responding to the surveys were reassured that their replies were anonymous. So what could not be -- it would not be

reasonable to ask them to go away and ask their parents for example the specific subjects of the degree that they held from a university or something like that, because that would immediately break that. Of course many of the young people might have chosen to do so but they couldn't -- the rubric of the questionnaire couldn't reasonably have included requiring them to talk to their parents. And that is why the question was always in the simplest possible form. I have showed it as 17 but it basically was, separately from mother and father, did your mother or father leave at 15 or younger, 16 and 17 or older? But having said that, 17 or older for the generation of parents represented here is a reasonable approximation to having entered either university or directly into a profession at the time when it was possible to go into certain professions, such as accountancy, directly from secondary school. So if you think, for example, about a young person who was aged 16 in 1976, so that person would have been born in 1960, so roughly speaking their parents would have been themselves born in the 1920s and 1930s, and if you go back and look and see from information about what these people, people born in the 1920s and 1930s did, you find that almost everyone who stayed on to age 17 or older, they would in fact go on to enter a profession --

professional training or to enter university in order to become, for example, a lawyer or a teacher.

So the 17 year or older thing may look a bit crude but it is actually not too bad as a surrogate for saying: these are parents who had a professional education, whether directly through apprenticeship, or indirectly through university and training.

LADY SMITH: If you are looking at that cohort of parents, staying on at school to the age of 17 or older would have been very unusual, given the statutory school leaving age?

A. Yes, that is right. It was very unusual. It was about 12%. From a survey of people born in 1936, only about 12% stayed on to that age, and about two-thirds of them went to university and about the other third went into professional training, such as accountancy training.

LADY SMITH: And it looks like you are targeting a group of parents who, if they even stayed on to age 15, were staying at school longer than the school leaving age?

A. Some of them. That is true, absolutely. Some of them --

LADY SMITH: Perhaps 14 until the date it changed --

A. 1947, that is right.

LADY SMITH: It would catch the people for whom the school leaving age was 14.

A. Yes, indeed. Absolutely. School leaving age was the age, as you say, to 15 in 1947. So some of these parents could have left school at age 14 in fact as well.

So in some ways this table is just telling us something similar to table 7. But I think there is more than that, because all the research on why we have educational inequality in society tells us things about the importance of parents in children's education, and well-educated parents tend to produce higher-attaining young people. And the psychologists now have given us enormous insight into why that is the case. The biggest thing above all -- this is not directly relevant to here because it is about young years, preschool and early primary -- is the amount of oral verbal interaction there is between the parent and the child, and especially the vocabulary. The richness of the vocabulary from a household in which the parents themselves have a lot of education tends to be much greater than in a household in which the parents have had minimal education. Now, these are tendencies. These are statistical descriptions. There are, of course, exceptions. There are well-educated -- sorry, there are self-educated parents who have not been -- who left school at 15 but nevertheless have read very widely

and they pass that advantage on to their children. But, broadly speaking, the parent who has stayed on beyond the minimum leaving age has more vocabulary and passes that greater richness of vocabulary on to the child. So that is the separate reason why table 8 is different from table 7. It is not just about social status and it is not just about using education to get into a well-paid profession, it is also about the educational environment in which a child grows up.

Q. That might lead us neatly on to table 10, which is parental involvement. Table 9 is looking at housing tenure which obviously is --

A. That is right --

Q. (Inaudible due to overspeaking) perhaps tied houses or postings abroad?

A. Yes, we just simply don't know. That is right. It seems plausible, but that is speculation.

Q. Table 10 looks at parental involvement, which is what we have just been talking about, in terms of, for example (inaudible) and language. We see therefore obviously, because boarding schools, I suppose as one might expect, at one level there are -- checking homework, for example, is down because they are boarding --

A. That is right.

Q. -- and not at home?

A. Yes.
Q. But then requiring chores seems to be consistently high. Is there a distinction between -- these are questions which pupils were answering as if they were at home --
A. Yes.
Q. -- rather than --
A. Yes.
Q. -- they were boarding?
A. I think that must be -- I too was somewhat puzzled looking at the data reported here, but it must be that. There are two things to remember. One is that, keep emphasising here, the first line of each of these tables is about pupils at boarding schools, not about boarders. I explain in the preamble that I couldn't look separately at boarders because that would really have risked identifying individuals. When you are talking about a small sector, and what I remember, it showed earlier on that about 27% of the children at the boarding schools were not boarders, and that is -- most boarding schools have non-boarders present. But if you then have 27% of even a number like this, 66, we are talking right down there at about 15 or 16 people, you really are beginning to risk identifying individuals and that is something that is absolutely not consistent with the ethical grounds on which these are done. So

I am talking about boarding schools. So some pupils in that row are, of course, not themselves boarders. But that still doesn't explain the chores thing and I suspect that pupils were just saying "Why on earth am I being asked this question anyway? It must be a question about when I am at home not when I'm at school, because of course I can't be doing chores for my parent when I am living away from home." So I suspect it is just a common sense response then that young people exercised.

Q. We may get it slightly better if we move on to the next chapters, which is questions about teachers.

A. Yes, that is right.

Q. So if we look at table 11, which is "teachers helping with personal problems".

A. Yes.

Q. Again one sees, just looking broadly, that there is greater involvement of teachers at boarding independent schools --

A. That is right.

Q. -- than the other two sectors here that you consider?

A. Yes, indeed, and one of the -- you kind of might expect that, I suppose. It depends what you are looking for really. Given that teachers do stand in loco parentis in the boarding schools to a much greater extent than in

the Education Authority schools or in the day schools you might suspect, I suppose you could argue, more than 36% in the 1970s helping with personal problems, because you do have to ask: where would a child have turned to for help with a personal problem at that time when they were away from home? That is a question -- I don't have an answer to that because, that wasn't asked about, but it is a question that might be asked.

On the other hand, having said that, we have to then say that things may be partly answered by the extra part of the question in the 1990s where the category of response "did not want help" was added, whereas in the 1970s it was just: "yes" or "no" did get help. It is interesting that the "yes" percentage is very similar, 34% compared to 36%, but in fact it turns out that 41% didn't want help at all. That still of course leaves 25% who didn't answer either of these, 34 plus 41 is 75%, so 25% didn't say they got help and didn't say they didn't want help. So they perhaps wanted help but didn't get it. So that is a question that -- there is a group there that perhaps weren't being served. But, nevertheless, the interesting point is that as many as four out of ten, 41%, didn't really feel they needed help with personal problems. That is despite the fact that -- and of course you can see a similar sort of

pattern, slightly higher actually, in the other two sectors. It is one of these things -- and I noticed this as a teacher at university myself, we put in place all sorts of things to help students and some students then think "I am having far too much help forced on me, I just want to get on with my work and do it", and clearly there is evidence here that around half of students perhaps just feel they want to get on with the work of the school and not needing personal help at all. Anyway, that is speculation. The point is that, if I am right in saying that there was a group of students that might have wanted personal help but didn't get it in the boarding schools, that group is greater, is higher, in -- slightly higher in the other two sectors as well. Not much. It's much the same. To be honest, it is a similar -- about a quarter, slightly more than a quarter, in the other two places of people who didn't say that they got help and didn't say that they didn't want help. So there may be a group of about a quarter of students that weren't being served particularly well, but that is no greater in the boarding schools than it was in the other two sectors.

Q. Looking at 12 and 13, which is perhaps support in a general sense, both support in being confident and choosing subjects and then, 13, helping with studies.

Again there is no great difference, but if one looks at the numbers, boarding independent schools seem to be slightly higher in terms of support that is being given?

A. Yes, that is right.

Q. Might that just, as a matter of common sense, make sense given the amount of involvement --

A. It could be.

Q. -- more than just daytime?

A. That is true. If we take a question like being confident, who is -- who is responsible for encouraging the confidence of young people? That has become quite a controversial topic of debate in the recent years, but clearly the thing is it would normally be thought of as to be at least a partnership between parents and the school. But if the young person is boarding, then you might think that a greater weight is placed on the teachers and therefore the 84% in the first column of table 12 might be what is to be expected.

On the other hand, choosing subjects is -- and remember we are talking about secondary school here, choosing subjects in secondary school is something that does require the subject expertise of the teacher. Parents can give general advice but we all know -- if you are a parent you know that there are certain things you simply can't advise a young person on because that

is not a subject that you have expertise in. That is where in a secondary school the teachers are behaving as professionals. And the same is largely true of the next table, table 13, which is helping with studies, and fortunately -- so that is a kind of core question. Fortunately that was asked, both in the 1970s and in the 1990s, and you can see that they are very high levels of reporting of support with studies, as well as in the previous table, advice with choosing subjects, very high levels of reporting support from teachers with studies in the independent schools, both kinds of independent schools, both of them slightly higher than in the education authority schools. So that suggests a perception of teachers doing the job that we would reasonably expect teachers to do, which is above all to teach children and to help them learn things and to advise them what things they should be learning.

Q. But interestingly, if we jump to table 15, which is teacher support in a more general sense, the figures differ?

A. They do differ indeed, and what is interesting there is the -- is the more -- the much more -- so if we take, for example, first of all, "getting on with others", this socialising aspect of education, to take the boarding figure there, 48%, that is to be compared with,

for example, in the 1970s, 86% reported as helping with their studies. That was from table 13. So that is 86% compared with 48%. There are two views about this of course. One view would say the reason we have got schools above all is to enable young people to learn things and there are lots of other institutions in society, including family, that helps with young people's emotional development and helps them to get on with their fellow human beings, but the only institution in society that helps young people to learn things is the school at that age and, therefore, it is perfectly appropriate that a far greater emphasis should be placed on learning things than on, for example, emotional support.

The alternative view of course is -- there are two parts of the alternative view. One is completely to reject that and say that schools are also about general human development. But the more pragmatic one might be to say, unless we pay attention to the emotional development of children, then they are not going to be able to learn things anyway. And ultimately that third point, that emotional development is a means to the end, the primary end, of learning things, is the one that probably explains why schools have become more child-friendly places over the last century, that we

talked about at the beginning of this session; that, in order to get people to learn things, it is more effective to pay attention to their emotional and social development alongside their academic development.

So I think that we can probably -- if we put again table 15 alongside table 13, we can say that, insofar as it is necessary, if a young person is going to feel that their teacher has helped them to study, as in table 13, to feel that they have been helped to study, they have to feel that the teacher has helped with the emotional aspects of study, for example, perseverance and not giving up under difficulty and things like that, then we can say that the high levels of support in table 13 probably do indicate a degree of emotional support. But insofar as emotional support is about the direct training of emotions or of the capacity to get on with other people or the direct education of things outside the academic curriculum, we can say that the level of perception of that being received is very much lower. That is table 15.

Q. Finally table 14, there is consistency broadly --

A. That is right.

Q. -- about teaching being relevant to jobs across all sectors?

A. Across all sectors and one of the -- there is

a widespread perception that schools are actually quite useful, that getting qualifications is quite useful. It is pretty pragmatic, the response from young people; to get on in life, you've got to get qualifications and, if you don't get qualifications, you are not going to be able to have a choice of jobs. And there is a perception that schools are doing that quite effectively. And that is true in the independent schools interests in the Local Authority schools.

Q. The final two tables looks -- it is under the general heading of "Schools", and table 16 is how pupils were treated by the schools. This is limited to 1976 to 1980. Three surveys, is that correct?

A. That is right.

Q. Is there any real distinction as between the three sectors?

A. No, not at all. And, again, that is really interesting I think. There are two claims that might be made. One would be perhaps claims for the superiority, especially the boarding schools, as more likely to treat the individual with respect, although there is no evidence for that. But correspondingly there is not evidence for the alternative narrative which says that boarding schools were particularly harsh places that hadn't participated in the growth of child-centred ideas that

I mentioned earlier had come to dominate the system as a whole, which might be reflected in the education authority schools. The evidence here is that all sectors were getting -- well, there is no trend over time here, but all sectors were not too bad at treating the young person with respect but there was at least a minority of young people that felt that they weren't treated with sufficient respect. So that is what I mean by the final column here, the 20% in independent schools and the 14% or 15% in the other schools. So 20% in the boarding schools saying that they felt they were treated too much as a child. And remember this was asked of people aged round about 16/17. That was a category of course in the questionnaire, but that was intended to be a category that would indicate a degree of dissatisfaction. They didn't want to be treated as a child at that age, they wanted to be treated with more respect, and about a fifth of pupils in the boarding schools felt that they weren't being treated with sufficient respect. That is a little bit higher than in the other two sectors but not enormously higher. It is certainly not a stark contrast between the sectors.

