

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

IBK

Support person present: No

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

Life before boarding school

2. I was born in Simpson Memorial hospital and grew up in Edinburgh. My parents were and . They are both deceased having passed away during the pandemic. I have two brothers and a sister. The oldest is my sister, and then and . My brothers are two years and four years older than me. My sister is 5 years older than me. I am the youngest.
3. My father was a solicitor. I attended Denholm Green pre-school which was a feeder school for Edinburgh Academy. I can't remember sitting any exams before attending the Edinburgh Academy School. Both of my brothers went to Edinburgh Academy prior to me attending. They were at the primary school for some of the time I was there.
4. I thought life at home was okay but I realise now that there were some difficulties in my parent's marriage.

Edinburgh Academy, Edinburgh

5. I was a day pupil at the school from 196 until 197. It was all boys. There were six hundred at the senior school and about two hundred in the junior school. I think junior

school was primary one to primary five. There were about twenty to twenty-four pupils in each class. I think less than half of the pupils were boarders.

6. They had a rector who was in charge of the senior school. I suppose he had some responsibility over the junior school. I think his name was Mr [REDACTED] but I can't remember.
7. In the primary school, we had the same teacher all year. We moved around the school for languages. I had a class teacher in the first year was Mrs Urquhart. I don't remember the teachers I had in the second and third years. I had a teacher called Mr Wares in fourth year. In fifth year I had a teacher called Mr [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Layout of the school

8. It was set in greenery. There were playgrounds all around it. In that sense, it was a good learning environment. It was a new school at the time, probably built in the sixties. The classrooms were off to the right and on the left were offices. The steps lead up to a hall. The layout was the same upstairs. There was a large hall with a stage. It was a multi-purpose hall. You walked through there to get to the back area of the school where there were music rooms, art rooms and the gym. There were two porta-cabins in the grounds outside with classrooms. There was another block which housed the fifth years. You went out at that end of the school and that's where there were the porta-cabins which is where my fourth year classroom was.

Routine at Edinburgh Academy

First day

9. I don't recall my first day at school so I don't know if I knew any of the other pupils at that stage. I would have been five when I started.

Daily routine

10. Usually going to school, my brothers and I were on the bus together. I wasn't always on the bus with them on the way home because of different sport's days. When my two brothers had moved to the upper school I started walking to school on my own, we had moved house and were within walking distance. I have always been quite an early riser and I didn't like being late so I would get there early. There would be other people there too. You weren't allowed into the school until eight o'clock so I used to have to wait outside. They did not allow you a football but you did get to kick a tennis ball about.
11. Once the school was open, you would go into the classroom, they would take a roll, and then you got on with the classes. They made sure that you didn't get much free time apart from the breaks. On the breaks we went out to the playground and played football with the tennis ball. You could walk around the playing fields.
12. We played sports after school and it varied because they couldn't accommodate everybody all of the same time. There were two afternoons a week and on Saturday mornings. They had a game called 'hales. You played with a flat wooden spoon and you chased a tennis ball about. They had rugby and athletics. I think we played rugby in the winter and hails in the summer.

Mealtimes/Food

13. We ate lunch within the school. I don't think the food was very good. I can remember a lot of wet mashed potato and mince. We were given rice pudding and things like that. We got tapioca too. It was horrible. When I went to the secondary school I started taking packed lunches. There were no issues if someone did not like the food.

Washing/bathing

14. I think when we were in the primary school, we didn't get to use the washing facilities. I think it was expected that we went straight home afterwards. They did have them and they were very close to the primary school. I can't remember using them in the primary. There were two or three big Victorian houses in a street opposite the primary school which were the boarding houses. I don't know what the washing facilities were like in them. I was never inside one of the boarding houses.

Clothing/uniform

15. The uniform was shorts all year round, long socks, black shoes, a white shirt and a blazer. My parents paid for my uniform and sports clothes, although I usually got the hand-me-downs from my brothers.

Trips and holidays

16. They had a house in the Highlands, which we could go to when we were in the secondary school. I don't think we went there in the Primary School. We went to visit farms and the like. I can remember going to Murchie's Dairy in Tollcross to see them opening their production line of yoghurts. I also remember going to the Milanda bakery. It was never anything outwardly fun. The visit to the bakery and dairy have lived with me all my life.

Schooling

17. I didn't have anything to compare it with. My wife always said that I had had a terrible education because of all the things we didn't study or learn properly. I think it could have been to do with the schooling, curriculum and the quality of the teachers. It could also have been to do with my lack of application – "could do better" being a common comment on reports.

18. I suppose I would have been aware of who was boarding at the school. There was a kind of distinction between those who were boarding and those who were day pupils. I didn't have to stay at school to do homework.