Q. Looking on then to what is described as "school ethos", which is the last decade of the last century, the questions go into rather more specific periods, and

there do we see differences?

A. There are indeed differences, although again not really differences between the two types of independent schools. Remember that this can be reflected on in the light of the table we had a conversation about earlier on which was reporting the incidence of bullying or harassment or -- these two especially. You can see that there was a feeling that the independent schools dealt quite well with that, 70 plus per cent saying that the school dealt with bullying. Of course that means that 30% didn't feel that they dealt adequately with bullying but there is no greater sense of dissatisfaction with the school in that respect in the boarding schools than there is in the education authority schools, where in fact a slightly higher percentage perhaps but not very much higher. Basically they are the same; the same level of perception of dealing with bullying is present in the boarding schools as it is in the other two sectors. So that is one thing to say.

The provision of after school activities is the striking difference in fact here. The independent schools, the boarding schools included, have much higher levels of participation in after school activities, 85%, 83%, very much less. There should be -- a little bit of

history here: there used to be a lot more after school activities in the education authority schools. There was a strike by teachers in the mid-1980s which led to the withdrawal of teachers from these activities, and it is widely regarded that that then meant that many fewer teachers re-engaged with after school activities. So much so in fact that it is usually now written into the contracts of teachers in independent schools that they must engage in after school activities and often the independent schools justify the higher salaries -- slightly higher salaries they offer as being a way for compensating for the extra time outside school that is required contractually of teachers in the independent schools. That is a separate debate, but that partly explains and helps to make plausible the claim that there are many more after school activities in independent schools. But the key thing here of course is there is not much difference between the boarding schools and the non-boarding schools. But I would take -- because both of these figures are very high, I would say that is more an indication of the extent to which the day schools, the non-boarding schools, actually do engage in after school activities, even though the children are returning home at the end of the day. It is a very high level.

The other things to be said here, the first column is in a sense a kind of -- the obverse of the question about jobs, which was from table 14. Of course life is more than just jobs, but they are really quite low levels of feeling that schools were not very good at preparing them for life. That is the way the question was phrased, as in the footnote. 75% to 80% of young people disagree with that. In other words, feel that the schools are preparing them for life in the general sort of sense and that is kind of consistent with the figures about preparation for jobs that were in table 14. Then there was a question there about vandalism, which I just put in because it's in the questionnaire. I find it slightly dismaying that there are such high levels of reported vandalism but --

Q. That is perhaps the one stark difference?

A. It is indeed. It's very stark, and I think teachers, especially headteachers, in the education authority schools would not be surprised by the 57% there. I have to say that most of it is low level vandalism. It is not like some of the awful things we have seen over the last year. It's graffiti. It's minor damage. That kind of thing. But, nevertheless, it costs money and whether that is money coming from parent fees or money coming from taxes, it is still money that could have

been spent on learning but it is spent on repairing damage.

Q. Although it may be indicative that the ethos, in a general sense, the atmosphere of the school --

A. That is right.

Q. -- might be poorer?

A. It is interesting. If we go back through all these tables, very often I have been saying there is a minority of 20% to 25% that didn't have a positive view. This is explicitly about that, but there have been many cases where I talked about for example 15% of people not feeling they had been adequately prepared for job or 15% feeling that the teachers didn't help them with their studies. There is evidence here of a minority of disaffection or at least a minority of not being enthusiastic about what was being provided. That is there throughout. But what I would say is that, almost without exception in these tables, there is no evidence that that minority of disaffection is greater in the boarding schools than it was in either the non-boarding schools or in the education authority schools. It's a fact of life, an unfortunate fact of life, but it is not any greater, according to this evidence, in the boarding schools.

Q. Is it any less?

A. It doesn't seem to be any less, although there are one or two ways in which there may be -- we pointed to a few ways in which the boarding schools had helped children to a greater extent. Let me just immediately jump to -- we looked before at "help with being confident" for example, table 12, it is very slightly higher, 84% compared with 72% in education authority schools. It is slightly higher but it is not enormously higher, no.

Q. In terms of vandalism --

A. That is right. Yes, vandalism --

Q. We can say.

A. We can, certainly. Indeed, that is true. Very much lower, yes, but not absent.

Q. I think that takes us neatly on to your conclusions on page 9, and looking purely as you do at boarding schools between 1970 and 2000 your conclusion is?

A. I think that, on the whole, pupils were quite satisfied with the experience. That, it must be emphasised, is a statistical description of a population of pupils as a whole, and statistical description of any social experience tells us nothing at all about the experience of individuals. If I say that 84% of independent school pupils felt that the school had helped them with their studies that tells us nothing about which individuals were in the 16% that didn't feel that. And it may well

be that, if somebody experienced the negative side of all of these tables, that they weren't helped in their studies, that they didn't get after school activities, that the bullying in the school was not adequately dealt with by the teachers and so on, in other words, that there were negative responses to all these things, that could be a pretty isolating experience and even more isolating in a context in which 75%, 80%, 85% of your peers felt that the experience was positive. But the conclusion nevertheless that, as schools, the boarding schools were at least as satisfactory an experience for the majority of pupils as either the non-boarding independent schools or the education authority schools.

Q. You comment about I think positive climate allowing such positivity?

A. Yes.

Q. And also of course that reflects perhaps financial backgrounds as well?

A. Yes, that is true.

Q. But ultimately you say these are all factors which you can speculate on no doubt?

A. Yes, that is true.

Q. Whatever the explanation, the survey evidence does tend to show that students who attended Scottish boarding schools in the latter part of the 20th century generally

found the experience to be satisfactory.

A. That is right.

Q. But as you have just said, the percentage who were isolated may have felt more isolated?

A. Yes. But if I may say, it shows the difference between social science, which I do, and legal investigations. Legal investigation is about individuals, social science is about populations, about generality, and that is where we, as social scientists, have to stop.

Q. And where the Inquiry perhaps for the individuals has to stop?

A. Yes, that is right.

MR BROWN: Thank you very much.

LADY SMITH: I am not aware of there being any outstanding applications for questions, but I am open to being corrected if I am wrong about that. (Pause).

Lindsay, I am not hearing either from here or from all those who are connected remotely to this evidence session that there is anything anybody wishes to raise with you. It just remains for me to thank you so much for a very clear and accessible report. Reports of this type are not always so clear and I am very grateful for yours being in the form that it is. Thank you for that. I am able to let you go.

A. Thank you, and thank you for the opportunity contribute.

(The witness withdrew)

LADY SMITH: I will rise now for about an hour and see everybody again at 12.10/12.15 pm.

(11.20 am)

(A short break)

(12.14 pm)

LADY SMITH: Now, Mr Brown.

MR BROWN: My Lady, the next witness is Helen Harrison, the head of Fettes.

LADY SMITH: Thank you.

Could we begin please by you taking the oath.

MS HELEN HARRISON (sworn)

LADY SMITH: Do sit down and make yourself comfortable. My first question I hope is an easy one. What would you like me to call you, Ms Harrison or Helen?

A. Helen.

LADY SMITH: Helen, you will see the Fettes documentation is there in a red folder ready for you, but you will also see coming up on screen the particular parts that Mr Brown wants to refer to. Any questions, don't hesitate to ask. It is important that you are as comfortable giving your evidence as possible.

So if you are ready, I will hand over to Mr Brown. Is that all right?

A. Thank you, my Lady.

LADY SMITH: Mr Brown.

Questions from MR BROWN

MR BROWN: Helen, good afternoon.

A. Good afternoon.

Q. Can I just reassure you that -- I think you have been following the Inquiry last week remotely --

A. I have.

Q. -- and you will have seen that obviously, and it is quite understandable, people have been arriving with bagfuls of papers, I think perhaps assuming they might be asked questions they would have to dig into.

A. Absolutely.

Q. Can I reassure you that this part of the Inquiry is not seeking to drill down into minute detail, it's a broad picture of the school that you represent.

You obviously have, and this is understood, before you in a red folder the responses that Fettes produced, which are known as parts A to D. Today we will be looking at material in parts A to C., which is broadly history, background of the school, policies, procedures, the background, I suppose in essence, to how the schools works. And then -- that is A and C, part B is consideration of really the subject matter of this Inquiry, and whether there is acceptance of there having been abuse. And then part D, which we will not touch on

today, looks at episodes of abuse. That is obviously for later in the year when we come to the Fettes chapter of applicant evidence, and it is after that that I would hope you would return to give further evidence. Do you follow?

A. Absolutely, thank you.

Q. Thank you very much.

Again in terms of part A to C, in terms of the questionnaire that was sent to you, to which the school responded, there is a great deal of crossover between the two, so it won't be literally going through the documents, because that would actually not be particularly helpful. Just to alert you, what I propose to do is ask on various chapters, I suppose, and I will tell you what we are doing before we start.

A. Absolutely.

Q. The one thing I would say is it is clear from your review, or the school's review, that it was prepared on the basis of reviewing pupil and staff files, going back to 1968 -- this reading from page 29 of part A, we don't have to turn to it, but it is based on -- sorry, part B -- a review of pupil and staff files going back to 1968, a review of minutes of governors' meetings going back to 1930, and interviews with former members of staff. So presumably, from your perspective, quite

a considerable exercise, speaking to people?

A. Yes, and then also going out to the Old Fettesian community, which is obviously so important, our former pupils.

Q. I am grateful to you.

Since we are on the subject of records, that is one source of interest to the Inquiry, the keeping of records, and you will have heard this last week. Obviously there is now a guideline that pupil files, for example, should be kept for five years --

A. Five years, that is right.

Q. Fettes, by the sounds of it, has pupil files going back --

A. Yes.

Q. -- 70 (overspeaking) --

A. Absolutely. We have not obviously followed through on that, those policies. They are all in place, of course we have kept everything, and not followed our new data retention policies because of the Inquiry --

Q. So you held everything because of the Inquiry?

A. Because of the Inquiry.

Q. I am grateful to you for that.

That general introduction aside, can we ask a little bit about you. You are now the head of Fettes. I think you are the first female head of Fettes?

A. I am.
Q. All your predecessors were headmasters?
A. They were, so I decided to be a "head".
Q. When did you take over as head?
A. In June 2019.
Q. Am I right in saying your background with Fettes goes much further back than that?
A. It does indeed. I joined Fettes in 1996 as a geography teacher. It was my second post.
Q. Where had you been before?
A. Clifton College in Bristol.
Q. Private sector?
A. Yes, independent boarding, coeducation. I have been in boarding -- I was not a boarder myself, but I have been in boarding all my professional career.
Q. So when you came to Fettes in 1996, who was the head then?
A. It was Malcolm Thyne, so he was head and he left in 98. So I joined in 96, so two years of Malcolm Thyne and then Malcolm Spens after that. Then Geoffrey Stanford in 2018, and then myself.
Q. Right. Shall we just get out the way Geoffrey Stanford? One understands there may have been tensions as between the direction the school was to go in in terms of boarding, is that right or --

A. It was, yes, in terms of just a different opinion of where they wanted the school to go, and therefore governors decided that it wasn't the right fit.

Q. All right. We will come back to governance --

A. Yes.

Q. -- and to who directs it in due course.

If we could put up on screen a picture of Fettes. This, my Lady, is from document FET-000000327, which is the retrospective for Fettes from 1973. The colour seems to have been lost, but obviously that, from Edinburgh terms, is the well-known spire of Fettes or the main building at Fettes. And if we go to the following page, we have an aerial shot which again shows a very grand building that is the core of Fettes surrounded by other buildings. If we move on again, keep going to the next page, please, we then have a plan of Fettes which may not be particularly visible, so if we can zoom in on some of the names of the buildings further down. Thank you very much indeed. That is ideal.

Looking to the history of Fettes, we understand I think that it was set up following a bequest from Sir William Fettes, is that right?

A. Absolutely.

Q. Who I think gave a bequest in the first half of the

19th century, which ultimately, with the money which had been grown, led to the opening of the school itself in 1870?

A. Yes.

Q. In terms of his bequest, who was he aiming education at?

A. He was aiming at the young people within Edinburgh, but he was also -- the boys -- he has a lovely thing of boys who could pay and boys who couldn't. It was set up as a boys' school. So he was aiming -- it's right from the beginning in Fettes, when we were set up, that it was for people whose -- I think you have probably got the terminology front of you, but whose parents had fallen on hard times as well as those who could pay.

Q. Children and orphans?

A. Yes.

Q. So it was philanthropic?

A. Yes, very much so, and it has been an important part of who we are.

Q. Initially should we understand that there are scholars who presumably --

A. Now it is totally separate, because scholarship is tested out, and we do have scholars, we have academic scholars, all-round scholarships, and they are hugely contested for, but that is not linked at all to bursary applications. Those are done on a totally separate

measure.

Q. So the school remains, I think -- as with all the boarding schools we are interested in, they are not for profit?

A. No, absolutely, the charity is not for profit, and ensuring we have a high percentage of means-tested bursary applicants is very, very important to who we are.

Q. Yes. And that is one of the requirements of remaining a charity?

A. Yes, absolutely. And so OSCR -- we were regulated by the charity regulator, OSCR, and have passed their test, and we have annual submissions to OSCR to make sure that we continue to do that. It is something that is in who we are, but it is very important that that remains so.

Q. When the school started I think the numbers were inevitably very low?

A. Yes.

Q. We are talking about the region of perhaps 50?

A. 53. It's our 150th year, so we have been telling everybody about the start so it is in our minds.

Q. So presumably --

A. 53.

Q. Yes. And now?

A. Now we are much higher than that. We are up to 780, if

you are taking the prep school and the senior school, and the senior school 583.

Q. We talked momentarily --

A. About boarding.

Q. What is the proportion of boarding and day?

A. In the senior school, so that is 13 to 18, we are 75% boarding, 25% day. It changes a bit in the different year groups as you go up. By the sixth form, we are 85% boarding.

Q. Has the number of -- what about junior school?

A. Junior school is right the other way around, in terms of it is probably 20% boarding, 80% day now. The boarding has actually grown slightly this last year, but it is a flourishing school that has a higher percentage of day than boarding.

LADY SMITH: What is the age range for the junior school now?

A. It's now 7 to 13.

MR BROWN: Has that gone down in terms of --

A. Yes, it went down during -- yes, it started younger, but in terms of percentage of boarding, very -- very low numbers, and none at the moment in the lowest year.

Q. In terms of trends of boarding, is there a trend away from boarding overall?

A. It is a very competitive market in terms of -- we have

actually gone up in the senior school for boarding, which is exciting and we are -- it's a really important thing that we encourage people to board. Definitely junior boarding has been something that has been going down nationally.

Q. You said twice it is a competitive market?

A. Yes, because there is a reduction in the number of boarders.

Q. So when you say "competitive market", in the context of Edinburgh the number --

A. Yes.

Q. -- boarding schools --

A. Yes.

Q. -- competition. Put it at its bluntest, is the pool that you are all fishing from, and this is talking I suppose Scotland-wide, so all boarding schools, is the pool is getting smaller?

A. That would be UK-wide as well in terms of the number of boarders getting smaller. I think important probably in the context is that we don't follow SQA exams, Scottish Qualification Authority, I know you were talking about language, so we follow the A level and International Baccalaureate. And that might link into some questions about recruitment later on, because we are examining -- we're using different exam boards, so therefore our

competition is UK more than Scotland.

Q. Yes. I think you're one of three schools in Scotland that does International Baccalaureate?

A. Yes.

Q. In that regard -- and thank you for the trigger -- one thing that was raised over the weekend following the evidence of the GTCS is on Friday figures were given by the GTCS of an apparent increase in the numbers of unregistered teachers within the boarding sector. Should we understand that you don't agree with the figures that were given?

A. I don't, no, and I have been in consultation with GTCS to make it very clear that I believe those were inaccurate.

Q. All right.

A. We have one unregistered teacher who will be registered by June. COVID and maternity leave have meant that getting the extra teaching qualification she needs to be GTCS-registered has taken a bit longer. We do not employ anybody in a teaching profession -- a teaching post, sorry, who is not eligible for GTCS registration.

Q. I think you are not the only school that --

A. No, there were quite a lot of people contacting saying the numbers are not -- were not correct.

Q. Thank you. So by 1 June, which is the change of

(overspeaking) --

A. Yes, we will be --

Q. -- you will be fully compliant --

A. Absolutely. If there is a problem, we will ring the GTCS and they will work with us. I know for that one member of staff they have been very good, in this very difficult time, the GTCS have been very good at helping us with registration.

Q. The school is now fully coeducational?

A. Yes.

Q. And I think coeducation began in the 80s with the sixth form, is that right? Or the 70s, rather?

A. Yes, we are -- it is 50 years of girls coming, but the girls were connected to the boys' houses to start off with in the sixth form, but now we have four girls' houses, senior girls' houses, and four boys' houses, so we're fully coeducational.

Q. In terms of the make-up of your pupils, we have heard again last week about the impact of foreign students. What proportion of the Fettes base is not from either Scotland, UK, or more broadly ...

A. We say 25% of our students live overseas, but of that 10% are foreign nationals. So 15% would be expat families who live overseas and a boarder's coming back, and then 10% foreign national. We have only 40

different nationalities of that 10%, so it's a good old mix.

Q. And since we are on this subject again, you heard last week the issue of speaking, giving information?

A. Yes, absolutely.

Q. Is that a problem from your perspective? How many are non-native English?

A. In the course of my time at Fettes, the number of non-native English or in terms of competency of English has gone down. We need people to have a standard of English to be able to access our curriculum, so therefore we are very careful to make sure the entrance process ensures that English -- the level of ability in English is to a level that can access GCSE, A level and International Baccalaureate.

Q. So wider issues of students understanding guidance, and so forth, should not be an issue because that would --

A. No, there wouldn't be an issue. I think what has been interesting, and culturally there may be an issue of inspectors finding out in different -- and using different practices to make sure that they -- for example, the use of anonymous questionnaires can help with every teenager, but also definitely in a culture that doesn't tend to -- that doesn't feel comfortable, necessarily, about giving an opinion or ...

Q. You touched about accommodation and now being fully coeducational, you said four boys' and four girls' houses. Am I right in saying that in terms of development, essentially the four boys' houses, which are all named after the original trustees, is that right?

A. Or estates of Sir William Fettes.

Q. Right. They are all -- three of them are creations from the 19th century?

A. Yes.

Q. And one from the 1920s, and then the remaining four, that's Carrington, Glencorse, Kimmerghame and Moredun houses, and then you have Arniston, College East, College West and Dalmeny, which are girls' houses, is that right?

A. Yes.

Q. Is there a mixed boys and girls?

A. In the -- it is not quite on your map, it is just off the top of the screen at the moment, is the upper six boarding house. In fact I don't ...

Q. Remember this is 1973.

A. Sorry, it is not there in 1973. Just between the science -- where the tennis court is on the east side -- yes, exactly there, is Craigleith House, which is our upper sixth boarding house. It is coeducational, so

that is every single upper sixth, last year at school, comes together. There is a boys' wing and a girls' wing, but they live in this house together for their last year with us. As a stepping stone to university it works incredibly well, and they get a little bit more independence all within school rules.

LADY SMITH: That must be quite an old plan.

A. Yes, it is.

LADY SMITH: Because it is showing, for example, the golf course which I don't think Fettes has anymore.

A. No.

LADY SMITH: That may be where there are modern buildings, houses?

A. Yes, and then we go -- modern buildings there, and then we do have some more playing fields up where -- yes, Malcolm House is now called the prep school as well, so up on Young's Field there. But you are absolutely right, both to the right and left of that path there are modern buildings.

MR BROWN: As I think I indicated, my Lady, this is from the 1973 retrospective.

LADY SMITH: It must be, yes.

MR BROWN: There are updated maps but (inaudible due to audio interference) focus.

Looking at the history though, obviously the school

opens in 1870 and there is accommodation really from the outset.

A. Yes, that is in the -- where College East and College West are now, that is called School House, so the main, amazing Bryce Building you saw in the photographs that people know, so that was where the original boarders were.

Q. Indeed. Obviously it was set up as a school. So again, following the evidence last week, you understand that it is really only in the last perhaps 25 years that the focus in terms of regulation on welfare has come to prominence. As part of that, the real focus was on education, albeit in inspections there is passing reference to welfare in other ways.

What was the thought process, if you can, when the school was set up -- presumably teachers at that stage would be expected to be able to teach. What thought was given to looking after the pupils?

A. Because it is our 150th year, I have been doing quite a few assemblies through video and stream, it has been a very interesting research into our history, and we have actually Dr Potts, who was our first headmaster, writing about the importance of nurturing the individual, and there is quite a significant part of how he wanted his school to be set up with that at the

heart.

Definitely as you go through the research you can see it moves to -- exactly as you say in terms of inspection, it moves to talk of academics, but there is still some mention of making sure that we "nurture" and "flourish". These words that are so important us to now have been there. I would absolutely agree it is far more implicit, and after, round about, as the evidence was last week, the late 1990s, was far more explicit.

When I joined there seems to be a real -- nothing to do with myself joining, but to do with the time I joined, there seems to be pretty much of a change in emphasis.

Q. Having joined in 96 --

A. Yes.

Q. -- were you aware of -- and perhaps this is going back to your experience in Bristol -- was the focus, even in your earlier career at Bristol, more on education rather than welfare, or was that something --

A. It is very -- no, I think I would say no, because that is why I went into boarding, because I -- because of the whole. And therefore I think -- but I don't think it was written down as much. I was a geography teacher, but I really wanted to be doing the extra requirements of being in boarding. That was a very important part of

joining the sector.

Q. From your own personal experience then, what experience did you have that would make you suitable, for example, to be a housemistress?

A. Certainly not when I joined, in terms of it's something that gets -- you have to have an experience in doing the tutoring. I think it is very important that we definitely induct people properly. And I have been in both schools as I have been -- it has got far more detailed in training, and that training includes things like how you conduct a tutorial. We must make sure that if we are putting an emphasis on one-to-one conversations that people understand how they undertake those.

Q. That is the tutors; I am thinking more of accommodation and looking after children who are boarders.

A. Sorry, a tutor -- I don't know if this is an appropriate time, and please tell me, but a tutor from a boarding terminology is a very -- it is the key pastoral role in there. So every single academic member of staff is a tutor, and you have -- you go to a duty night in a boarding house, in the way that we run -- in both the schools I have been in, definitely the way they were run, and I would say this is the definition of full boarding in its ethos. Every single member of staff who

is employed full-time, academic member of staff, does a duty night in a house. So every single member of staff needs to know how to look after people pastorally. From that, you will definitely find there are people that love that side, and they will be the ones who apply to be the -- what used to be called resident tutor, but are now called assistant house staff. And then from the assistant house staff, the training will go on, and from that pool you will get housemasters and housemistresses.

So there is sort of a level, but tutors, I think that is an important definition in a boarding school as to what they do.

Q. Thank you. What about in 1870?

A. I suppose -- no, I can't say. Although I suppose what was good was that it was laid down that it wasn't just academics that was important. That is all I can say about that.

Q. Matrons, speaking generally, seem to be important people in the context of boarding schools?

A. They are fundamentally important.

Q. But again, in terms of thinking, if you speak historically, how were they appointed, going back to perhaps the 20th century, do you have any idea?

A. I don't. I could speak to how we were involved in appointing matrons in mid-2002, I think we appointed --

but before that, no. And I think I wouldn't have a clear idea. I know what they did and how important they were, and from testimony the matrons were key people in the boarders' lives.

Q. Involved in 2002, presumably -- was the process much more regulated and akin to appointment of teachers --

A. Yes.

Q. -- finding they were somehow appropriately qualified?

A. That has been different with the SSSC registration, and that I think has been a huge bonus. Listening to the evidence last week, understandably whenever there is change there is nervousness, and I think the change to making sure that everybody who had residential responsibility to be part of a professional body especially was difficult for matrons, who had been doing this incredible, caring job without a qualification, and then they have said "Well, you are going to have to get qualified".

What that has done -- it was difficult, but what it has done is absolutely given accountability and legitimacy to what is a key pastoral role.

Q. Absolutely. But what I am interested in --

A. Sorry.

Q. No, no, that is fascinating. But what I am interested in is you have been present prior to the inception of

SSSC --

A. Yes.

Q. -- and the regularisation of this area. What, in your experience, and I appreciate you can't answer before that, what steps were taken to ensure by the school, because no one else was doing it, that appropriate people were appointed?

A. Interviews in terms of people who know what is needed, having really in-depth -- I think that is a very important part of what we do. We don't presume to say we work anybody harder -- it is different, it's a different community, so we need people to understand what they are coming into, and then we needed to make sure -- so a matron, if I can go back to who applied for the position that I am thinking about, it was a huge array of different people who didn't -- some had experience, but the vast majority didn't have any experience in boarding. And then you are trying to find out where is the care? Where are the people that are going to nurture, that are not going to mind somebody coming at quarter past ten at night, because that is when you are feeling a bit miserable, to have those conversations? Who is not going to send that person away? You have got to try and get in -- and then references, obviously, we need to make sure we get

written references.

Q. We will come back to appointment, particularly teachers, in a little while. But by the sounds of it, in 2002, with the best will in the world, you were applying common sense and your own knowledge?

A. Absolutely.

Q. There was no regularity --

A. No, not at all.

Q. It would depend on who was doing the interviewing --

A. But knowing it was a key -- you are absolutely right. But knowing it is a key appointment, the care that's taken into that interviewing was huge because this was going to make a difference to your house.

Q. Prior to that, though, and I think we may hear some evidence of this later on in the applicant phase, for example, it was assumed with the junior school, going back to the 1970s, by way of example, that headmasters' wives would play a role. Does that make sense of your knowledge of --

A. Yes.

Q. -- the way the schools operated?

A. Yes, it did, and does, yes.

Q. We also may hear at that period, as well as boarding houses, the four boys' ones at that stage, and then the junior school, that pupils were staying with teachers --

A. Yes.
Q. -- in their lodgings, which were part -- or they were being farmed out, and I don't use the word pejoratively, to local families?
A. To host families, yes.
Q. When did that stop?
A. I am so sorry, I don't -- certainly it was absolutely not in the time that I have been part there. I would need to find out that answer for you.
Q. But you are aware that that happened --
A. Definitely.
Q. -- that students stayed with local families?
A. Yes. It was certainly happening in -- when I was at school in Edinburgh, because I knew friends who were doing that, and certainly with girls it happened from that. But I don't know when it -- I would imagine it was when the houses, the girls' houses were established. Certainly with boys it would have stopped much earlier than that, but sometimes with some girls.
Q. Is there any awareness given, 150th anniversary, of what measures, if any, were taken to assess the suitability of the families?
A. I couldn't say that. I don't know.
Q. Because obviously we have heard last week about the importance of guardians.

A. Yes.

Q. And the need to -- the onus seems to be on the school now to make sure that guardianship provisions for boarders is good. Is that fair, from your perspective?

A. There are two ways you can go with guardians, as I think was said. It can be organised through the school, or it can be that the school say it's a parental responsibility. We take the latter, however we take a huge responsibility with guardianship for all the reasons you might imagine. So therefore we do have a programme of consultation after they have been to their guardians, and our deputy head of pastoral goes to each of the agencies to check the safeguarding standards for each of the guardianships.

So we go above and beyond what we need to do, because we believe it is really, really important, and especially this last year because people have been staying with their guardians for a significant amount of time and we need to check their wellbeing.

LADY SMITH: Helen, you just mentioned agencies. What agencies?

A. These are guardian agencies, but they have to be -- we wouldn't accept anybody with a guardian who isn't Care Inspectorate-regulated. So the guardian agencies we know or do any dealings with will have gone through

the Care Inspectorate, so each of their guardians will be childminders.

LADY SMITH: Thank you.

MR BROWN: You talked earlier about competition. Obviously the world is now much more regulated, so there is independent checking, it would seem, of everything. We will come on to that. But given the competition, is school image very important?

A. Yes, but only because I want to be leading a place that children have a fantastic time in. I want Fettes to be talked about in all the right ways because people are having a happy education. That is the most important thing.

Q. That is obviously speaking from you as the head?

A. Completely and genuinely. I think we all know that education is a really hot -- people discuss schools, don't they? It's just what it is. And I want, when our school, my school is discussed, it to be one of praise. That would be inevitable, I think.

Q. I think it is fair to say that in relation to the Child Abuse Inquiry's investigations, Fettes has been proactive in acknowledging -- we will come on to this -- and has been engaging with the student alumni?

A. You have to -- we have to be open and honest with what has happened. It matters to us hugely. I can't tell

you how reading some of the testimony that has come in has affected me. Because this is a place that matters to me, and, therefore, when we do say sorry, we are saying sorry so -- we mean it, absolutely. The Fettes of today means it; that anybody who has suffered abuse, we are very sorry for that. And that openness to learn, and it's what -- I hope I am echoing in the opening submission, we mean it most sincerely, that we want to listen and we want to learn.

Q. As part of that learning, talking about image and the label that the school carries, you have been there for almost a quarter of a century?

A. I know. Please don't.

Q. Has the label ever been more important than the honesty you talked about?

A. I think if -- if you worry about that -- I don't worry about -- I worry about -- and I mean this genuinely, I am so proud to be the 11th head of Fettes. I am not proud of the some of the things that are going to be mentioned here at all, but I am so proud. My job is to be doing the best I can for every single student, and then the image takes care of it itself.

Q. Absolutely.

LADY SMITH: Helen, I think what Mr Brown was getting at was whether you can see there was a time that it was

regarded as enough if the perception was that Fettes was a good place, rather than Fettes had to be a good place? Do you see --

A. Yes.

LADY SMITH: I think that is what you were getting at, Mr Brown, wasn't it?

A. My Lady, I understand. It is so far away from what I understand to be --

LADY SMITH: I get that is not your approach, but you have been around Fettes for quite a long time. It may be that you have not --

A. I don't feel that in my time at Fettes. I think there was a real -- the lack of complacency in every single -- that is a real aspect of the leadership, is a lack of complacency. Maybe it is -- when you have been doing the deputy head job, you are in it. So maybe that is where my experience comes from.

LADY SMITH: But that of course only takes us back to, as you said, the mid-1990s. What about before then? Have you seen any signs of, to use a colloquialism, the school being happy to "rest on its laurels" and assuming that that is all anybody will look at and it doesn't have to look beneath its own laurels.

A. There is absolutely no doubt, because you can see it in the numbers and you can see it if you go through the

files, that there have been tough times. You can see it when you talk to Old Fettesians. They are so brave to come back and tell us things, and some come back -- our Old Fettesian events are so full and then you hear things that have happened. There have been really, really tough times.

I would say from -- I think the idea that -- resting on laurels doesn't sit well with me, as you can tell, but certainly things were not going in the way that Fettes -- any school I would want to be involved with.

LADY SMITH: Mr Brown.

MR BROWN: Thank you, my Lady.

Last question about the accommodation meantime. Again, your experience is last quarter century. The impression one could get from reading some of the applicants' accounts is that the boarding houses were little kingdoms. Is that something you understand from your own experience?

A. I think the last vestige of that would probably -- we still like the personality of a house to thrive, but it does within a very, very consistent framework now. When I joined I think there were some idiosyncrasies that would no longer be tolerated today, I think, not in anything that would be of matter to the Inquiry, but just in terms of more bravado in some houses than

others, just a bit of a house spirit maybe going in the wrong way.

Q. All right. I think some concerns may have been expressed that the house system breeds a code of silence because everything in the house is kept within the house. Is that something you recognise?

A. I don't recognise that. And I have read that, I have read the report, the BSA Fellowship report, which says that, the Delyth Lynch report. And I think if the culture is the child matters, and your safeguarding culture is that that is at the heart of everything, then these loyalties remain to the child and to safeguarding, and then things like house loyalties come after that.

That is most definitely how I have experienced life within boarding schools, I have been resident, and there has never been -- teenagers get things wrong, but there has never been a hint that we would keep anything in-house or do anything like that, that is just not the environment I have been part of at all.

Q. As deputy head for 24 years --

A. No, 12 years. It probably felt like 24 at times, but 12 years, yes.

Q. Yes, geography teacher and then --

A. Yes, in the boarding house, and then deputy head.

Q. Deputy head, would that be very focused on the

day-to-day running of the school with higher level management being left with the headmaster? Or were you at the table, if you like?

A. When I took over the role, it was day-to-day running of the school, I deputised for the headmaster, and then overall charge of pastoral care. It became very obvious that over time, as the school grew, and also as change happened in terms of regulation, that that role was too -- there were too many parts to that job description, and therefore in 2005 we created the role of head of pastoral care, so somebody became -- and we created a pastoral leadership team at that point, and that was a key change.

It had been happening and I had been doing it, but I needed help to do it, and that is how we sorted out the management structure at that time.

Q. So first head of pastoral, 2005?

A. Yes.

Q. De facto was some work being done, or was that done by you? Did you lead on this?

A. I think I have said the wrong date there, 2005. That doesn't work. It must be -- can I look in my ...

LADY SMITH: Please do.

A. Dear me, with numbers ... Because I only took over in ... It's 2015, sorry. Give me ten more years. I do

apologise.

LADY SMITH: So that was when you became --

A. I have always -- I was deputy head, but I was deputy head with a remit that had all the things I have previously said, and then I said -- I just said it is too much, partly because of Care Inspectorate -- you know, brilliant regulation, GIRFEC coming in, everything, we needed to make sure that we had somebody who was dedicated to that. So, sorry, 2015. I do apologise.

MR BROWN: Was that when you had your first child protection co-ordinator?

A. No, that happened -- there seems a real change -- before I came in 1996, there was an HMIE inspection in 95 and published in 96, so this was before my time but in my research. I think that -- I am very confident, actually, that was the first time that the care and welfare part of HMIE inspections was inspected in the way it was. And from then, there was a real significant sea change I think in terms of -- because the recommendations came in to have a child protection co-ordinator, to make sure that our child protection paperwork was all explicit rather than implicit.

You can go through the recommendations to the 1996 inspection which were put in place, and that -- there

was a housemistress at the time and she was picked up by the HMIE as being a real class act, and she contributed to a document that we passed to the Inquiry last week. And that is a really -- the first sort of self-evaluation document to make sure that safeguarding was undertaken in the professional way. It's the start of us saying, right, we need to do this in a different way, "we" being the sector, including HMIE, in there.

MR BROWN: So the school was looking at -- Fettes was responding to inspection.

A. Yes.

Q. It wasn't doing it of its own volition --

A. I think -- no, I think you are absolutely right. I think the fact that we were asked to contribute to the report showed that we had something to offer.

Q. Indeed. I think as we heard last week, it was only in 1996 that this level of inspection came in?

A. Yes.

Q. If we could move on to leadership and just set the scene. One of the reasons -- I was asking about the idea of one of the houses, which would have its own headmaster or headmistress traditionally, who would be essentially the leader of the house, is that fair?

A. Yes.

Q. With appropriate staff for that house?

A. Yes.
Q. And within the house you would have house prefects. So there is a whole structure --
A. Yes.
Q. -- which may mirror the school as a whole, is that fair?
A. Absolutely.
Q. That is why I used the (overspeaking) --
A. Yes, definitely.
Q. Is the same true of the environment at the school where the lead traditionally was taken by the headmaster and what he, prior to you, viewed as the direction of the school?
A. Yes, most definitely.
Q. I think if we look at FET -- this is one of the Delium documents, my Lady. FET.001.001.0023 at page 23 of the report.
LADY SMITH: If that is a Delium number, you may not read the additional number 23. The Delium numbers ran sequentially within the document I think.
MR BROWN: If I can just cut through this by reading it, my Lady. Question vii, or vi:
"When and why did any changes in the culture of the organisation come about?"
This is under culture, past culture:
"The culture of the boarding environment evolved

through time; triggers included the abolition of corporal punishment as a standard form of discipline, abolition of fagging and the introduction of co-education."

Then vii:

"Were any changes in culture driven by internal influences, incidents, experience or events with the organisation, or any of the establishments run by the organisation?

"Yes; for example, a change of Headmaster would have led to some change in culture."

Again from your experience, no doubt you bring your own impact to the school's culture but is that something you have seen, having worked with a number of headmasters, that there has been a change of direction because of --

A. Yes, I think that is why it's important that prospective parents meet the head. I think the head has a strong influence on a school.

Q. He or she will set the tone?

A. Definitely.

Q. Yes. He or she may set the tone in terms of the openness we are talking about --

A. Absolutely.

Q. -- and the willingness to learn. It really depended

very much, looking back, on the character of the individual?

A. Yes, I think that is -- through our submission you see that we absolutely come to that conclusion, that the way the school was led at times very much had an impact on the experience.

Q. Was that something, with hindsight, that was on occasion less than ideal?

A. Definitely.

MR BROWN: That might be a point to stop, my Lady.

LADY SMITH: Helen, we will break now for the lunch break, if that is convenient for you, and I will sit again at 2 o'clock. Thank you.

(1.00 pm)

(The short adjournment)

(2.00 pm)

LADY SMITH: Good afternoon. Helen, are you ready to carry on now?

A. Absolutely.

LADY SMITH: Thank you. Mr Brown.

MR BROWN: My Lady, thank you.

We were talking about the importance of -- perhaps more so in the past, the importance of the character of the headmaster, because that could determine policy, for example. Again, just as a broad proposition, would

you accept that once upon a time, how far back we go may depend on which institution and the governance style, really headmasters set the tone across the entire school. Governors existed to worry about the finances, the head did everything else.

A. Yes, I think that is -- and certainly looking at the -- although the governing board set up at Fettes, they had lots of different interests came from there, but yes, I think you are absolutely right.

Q. We will come back to governance and how that has changed because that is important. But a head's outlook could determine, for example, corporal punishment --

A. Yes.

Q. -- and whether it was seen as a good or bad thing?

A. Definitely, and would be taken -- although in the review of the governors' minutes there is definitely conversation that has happened. So it is certainly not something that is taken just by the head, there has been a dialogue between the governing board and the head --

Q. In the context of that particular time --

A. Yes.

Q. -- what was deemed acceptable or normal?

A. Absolutely.

Q. Although some might have to be said, looking back, to be perhaps less than ideal, taking corporal punishment to

levels that weren't -- wouldn't be acceptable now?
A. Yes, it never would have been acceptable.
Q. In terms of that less than ideal -- sorry, I am not trying to be harsh, because we will come on to your response to part B in due course -- would you accept that sometimes schools are slow to acknowledge bullying?
A. In clarifying -- could you clarify in terms of what -- is this linked to our submission? Linked to the culpability of who is responsibility?
Q. Whether or not, for example, there were systemic failures. There is a change of emphasis which we will come to. Is that reflective of perhaps the response being less than ideal to face up to things?
A. I think at that point in time, and that is very recent, just thinking, right, there was an individual who got it wrong, without taking a step back and saying -- and it doesn't take much of a step back, I absolutely appreciate that, and that is what is going to happen now, except we're saying how did that individual -- how was that individual allowed to get it wrong? And that is where the systemic failure comes in. And that is why we wanted to be clear about that.
Q. We will come back to clarity of that when we look at your part B response. But would you accept what I am suggesting, that sometimes it can take a little while to

recognise, and to that extent the recognition is less than ideal because it is not as fast as it might have been?

A. Yes, absolutely, and I am sorry that that was the case.

Q. Yes. We will come back to that. Again, that is perhaps down to the individual headmaster, the board's response, it is a variable number of factors?

A. Over time, the responses of former pupils. It is exactly as you say, a number of factors.

Q. All right. One of the other factors, and just to touch briefly on this, talked about corporal punishment, the other thing that a headmaster could I suppose have impact on was allowing pupil discipline or stopping it?

A. Yes.

Q. Again, was that a factor that you are aware of was an element that impacted on Fettes?

A. Yes. And I think that does also link in with the point you said about in terms of how much autonomy each house is given, and going back on the research you can clearly see some houses were run in different ways to others, that might have had an impact. And it surely has to be the culture, the standards and ethos of the school that mean how much discipline needs to happen throughout the school.

Q. From what you said about individual houses, perhaps one

differing from another is a different style. Do you agree what was lacking was an overall monitoring of what was going on?

A. Exactly that, absolutely, and you can't help but look at the records and say that has to be the case.

Q. What is the current state of play with pupil discipline? What can pupils do to one another formally?

A. Can I just say it's so different than anything you would have read, quite rightly and quite understandably. We do have house prefects and school prefects, but in terms of sanctions and punishments, absolutely nothing like has been asked, and all linked with a member of staff. So if somebody is persistently late, for example, to a check or an area, then that person will go to -- the prefect would say to the member of staff "This person has been late", and then a punishment will be decided upon. "Punishment" -- it's not even the words we use any more, "sanction", to try and put the point across, but not at all prefects punishing in the way that I have read as happened in the past.

Q. We have heard, for example, in your response, fagging was stopped by a particular headmaster. But equally applicants, for example, are saying you may have changed the name, but it became lines equivalent, which was effectively the same thing?

A. Yes, absolutely. And looking at -- there was obviously a big review you will have seen in 93 of punishment and I think it still had some way to go. It was a very good review and lots of change happened, but it still took some time to bed in, and you can see that through the applicants' statements.

Q. Obviously you are, I suppose, a new generation of head?

A. I hope so.

Q. You are the current generation of head, you agree with that. But what training did you receive to be a head?

A. That is a very, very good question, and I suppose it's my experience rather than training. I actually feel the training I have got to talk about what we are talking about is long and detailed. I have been -- my role as deputy head was pastoral to its core, so therefore I have been on lots of child protection courses, I have been on lots of safeguarding courses. I have also done a preparing for senior leadership course, which includes safeguarding, and also leadership and management.

I think the more strategic -- I have got some training still to go. I did take over in June 2019, and it has been an interesting time since then, and I have been very much running a school during COVID times, so I think there is more training that needs to happen, definitely. I think training has to be ongoing.

Q. Yes. You talked at the beginning of that answer about your experience, presumably learning on the job, but also, as a deputy head, the raft of training you have just mentioned. Is leadership -- we know that leadership is now a factor in inspections both by the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland, so it's a factor they are looking at. Is that something that can be taught, do you think? Or to put it another way, what is required for good leadership from your perspective?

A. You have to believe in it, you have to live it, especially when we are talking about this, and that is where I think my experience -- in terms of that is what I have done. If we are talking about that culture, it has to come from me, that everyone has to notice things. I start staff meetings all the time saying "Are we noticing? Are you passing things on?" And that has to come from my emphasis that I am giving it, and that is the leadership, so it has to pervade. I have to communicate very well and I have to tell my staff and also students what is important.

LADY SMITH: Are you really saying you have to be authentic?

A. Yes, I believe so. I have to do quite a lot else on the practical side, but if it doesn't ring true, we are asking our staff to do a lot, and I think that came through in the report. When I am asking somebody to

become a member of staff, there is a lot there. If they don't believe me when I say that this is at the core of what we do, then we are not going to get anywhere.

LADY SMITH: If I use the expression "growth mindset" to you, would that mean anything?

A. Absolutely, it would.

LADY SMITH: What does it mean to you?

A. It means you have to keep learning, keep growing, you have got to be open. It's exactly that, you have to be open. And certainly if you spoke to any secondary student, they would know about growth mindset. They should at least know about it now.

LADY SMITH: Mr Brown.

MR BROWN: Is the flipside of that, because that is all looking at what you do, is the flipside of that in contrast to the periods we have been talking about, particularly when potentially things were less than ideal, but there is now also a great deal of monitoring of leadership by others?

A. Yes, and I think this is where the Inquiry has been -- because you can't help but go through things and reflect on your own -- what is going on. So it's sort of who am I accountable to? How does it work if I decide to do ... And that is -- and there is lots, and I could tell you those. That wasn't necessarily the case in the

past. It wasn't that people weren't there, but there was a trust placed in the leadership.

Q. It was assumed they would do the right thing?

A. Exactly. And there is trust now, but it is backed up with real careful governance.

Q. That is the point, as well as the inspections, which are looking at the way leadership is handled, whether it works or not, and there could be adverse reports I suppose about leadership?

A. Yes.

Q. But more to the point, and this is what we are coming on to next, governance. The board of governors, presumably, as compared with the past, is not simply looking at how are we functioning as an entity, they are looking at welfare and whether it is working and whether the leadership is good?

A. Absolutely, and I think it is more effective now. I think the governors of the days that we are talking about would say it is important to them, but obviously it didn't have impact that it needed to have. I have no doubt that the good people sitting around a governing board felt that they were, but it is very obvious that there was not enough overseeing.

Q. Have you seen that transition in your experience looking at Fettes over 25 years?

A. Yes, definitely. It is difficult. In all the ... in terms of the leadership and what we are discussing as well, it has been -- it was there already. I wouldn't have joined anywhere that didn't have -- that I didn't believe in, I wouldn't. But definitely there has been a progression, as there should be.

Q. Yes. Although I suppose one might ask, how would you know?

A. I suppose in terms of, you know, because I have -- I wasn't on the governing board, but when I was deputy head I went on the governing board, and then things like the safeguarding committee, safeguarding governors, the external audit, now the Care Inspectorate. You have to give a list of who has come in and done your external audit as part of your inspection. It's a brilliant thing, it's great, so you have actually got to provide dates. And not that the governors have come to a governing board, but they have come and chatted on a touchline, if that is the case, or wherever. So they are actually getting in and feeling the rhythm of a school and finding out what is going on.

Q. In your experience, have governors over the last decade, I suppose, or more, become more involved, more engaged with the school than they once were?

A. Definitely. Yes, it's a big job.

Q. It is a big job. Is it taken more seriously by governors now than it once was?
A. I think that is where I really struggle, because these are people that I know really took their -- I know, but it just was a different expectation, I think that is the thing. I think there was a real pride, honour, and also done very diligently, but at the time it wasn't expected that you would do what you do now.
Q. Is it more focused now, for example, by having a governor safeguarding --
A. Yes, the safeguarding committee is superb and brilliant, and safeguarding is now a standing item on all governors' agendas, which it obviously should be and was in terms -- sorry, care and welfare has always been discussed, but it is now a standing item on the governors' agenda, and the safeguarding governor has met the child protection team, and the deputy head pastoral, before any governors' meeting and can report with real knowledge and real accountability on safeguarding at Fettes to the board.
LADY SMITH: How often are your governors' meetings?
A. Four a year, so two in the first term, and then the safeguarding governors will meet twice in the terms before -- and the safeguarding governor is -- the email is available on the website for any complaints. And

then just -- we always keep them, they are added to the person -- the reporting list that we would do.

MR BROWN: I think we see from page 27 of your response to part A, that in 2016 governors with specific responsibilities for safeguarding were appointed. Again I am not being critical, but was that, in comparison with other schools, later, do you think?

A. I wouldn't know, actually. I would hate to think it was, because we like to make sure we are doing things at the right -- and if it was, it was remiss of us. We need to be doing things at the right time.

Q. It is simply because head of pastoral care is established in 2015 and then the governors come on board a year later?

A. Yes. With GIRFEC and changes with that, there was a lot of change around that point. And then we also had a care inspection, and then we have also had -- which -- there was a Care Inspectorate report I think mentioned, safeguarding governor. And it is not because we -- we want to be doing best practice, so we see inspections as learning. It really is. If they recommend, we will do it to the nth degree.

Q. Although we would gather from inspections you are given tasks, effectively. There are issues or areas where things can be improved, and obviously they would expect

you to improve. Is that not fair too?
A. Oh definitely, but if we are not doing it right then we should.
Q. Okay. What about governor training?
A. Totally different as well in terms of -- so all governors are child protection trained, our safeguarding governors goes on external child protection training, as does the Chair. And then individual training through AGBIS, through the association for governors, is undertaken depending on what skills the governing board --
LADY SMITH: Helen, just to pick that up -- AGBIS?
A. It's the governing board association, I'm not quite sure -- The Association of Governing Bodies of ...
LADY SMITH: ... Independent Schools. Yes, because some boarding schools are not independent.
A. Very useful. It provides a lot of training.
LADY SMITH: That is a UK body?
A. Yes.
MR BROWN: We have heard about SCIS.
A. Hugely. I mean, essential, and provides -- that is really in terms of when you are talking about where -- you go on the training, you know that this is best practice, you try and -- training probably through SCIS. You hear this is best practice, you implement it, you

get inspected on it. It is that way round. And if we have missed anything on inspection then we need to know and change it.

Q. When did board training begin?

A. In terms of child protection, probably around about the same time. Certainly we didn't have safeguarding governors who were not trained.

Q. So from the last five years on?

A. Yes. Probably earlier in terms of whole, but more specific going forward. I can find out if you would like.

Q. That would be helpful, thank you.

Could I move on to another area which is recruitment.

A. Yes.

Q. I suppose carrying on with governors. Governors, would you agree, have tended to have a connection with the school, looking back, would tend to be old boys or old girls?

A. Yes, we were a bit different because of how we are set up. We have -- they're co-opted from various institutions around Edinburgh.

Q. I was going to say, Fettes has always had a fairly broad pool?

A. A really broad pool. And actually that is -- and

bringing those skills to helping run the school. So it is different in that, and that was set up in the scheme right at the beginning.

Q. So that hasn't changed, but perhaps what they are looking at has --

A. Yes, but actually (overspeaking) --

Q. -- describe it in that way?

A. Definitely.

Q. Teachers, recruitment of teachers, as you will be aware, is something that has sometimes not worked as well as it should?

A. Absolutely.

Q. Again from your experience, and you can speak beyond your experience from your reading and so forth, processes have changed over time in terms of recruitment?

A. Definitely. Far more rigorous now, say, for recruitment procedures quite rightly, and you can see why when you read some of the paperwork. It is just -- it is -- it is -- I regret it hugely.

Q. Have you had experience of, going to the English List 99, did you ever have experience of using --

A. No, I haven't had experience of using List 99 in terms of -- it would have happened to -- myself, but I haven't, you know -- and we make sure that we

follow -- every single person, and that is not just teachers, because I think it is really important in the boarding context that we are not just talking teachers. We need every single person on campus and employed by Fettes is PVG-checked.

Q. I will come on to PVG separately, if I may, because obviously in terms of recruitment, going back to the happy days of, say, the 1970s, an advert went in the newspaper, people applied, and the right chap was appointed, or so it was thought?

A. Yes. And certainly references seemed to be written, but what is written on them may not be the most helpful or the most honest or -- or they are honest and you cannot quite believe employment still happens after that.

Q. Yes. Or they haven't been followed through on as perhaps they might be now?

A. Yes, definitely.

Q. Because nowadays, in terms of you wanting to employ a teacher, briefly what is the process that you would expect to take place?

A. So advert in -- and it's broader now, which is great for equality and diversity, but you would get adverts in, you would have a look, you would make sure that in the recruitment it has to say GTCS eligible, if we are talking about a teacher in this context. And then we

do -- we always do face-to-face, or Zoom in COVID times, interviews, and we would take up three references. They need to be -- we would be getting written references and following up those. If there is anything on there that concerns us, then following them up of course.

Q. The need to speak to the last employer, for example.

A. Yes.

Q. Is that something that as a matter of routine you would do, as in physically talk to?

A. We haven't done that as a matter of routine, but we make sure we get a reference from the last employer. We don't allow any gaps in work on the CV.

Q. Yes, any gap in work history --

A. We would dig into it and make sure we understand that. And we won't employ somebody if we don't have a reference from the last employer.

Q. In terms of PVG scheme, we have heard now obviously that to get registration you have to be on the PVG scheme. From your perspective, do you have any concerns about the PVG?

A. Yes, yes, because we have just been -- we felt, and I felt as head of Fettes, that the PVG scheme, if something happened -- it was a dynamic process, that is the easiest way to say it. We have now been told best practice is to do the same process again every three

years, and that starts you thinking, well, why do we need to do that if it is a dynamic process? And I suppose -- sorry, in the discussion about this, you start to question: are we getting the right amount of information from PVG? Also, within a boarding context, we found it very difficult to PVG-check people who we deem it essential to do that for their and the community's behalf, which are spouses of house staff. And that is assistant house staff, matrons, anybody who is in live-in, and to do that is not easy because they would say they are not employed by you in the way that they would suggest that you would be PVG, so you have to battle a bit for that.

Q. Does that battle result in PVG scheme --

A. Yes. We wouldn't -- we keep going. But it is not -- because we are a sector that is possibly not understood at that level, it is not automatic. When we say this person's spouse. How are they employed? Well, they are not, because they live -- you can imagine the conversation, and we have to have those conversations, and it would be very good -- but we won't -- we will keep going, because we will not have anybody in that position not PVG-checked.

Q. You talked about checking every three years. Have you ever been notified positively about anyone?

A. We have on the operational side, not on the teaching side.
Q. Right. Is that the sort of thing that you would like to have on the teaching side as well?
A. Yes, I think in terms of -- I am sure -- with the system I am sure, and I am sure if PVG were here they would say if we needed to be we would have been. It's just that dynamic -- there is a question mark over the dynamic nature of this process if you have to redo it as a good practice.
Q. We heard on Friday from SCIS, who obviously represent the boarding schools and seem to be very positively engaged. Is this something that you as a school have taken up with SCIS or have spoken with other schools about?
A. We have definitely spoken with other schools about it. I would have to say probably more intensely the six boarding schools that are talking through these matters with the Inquiry.
Q. What about you notifying? If you come across a problem, who do you notify?
A. Lots of people.
Q. We will come back to that. But thinking in terms of PVG scheme?
A. PVG scheme. In the child protection guidance it is very

clear. If we have a concern we should notify, and we have done that.

Q. Who do you notify?

A. Disclosure Scotland.

Q. So you go direct to --

A. But we had gone via -- it was one that we deemed should go to the police, and then, to be very honest with you, we waited for the police to get back to us before going to Disclosure Scotland, and I think we should have probably just gone straight to Disclosure Scotland, but it was unclear at the time because an investigation was ongoing.

Q. That is what I wondered, whether you would go to the police first, but that would depend on --

A. Definitely. It depends on -- in this case it was deemed -- the person was suspended without prejudice and we went to the police, and everything took longer than I would -- if it is of use to the Inquiry, it is quite a good little case study because I -- which I could put together for you, just to show -- we tried to do everything right and it just took a long time.

LADY SMITH: I would be interested in that, thank you.

MR BROWN: Yes. That is obviously talking about recruitment into the school. The Flipside of recruitment obviously, again there are examples of it going less than well, is

where schools have been frankly not remotely candid about what they are passing on. What provisions or policies are in place at Fettes in terms of providing references?

A. That is a good question. I -- you might sense that I would always write an honest reference but I -- and I have done and I would do. I am not sure I am following policy on that, other than just process. I would never not.

Q. Again from the work the Inquiry has carried out, in some schools obviously teachers have left with compromise agreements?

A. Yes.

Q. Is that something that is still used --

A. Yes.

Q. -- which provide --

A. Yes. I have -- yes, I have not been involved in that but I know that has happened during my time at Fettes. In terms of what is done on the reference, it is very clear that it is a compromise agreement, and I would hope -- and if I received that as a head, I would be picking up the phone to that employer, I wouldn't be accepting that as -- they are not full -- they are not -- they are very short.

Q. It tends to be simply a factual: that they taught at the

school from A to B?

A. References from Fettes would never be like that, unless --

Q. It was a compromise agreement?

A. Yes.

Q. We talked -- or you talked about reporting and notification. This, as you will have gathered watching last week, is an area where certainly it would appear a decade ago it wasn't absolutely clear for headmasters what they should do, who they should report to. And as I would understand it from last week's evidence, the Care Inspectorate are of the view that they have to be informed within 24 hours, and that the Registrar and Education Scotland should be, but there is no actual requirement to do so?

A. There is now in the new child protection guidelines, but it has been a process, and I suppose I have been part of that process because I have been the one reporting, and the list of people to report to has got longer over the time.

Q. Again is that a process that is now formalised within Fettes?

A. Yes.

Q. That if something happens --

A. Absolutely.

Q. -- you can get a policy out: this is what you do, this is who you alert?
A. Yes, yes. Absolutely. It is very clear -- we are very clear who we need to inform, but it is a long list.
Q. Who else would you be informing other than Care Inspectorate, Education Scotland, Registrar (overspeaking) --
A. BSA because we are committed to their charter, SCIS because we want to make them informed, and I think you have got the others, but that can take, as you imagine -- there's quite a few, I think there is only us ...
Q. But the expectation, if you have to inform Care Inspectorate, the rest will be informed?
A. You just go through the list. Police is at the top because obviously -- and if you are not informing the police that you will be -- people will check. You may form, and I suppose this links in also with a sort of -- it is sometimes -- these are complex cases, and no matter how much training we have had or how much experience, the opportunity to ring up and get advice is hugely helpful because you want to do the right thing. We have recently employed an independent child protection consultant, and I think that has been a fantastic innovation as well, so that we can -- that

doesn't mean to say we don't do it, but we just making sure we are going the right way.

Q. Is that with a view to sort of sharpening your own policies to make sure --

A. Yes, make sure we are doing everything absolutely right because this is too important not to.

LADY SMITH: You say you have recently employed an independent child protection consultant.

A. Yes.

LADY SMITH: Does that tell me you have commissioned an independent child protection consultant to advise you on your processes?

A. Yes, it's so that we have on call -- because if you are ringing any of the people that we have just mentioned, you are immediately into a process, which is brilliant and right and absolutely -- but you don't -- sometimes you need a bit of time just to take stock and work out what you need to do because the child protection cases are complex. And it used to be, when I started, you could ring for example the police and say "Is this the right thing to be ringing you?" And they would say "No actually, that sounds --" but you can't do that anymore, because as soon as you make the phone call you are in the system and they will -- you are on -- and I don't know if -- you are starting a process, of course.

LADY SMITH: Yes.

A. It doesn't slow -- there is no hiding or anything, it is enhancing what we do, but that advisory capacity is something that I feel has almost gone from what I used to be able to -- you can still -- you ring your -- before you do a Care Inspectorate notification you might ring your Care Inspectorate inspector to just say "Right, am I doing this alright?" to make sure we are doing it in the right order.

LADY SMITH: So this child protection consultant is available on call --

A. Yes.

LADY SMITH: -- if there is an incident, or what you regard as an incident, and you want an external independent expert to advise you who you should tell, if anybody, is that it?

A. Yes, or in terms of which process -- yes.

LADY SMITH: Thank you.

A. Just advice, my Lady, because they are complex.

LADY SMITH: Thank you.

A. Also the independent -- sorry, just to -- they are an extra layer of accountability because they scrutinise -- they are on the safeguarding committee and they make sure that we are following due process.

LADY SMITH: Thank you.

MR BROWN: When did you engage them?
A. That is only from the external audit, actually, that we did in 2019. Very recent.
Q. Is that something -- do you know, was that a process recommended by SCIS, for example, or BSA, or is this just something that Fettes decided to do?
A. It was recommended through the audit as good practice by lead child protection advisers who undertook the audit.
Q. All right. Was that audit in itself recommended to all boarding schools or was this again something that was decided by Fettes to do --
A. It's part of our -- sorry, it is part of our framework for consultation. Every three years we will do a safeguarding -- full safeguarding audit of parents, guardians, staff and obviously students, and we will do that in a really detailed way. What was decided was this time we would do it -- we would get external auditors in. We just wanted to know their opinion and be tested out by them.
Q. Safeguarding, this was 2019. Does that reflect the setting up of safeguarding provisions in 2016? As we discussed earlier, was that the first audit --
A. No, we had done another one before, and we had had a Care Inspectorate review as well.
Q. Was it the Care Inspectorate review that triggered the

audit?

A. No, no, it's just what we do.

LADY SMITH: What type of person or organisation carries out a safeguarding audit?

A. We went to -- we have asked SCIS as well to get names, and I know that these are their child protection experts used for training throughout Scotland, and so SCIS. So we are very confident that they know and -- yes, it was very thorough and very -- yes, you knew you had been audited.

MR BROWN: Thank you. You have talked about the complexity or the tensions about reporting. Presumably you can't anticipate every scenario?

A. No.

Q. It has to be case-by-case?

A. Definitely.

Q. Again we heard last week about the practical difficulties of running a major boarding school, and something happens and there is an awful lot to do. Have you ever had experience of this sort of reporting process being delayed by practical issues or is it something that you now just do quickly?

A. We now just do it. I would say before the head of pastoral care, when it was -- this is one of the reasons, because there becomes a larger number of

people, and you need to do it quickly for the sake of the child, we need to make sure we are actually doing the right thing by them, but I think it is part of the reason to get a pastoral leadership team, to get a head of pastoral care, now deputy head pastoral, and making sure you have a team, and we have a child protection -- so our child protection co-ordinator has two assistants as well.

Q. So there is a team. It is not the scenario that if someone is off ill ...

A. No, no. And then also the child protection team, it is really important you have a range of people, these are current members of staff who -- this is an extra responsibility. Different genders, but then different people, because people might not want the teacher that -- you know, if the child protection co-ordinator has a specific relationship they might not want them, but then they also might, so you have to have a range of people to be able to respond.

Q. We talked last week about misconduct. What does misconduct mean to you?

A. Misconduct means going against our code of conduct. Sorry to use the same words there, but every member of staff signs a code of conduct every year, and we go through it. These again need to be dynamic documents,

they mustn't just be something that gets tick-boxed and put away, it needs to be at the forefront of people's minds, and therefore they know exactly what our code of conduct is in safeguarding, and it's detailed and it follows the guidelines. So misconduct is not following that.

Q. But are there scenarios where you may or may not report?

A. No.

Q. No.

A. No, absolutely not. This is where -- you know, you are not in a situation now to not report. It would be absolutely wrong. You need to take advice, so you make sure -- I suppose the advice really is whether to ring the police. This is the honest -- this is the difficulty. Because as soon as you ring the police, which you must do in certain -- there are some scenarios that you would immediately ring the police, but there's always going to be blurred lines, and you have somebody who says "Please don't ring the police", and you are needing to make the right judgment call, and it can be very difficult to do that.

In ringing the police, you are ringing 101. You are not ringing any child protection trained -- and this is no reflection at all on who you ring, they are great people, but you might have just had -- your child

protection team, only allow your child protection team to speak to that child. And then you have to think, right, if I am going to ring the police, what is going to come next for that child is a policeman in full uniform who has had very limited child protection training. That is where it starts to get very difficult.

Q. What about for the teacher?

A. When the teacher -- if there is any -- this is a big difference. Child says something has happened, teacher did this. You believe the child, you suspend without prejudice, and we take up our processes.

Q. What about teacher anonymity?

A. Absolutely, it is all within there. Nobody would know about it from us in terms of we could preserve the anonymity, because it is so important to do that. However, in the case study I mentioned, the police took two months to get back to us.

Q. So you err on the side of action, by the sounds of it?

A. Definitely.

Q. By the sounds of it, what we were discussing on Friday afternoon, SCIS's flowchart to simplify matters, is not really necessary?

A. I think what I would like if I was -- and I'm first of all very early in the process, I totally appreciate

that. But the idea of being able to ring a child protection -- straight to a child protection unit and the police to say "This is the issue, we would ..." We want to report, that is what we want to do, but we want to make sure it's the right thing for the child.

Q. What engagement do you have with GTCS other than --

A. Quite a lot the last weekend.

Q. Other than the weekend correcting the numbers?

A. I am a member of GTCS, obviously, I adhere to their professional standards, and I think the professional update is superb. It's a great thing. And I think we are, as a workforce, much the better for the professional update.

Q. You just talked about the list of people you notify. Does GTCS need to be on it, or is that for a stage down the line?

A. It is on it, but it depends what the -- if it is a teacher, then we would be notifying GTCS if it warranted it. But in all the cases we want to do the right thing, I suppose that is what I want to say, in terms of -- I think we over-report. We will tell everybody to make sure we don't miss anybody rather than go the other way, which I would say is very different.

Q. Is that since 2019 or since --

A. No, throughout the time I have been deputy head in terms

of ... and that linked in with things like Care Inspectorate notifications and things like that.

Q. Can we move on then to inspections, Care Inspectorate, and HMI as they once were. HMI, you have talked about -- or Care Inspectorate, you talked about phoning the inspector, and we have heard about link inspectors with HMI or Education Scotland. Is that an improvement, having that immediate contact?

A. Definitely, and I think that links in as well to that advisory. It is where we are raising standards together. There is still a -- you know, you are on your mettle, you want to make sure you do the right thing, quite rightly, but you can work together to make sure that the standards are raised.

Q. They seem to expect communication with them, and by the sounds of it, that's what you --

A. Yes, and also gaining from it.

Q. From the schools' perspective, and we come back in a sense to the importance of results, do inspections matter to Fettes?

A. Yes.

Q. You don't want a bad one --

A. Yes, they do, because they are about the child's welfare. So if you are talking about a Care Inspectorate report, it matters hugely. It is also

my professionalism. I want to be running -- especially when you're deputy head, you want to be running a school that is getting it right for the child, if I might -- that came out, but it's important.

Q. Obviously we heard last week a great deal about Getting It Right For Every Child, and the associated acronym SHANARRI, and the introduction of -- we have had a great raft of policy in the last ten years. Has the way that has been implemented caused you, as a deputy head, concerns, issues?

A. I think -- I have probably been at the sharp end sometimes of some meetings because we were trying to -- what was trying to happen was, and totally understandably, the boarding sector doesn't necessarily -- isn't known. So therefore if you are talking about SSSC and GTCS registration, then the concept of a tutor, nobody had thought about that, so suddenly we had a scooping-up -- a policy which is great, but it's scooping up and causing issues. So I might be seen sometimes to be in meetings going "You have forgotten about this" and "How does this work?" But I think in everything that has been brought in, it's all -- I think GIRFEC has done superb things. I have been very proud to go as a deputy head to conferences down south and realise what we are doing up here is very

good.

Q. Do teachers understand it, though?

A. Yes.

Q. Was there a period, a transitional period when they found it hard to understand?

A. They probably understand the relevance of it, but then when you have things -- so, for example, now all our reporting is GIRFEC-compliant, and what I mean by that is people are actually clicking on the SHANARRI wheel to say which part of the SHANARRI wheel the wellbeing concern is, on a bespoke package that we have helped to produce for the management system. So it is just part of who we are now.

Q. Does the use of language, which was discussed last week, help or hinder?

A. It was fascinating listening to that because I sort of feel as though I have been immersed in it now. I don't notice it as much. When we were calling people: students, pupils, children, service users, that felt wrong, and that is what we did for quite a long time with the Care Inspectorate. But we don't now, and I think the language has changed. Or maybe we still do.

Q. Or is it something you are just now accustomed to?

A. I would hope not, but probably, by the looks, I probably am.

Q. Was implementation of this level of policy with this particular language do you think a diversion at all? In other words, there is so much policy that you stop perhaps seeing what is going on around you because you are so focused on the policy?

A. No, because I think it is always good to have somebody looking. For every Care Inspectorate -- and when I took over as deputy head, I think you will see I was inspected a lot by the Care Inspectorate -- I say "I", the school was inspected a lot. But we gained something from each one of those.

Do I think the new framework is much better now that they have understood the sector? Yes, it has been an evolution, it absolutely has. But I don't think we should ever -- possibly it hasn't been right in the first place, but everybody, by doing this process, is trying to make safeguarding the centre the most important thing, and that has to be good, especially in the context of this Inquiry when you see inspections possibly weren't as effective as they were before.

Have I moaned a bit about some inspectors at times? Yes. Do I think the process is good and right and proper? Yes.

Q. Does it lead to a change in the dynamic between a teacher and a pupil?

A. Yes, it does. Well ... yes and no, and that is where I ... Is my dynamic between -- I started in 1990 as a teacher. Is the dynamic between me and a pupil different because of all the different policy changes? I don't think it is, because I think we would have the same dynamic in a class. However, around about that is a framework that means that that child is far better looked after now than they were when I first ... But in terms of my dynamic as a teacher, I don't think that has changed.

Q. What about younger teachers who have only ever known GIRFEC, do you see their approach in any way differing approach from yours, if you see at all?

A. Yes, I do, because I think safeguarding is central now. It is part of -- it is just there, it's part of the framework. They have to include it in their daily lives as teachers.

Q. But does that not lead to a reticence or a detachment?

A. If it does, we have got some work to do to make sure -- to understand why it is important. I think you can get bogged down in the language and you can get bogged down in the reporting -- sorry, I don't mean reporting on a big scale, I mean a tutor writing everything down. What we have to come back to is me saying to my staff "The most important thing you do is notice", and you do

that -- somebody comes into your class who is a wee bit late or isn't sitting with that person, somebody is not eating as much as they might do in the dining hall, et cetera. Loads of different things. And that is not just teachers, that is everybody. You have to notice. And if you had my staff sitting here, I would hope they would say that that is something that pervades everything we do.

Q. Is that requirement to notice driven by GIRFEC and SHANARRI, or is it driven by an acceptance that perhaps life wasn't just as rosy as we once thought it was?

A. I think it is driven by safeguarding become -- it's the key thing, which probably in my -- would always have been the case, and supported by GIRFEC and SHANARRI. I suppose I see it more positively, that I think that is the right way to do it. Not because it has been done wrong in the past, but because that is the right way to do it.

Q. You mentioned briefly SSSC?

A. Yes.

Q. That, in relation to non-teaching staff, is something you obviously, from what you said, support?

A. Yes, although the implementation of that probably was the most difficult of everything, because you had great people who were doing a written, albeit one that had

a lot of practical element to it, a written qualification to maintain their jobs, and I think that was tough, very tough for some matrons especially. However, that has given a real professional standing to the actual role, and it's such an important role I think that is a good knock-on or impact.

Q. Can I move to a very practical issue which is access to visitors. In your response, FET.001.001.0033. Sorry, Delium is not something I am obviously working with well with. I think it may be page 16. Paragraph 4.7, "Visitors". It's part C.

You will see once upon a time there were no policies as such, and presumably, with an open campus in the city centre, with hindsight, that is remarkable?

A. It is, absolutely. And now we have a gatehouse and security and ...

Q. Yes.

A. And everything. I agree.

Q. A full review, as we read question 7, was undertaken in 2011 by the police at the bursar's instigation. That wasn't because of a particular incident, it was just recognition that it wasn't ideal to allow --

A. We had had people -- there had been people on site, I don't know if that -- I am sorry, I don't know if the 2011 had instigated that request to the police. I don't

know if it was a cause and effect.

Q. You now have to check in to get on to campus?

A. Yes, quite rightly.

Q. What about within boarding houses?

A. That is really important. Every house has a button code, so you have -- there is no free access into houses, so you would have to know the code to get into houses.

Q. When did that change?

A. That has been ongoing and possibly -- button codes have been for quite a time, I would imagine in the mid -- I would have to check that, I am sorry. I don't quite know.

Q. Again an issue that has arisen obviously is pupil access to staff quarters and vice versa, staff access to pupil areas. Is that something you have seen change in your time?

A. The school that has lots of staff accommodation on site. So therefore when we were talking about accommodation, it is those attached to the boarding house, apart from the chaplain's home and the deputy head's house. We have really -- I would say, just the same as every safeguarding process that we have been discussing, the processes of -- as a tutor goes around the boarding house, there are much clearer guidelines to make sure

that that is appropriate at all times. However, I would say people have always done that, but it is now written down to make sure you keep the door open if you are having a one-on-one, you make sure you don't block the doors. And we do also have a lot more doors with windows in them to make sure that people can see into those.

Then certainly the assistant house staff and the -- houseparents will have groups of children into their for birthdays and for, you know, to celebrate things,but again there are clear guidelines as to how that happens.

Q. It's just that one can -- presumably the risk is to take it too far?

A. Definitely, absolutely.

Q. You talk about a one-on-one, leaving doors open --

A. Yes.

Q. -- for visibility?

A. Yes.

Q. Was there a temptation just to remove the scope for one-to-one, full stop?

A. Our tutorial system which we mention is that key thing. They don't have a significant adult in their life. What we believe is you have to be able to look people in the eye and have a really important conversation, but that needs to be done in a space that is secure and safe for

everybody. But to do it in a group, that is not necessarily the right thing to do, because you don't actually have the conversations that matter then. So you have to make sure you follow the code of conduct to be able to do the job that needs to be done so that you can actually find out how people are.

So it is making sure that people really understand their codes of conduct.

Q. Because that would be things, I suppose, like the dynamic between pupils and teachers. If taken too far it's cut, or they become too remote perhaps --

A. Yes, if we weren't having those conversations I don't think we could find out ... When we say -- we are talking about the tutors. The tutor is the champion of the pupil, but they have to be an informed champion. They have to know what makes these students tick, these children tick. So to do that you have to have good conversations, you've got to make sure that when they say "Fine", you are not saying that is okay, you have to work out what "Fine" means. And those are the relationships that absolutely are the stuff of who we are. But we have to make sure we know that that is where things can go wrong. Never be complacent about that.

Q. How do you monitor that?

A. In terms of noticing, I think that is the key thing, and making sure staff are absolutely -- staff and students, making sure that the voice of the child matters. Making sure that we are asking the right questions and we are listening to the answers when they come.

Q. We heard last week from one of the inspectors that children are increasingly vocal?

A. Yes, beautifully so.

Q. How do you ensure you hear the voice of the quiet ones?

A. I think that's really important in the whole of education, and that is something we do -- you can spend your time with those that dominate at one level. You need to work out what the majority are feeling, and those that don't necessarily feel they have a voice. And I think that is working out lots of different ways of making sure that in consultations we ask, but we ask in a way that people are going to give us genuine answers.

That could be a pupil-led consultation, for example, in equality, a really important issue. Then our pupil-led Equality Society does some asking, so we can actually find out, and they go in and do little focus groups to make sure that we are actually finding out what happens. Anonymous questionnaires, not too many, otherwise you get questionnaire fatigue.

But actually if you want to find out, I think, and it has been a good thing in inspections, which is for smaller groups, and we sit down and we talk, but make sure you listen.

Q. You talked about pupils' societies. Presumably pupils, and this is both within house prefects, school prefects, responsible positions generally, are they trained now?

A. Yes, they are, so they all have child protection training. And then we have a lot -- we have some mental health counsellors who are -- that's a new position in the school, so they are going to be -- and pupils can contact these pupils, these peer supports, through our management system, so it's anonymous, and they can reach out in lots of different ways. We need to make sure we have got lots of different levels of people supporting.

It is most likely if you -- if I stand and do a PSE session on counter (inaudible) and I say "Who are you going to talk to if you're having this?" And they say "Mrs Harrison", I'll say "No, you're not going to come --" I would love it, I would love it if they come and speak to me, but let's be honest, they are not going to. So therefore we need to give lots and lots of different people to that, that might be a peer, that might be house prefect, that might be their chemistry teacher, who is not one of their visiting tutors but is

somebody who they can relate to. We need to give lots and lots of different people who they can have those really important conversations with.

Q. Obviously in your responses you have talked about peer to peer issues; pupils abusing pupils. Has that stayed static, is that a constant? Is it reducing with all the provisions you have just talked about?

A. It is with regret -- if any head or any teacher or anybody involved in education says there is no bullying in their school, I would walk out of their school saying they don't know what is going on. That is a real regret, because that is not what I want, and therefore you have to be incredibly proactive in -- and that is where policies are all well and good, and you have to have them. But you have to make them dynamic, you have to make them actually active and people live them out. And regrettably, when people get things wrong, you have to follow through and you have to be seen -- as Professor Paterson -- seen to be fair, seen to be getting things right.

But teenagers will be mean to each other sometimes. It is with great regret that that happens, but if they then -- we can really talk through and make sure that -- and it may be, depending what circumstances we are talking about, it may be at a level that means their

position at the school is in jeopardy. It absolutely could happen. It may also be a conversation is had with everybody, and very careful conversations means we can move forward and people can learn and we can go -- because they are living with each other, they are -- this is 10 to 12, 13 to 14 year olds. They don't get it right the whole time.

Q. Has bullying changed in your time?

A. Definitely with cyber bullying, yes. It is still people being mean to each other, it's just a different playground, if that makes sense.

Q. That does make sense. Is that something that means bullying is getting worse, do you think, because of the nature of it?

A. I think it means you have got to be aware of that. So when I am speaking to school prefects, I'll say "If you see something on social media, that is just the same as if you have seen it in the corridor, so you have to make sure we are absolutely aware".

Is there more? Yes, again, it is a difficult issue, and we try every which way to get new ways to get into people's ... to change behaviour. If you are sitting there -- I think we can see that in society, can't we? People behind a screen sometimes act in a way that they wouldn't do if they were face-to-face.

Q. Just reading in the newspapers at the weekend, for example, an expensive school in London was being adversely commented on because it was breeding predators, it was suggested?

A. It is brilliant -- social media is fantastic, absolutely great, because it is giving people voices and it is superb and it's making people -- and every school, I don't know about the school you mention, but every school has had that. It is viral activism which is just raising awareness, and you will have people saying "Right, come on, what can we do?" And then as long as you harness that and say "Okay, this is your experience. What can we do about it?" You meet, you talk, you work out action that comes from that. That is actually using social media in a good way, giving people a voice.

Q. Sure. But I suppose the concern would be with what we have been discussing for the last twenty minutes, which is child protection safeguarding ramping up. Notwithstanding that, there remain now new issues perhaps?

A. It is an enormous task doing safeguarding and child welfare within schools. I cannot say otherwise.

Q. And perhaps emphasises the need for monitoring?

A. Definitely.

Q. In new ways.

A. Yes. And we would love to be at the forefront in terms of making sure that we are looking in different ways at how to do things. I think that is where -- we have to keep moving forward. Certainly if you are talking about cyber bullying, we are all out-of-date, we are all -- as long as you appreciate that. And so therefore, again, if I did or any of us did a session on cyber -- even calling it cyber bullying, they would be looking at me as if I was very much not of their world.

LADY SMITH: Mr Brown, it is 3.05 pm. I would normally have a break some time in the middle of the afternoon. Would now be appropriate?

MR BROWN: That would be ideal.

LADY SMITH: Helen, if it is going to suit you as well, we will take a short break just now and then get back to the rest of your evidence. Thank you.

(3.05 pm)

(A short break)

(3.18 pm)

LADY SMITH: Are you ready to carry on, Helen?

A. Yes, thank you.

LADY SMITH: Mr Brown.

MR BROWN: Helen, the last part of your evidence I think will focus on the response the school provided to part B, as I indicated, and you will see that that is

now being shown. This is FET.001.001.0003, that is page 28. It starts with retrospective acknowledgement/admission, and first of all acknowledgement of abuse. I think it has been apparent both from the opening submission of counsel for Fettes, and some of the things you have been saying already today, that there is recognition that there was abuse. But this response was obviously formulated in 2017 --

A. Yes.

Q. -- is that right?

A. Absolutely.

Q. At that stage you were deputy head?

A. Yes.

Q. Were you involved in the preparation of this response?

A. I was involved in the research, and sat around the table when the report was being produced, yes.

Q. But who is, if we may understand, primarily the author of these words that we are about to hear?

A. It was certainly checked by the chairman of the board at the time and the headmaster at the time, that would be Mr Spens, the final check.

Q. The questions are:

"i. Does the organisation/establishment accept that between 1930 and 17 December 2014 some children cared for at the establishment were abused?

"Yes. We have established that incidents of abuse and alleged abuse occurred.

"ii. What is the organisation/establishment's assessment of the extent and scale of such abuse?

"From the evidence we have reviewed, abuse and alleged abuse has occurred on a number of occasions.

"Anecdotal information would suggest that other instances of abuse, not documented, have taken place. Incidents of peer to peer bullying have been identified.

"However, it would be inappropriate to attempt to assess the impact/scale of this abuse on individuals concerned."

Why would it have been inappropriate?

A. I think it was felt that we were not best placed to have -- it was the victims themselves who would be able to tell us how they had been impacted, not us.

Q. Thank you. Over the page, you formed that assessment by the review we spoke of at the beginning of pupil files, board minutes, et cetera.

Then the next question is "Acknowledgement of Systemic Failures", the question being:

"i. Does [Fettes] accept its systems failed to protect children ... between 1930 and 17 December 2014 from abuse?"

The response is:

"There were systems in place that were not followed on occasion that led to a failure to protect those children involved."

The next question:

"ii. What is the organisations/establishment's assessment of the extent of such systemic failures?

"We do not believe that these instances arise from systemic failure but rather the failure of certain individuals to follow procedures that were in place.

"With regard to peer to peer bully evidence suggests that pupil were disciplined appropriately."

And the assessment is made:

"From an examination of files ..."

And reference again to:

"... on occasion individuals in a position of authority have not followed the procedures that were in place and that peer to peer bullying took place."

Again that is explained as being down to failure of an individual's judgment.

Question 3.3 "Acknowledgement of Failures/Deficiencies in Response". The Fettes response at that stage was:

"Having examined the evidence detailed above we have identified two occasions in which the school's response was deficient. In all other cases that we are aware of

where abuse was alleged, the school's response followed the procedures in place at the relevant time."

And question (iv) of 3:

"iv. What is [Fettes'] explanation for such failures/deficiencies?

"These were failures of judgment on the part of the Headmaster and, in so far as matters were brought to their attention, of the Governors regarding the need to take prompt action to remove the alleged abuser from the School."

Obviously recently Fettes wrote to the Inquiry again.

A. Absolutely.

Q. Do you have a copy of your letter?

A. I do through there (indicates), but not here, but I think I am pretty aware of it.

Q. It came late in the day.

LADY SMITH: Do you want to have it in front of you?

A. Shall I go and get it? I am so sorry.

LADY SMITH: No, that is absolutely fine. It's better that you feel at ease.

(Pause).

MR BROWN: Thank you. This is obviously a letter which you presumably --

A. Yes.

Q. -- were directly involved --
A. Yes.
Q. -- in the creation of and the wording of --
A. Yes.
Q. -- now being the head. I should say that it sets out, and we don't need to go through this because I think copies of the various policies will be or have been made available to the Inquiry so can be considered, but in terms of the very many changes that have taken place over and above the safeguarding governor and the safeguarding committee and child protection training, there is a great deal of detail.

You say on the third page of the letter in relation to the initial part of the answers in part A, at answer 2.2, it was said:

"Changes had not been driven by any alleged abuse but, rather, a desire to establish best practice."

And that was obviously your response. The position has now changed, is that right, or the emphasis has slightly changed?

A. Yes. If anything does, I would -- every single thing that happens we reflect on, so therefore I believe that we do have processes in place. If something happens, for example, regrettably peer on peer bullying, we would then look at our practice, we would do an investigation

just to check and see everything was fit for purpose, and then we would make changes if that was right. So I don't believe that is the initial answer.

Q. I think the difference is in the original 2017 response Fettes had said that:

"Changes had not been driven by any alleged abuse but, rather, the desire to establish best practice."

And then you go on:

"The school does indeed desire to establish best practice ..."

And you have said that clearly.

"... but on review of the records, the schools notes that some changes have in fact been driven by reported abuse."

A. Yes. And I think it sounded like we disregarded when incidents happened, and that just has never been my experience and not the case. And when we have looked at governors' minutes, that is not the case either, in terms of things that have happened following incidents, and therefore there has been a change of policy following abuse.

Q. That is obviously a matter that can be reviewed at a later stage.

A. Yes, absolutely.

Q. But I think then on the final page of your letter you

have a subheading, "Retrospective Acknowledgement of Abuse", and here there is what might be characterised as a change of tone, would you accept that?

A. Definitely.

Q. And that is coming from you?

A. Yes, and the board as well. We have just -- time has passed, we have had a look again. It has been a hugely important process to go back and have a look. And also I have gone out to every -- personally gone out to Old Fettesians, and they have come back, and they didn't feel, and that is everybody at Fettes, didn't feel that the answers we gave summed up how we felt, and thank you for giving us the opportunity to -- which is a fundamental change, I agree with you.

Q. Is that reflective of the school accepting perhaps that it is -- well, as compared with 2017, the school is now, to use your word, more "reflective" than it was then?

A. I think the process -- if you can't be reflective in this process, then ... Absolutely we have reflected more in the time that has happened since then, because we know more now and we have really wanted to understand the incidents of abuse that have happened.

Q. The different of emphasis, just to cut to the chase, is the school also accepts that its systems did fail to protect children?

A. Absolutely, and I think that is something that Fettes accepts completely, that its systems did fail. There was a misplace of trust and that had an impact on students, and it is with much regret that I say that.

Q. So in the last four years, and with your appointment as head, there has been reflection and a different emphasis?

A. Yes. I think we have looked again at specifically a period of time in Fettes' history and said that the standards were not, during that time, ones that we can -- well, we definitely don't adhere to them today, but we can say that our systems worked during that time.

Q. I think, for completeness, returning to the original 2017 response, 3.4, "Changes", when you were asked essentially how has Fettes changed, the answer was:

"The governors are more aware of their responsibilities in respect of care of pupils, making it unlikely that the headmaster will operate independently without consulting the governors and chairman. The lines of reporting between the headmaster and the chairman have been clearly defined, with clear roles, and collegiate partnership of the senior leadership team and the emphasis on pastoral care are a priority."

Is that any different now in 2021?

A. Just the first sentence, I hope it has been very clear

that I take my responsibilities incredibly seriously in this regard, but I would make sure that I am consulting with the governors and chairman, and I am accountable to them and I have regular meetings with them in which I have got to justify where we are going and where my leadership -- what I am doing as a leader. And then I also have both from the governors and the Chair, and then also from the team, in my senior leadership team, just as it says in that last sentence, everybody is working towards the child being -- the child is -- completely at the centre of what we do. And if I was not adhering to that, I know that I would be -- the Chair of governors would be told very swiftly indeed.

Q. Is there anything you would wish to add?

A. I think part B, I hope it is apparent that Fettes matters to me hugely, and we let people down as an institution during times in our past and that is a huge regret to the Fettes of today.

I think anybody who sits here and says it can't happen shouldn't be in the position that I am, and I would want to say very clearly that is the culture that I have and intend to keep going in terms of: it could happen, and we are going to make sure that we are never, ever complacent in this regard.

MR BROWN: Thank you very much indeed.

LADY SMITH: Thank you. I am not aware of there being any outstanding applications for further questions of Helen, but please would anyone let me know if there are? (Pause).

It seems there are no outstanding applications for further questions. We have asked you quite enough for the moment.

I am reminding you, I'm afraid, that we will need to hear from you again. But, Helen, thank you very much for coming today and speaking to those parts of the school's response that you have been directed to, but going beyond what is in the school's response. It has been very helpful to hear from you, particularly as to the views of a boarding school head today as to how things should be and need to be in the future. That is immensely valuable to me.

A. Thank you very much.

LADY SMITH: Thank you for that, and I am now able to let you go.

A. Thank you very much.

(The witness withdrew)

LADY SMITH: Mr Brown.

MR BROWN: My Lady, that concludes today's evidence. Tomorrow we will continue with two further headmasters from Loretto, and also the head of the governors from

Loretto who is joining remotely, and then the headmaster of Morrison's.

LADY SMITH: So for Loretto, we have one person in-person and one on screen. Thank you very much for that.

I will rise now for the day and look forward to seeing everyone tomorrow. Thank you.

(3.33 pm)

(The Inquiry adjourned until 10.00 am on Wednesday, 24 March 2021)

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