Religious instruction

19. There was a school assembly at the secondary school where they said a prayer and maybe a hymn. Religious Education was part of the curriculum. There were definitely some comparative religions which I can remember studying.

Work

20. I don't think we had to clean up around the school. I think sometimes certain people would go around with a bin bag. I think we just had to leave our desks tidy and that was it. I do not have specific, clear memoirs of having to clean up.

Discipline

21. The sanctioned punishments by the teachers were having to write lines, for repeatedly getting lessons wrong and were done in detention after school. There was beatings, corporal punishment, with the clachan which was a big, wooden spoon and standing in the corner. You could also be beaten with a gym shoe on the backside. You could be sent to see the school head. I can't remember his name. Then there were unique punishments. The teacher who abused me, Mr Wares, would brand me by running a piece of chalk down my cheek. He also liked to throw the blackboard duster at pupils. Another teacher would twist your ear. Those were specific to individual teachers. It was Mr [REDACTED] who did the twisting of the ear.
22. The female teachers didn't indulge in this form of physical abuse. The class teacher would mete out the punishment. Lines would tend to be for not learning your lesson properly. A beating would be for disruptive behaviour. I think in the first two years some children, who were left handed, were forced to use their right hand. I don't recall if they got their left hand beaten with a ruler.

23. My mother became a teacher at the school during my last two years at the school. She taught [REDACTED]. I don't remember bullying being a big problem but I think it was there. I can recall walking through the colonies in Stockbridge wearing my uniform and there was one guy, from another school, who lay in wait for me. So I got a couple of doings off him.
24. I recall that the gym teacher, whose name I don't recall, would on occasion suggest that he had found liquid on the floor of the gym and someone had wet themselves. Of course no one owned up to this so he had the whole class drop their gym shorts so he could inspect for wetness. I don't recall if he felt us around our penis or just looked. I don't recall if anyone was ever found to have wet themselves.

Abuse at Edinburgh Academy, Edinburgh

25. In my fourth year, in 1971, my classroom was in one of the porta-cabins at the back of the school. It was self-contained and didn't adjoin onto any other classrooms. There were twenty to twenty-four pupils in the class. The class teacher was Ian Wares. He had the nickname 'Weirdo Wares' among pupils. He had absolute white or blonde hair. However, I would say he was probably only in his late twenties or early thirties. He wasn't old. He had a roundish face and was quite heavily built. He was probably slightly shorter than average.
26. The abuse took the form of Ian Wares calling me to his desk under the pretence of going over homework. I stood beside him while he sat at his desk. While I stood there, in front of the rest of the class who were doing other work, he would fondle my penis by putting his hand up my shorts. I recall that there were piles of books on the desk so the rest of the class might not directly see what was taking place. The fondling did not feel affectionate in any way, but was more threatening and intimidating. I couldn't try to pull away because he would pull you towards him to get his hand up my shorts. A lot of pupils, but not all, were invited up to have their homework looked over. If others received the same treatment as I did, I do not know. I suspect I was not alone.

27. I don't remember much of the learning experience of going over the work. It was quite traumatic in terms of I don't remember learning much in that year. It went on for the whole year, a couple of times a week.
28. I presume he was doing similar things to other kids. We didn't talk about it even though he went by the nickname. Other people didn't talk to me about it so whether they were also experiencing it and also keeping quiet, I don't know. In those days there was no open way of allowing kids to communicate anything in the school. I don't recall any school inspection or anything like that.
29. I didn't speak to my parents or my brothers about it. I think Wares was well aware that kids might not want to come out with these things to their parents as they were paying their fees or they were simply embarrassed .
30. It seemed to be more about power than affection for the pupil. I don't know what he got out of it. There was no communication with him about it. He was never trying to get you to meet him out of school or out of the class. It seemed to be something that he liked to do to anybody. It was intimidating in nature.
31. I knew that he wasn't a pleasant character. He would also use subtle and not so subtle forms of intimidation on the pupils in his care. He would throw the blackboard duster at people. It was dangerous if it met its target. It was a heavy block of wood. He would "brand" pupil who did not please him, with the piece of chalk. It was not physically harmful but seems to have been part of his way of exerting his power and intimidating the pupils.
32. I think he was probably quite a cruel person. I didn't think I had any contact with him after I moved on. He might have been involved in the sports but I'm not sure. I might be blanking it out of my mind.

Leaving Edinburgh Academy

33. I went to the senior school until I was eighteen. I didn't have any problems there. I left school with five Highers. I stayed on for an extra year at the school because my parents split up. My mother was upset by it and I was the only one still living in Edinburgh at the time. I stayed around for her. I didn't actually attend school very much. I think I stayed on to do an Art A Level and two others which I didn't need for the academic side of it. There was quite a lot of time for self-study so I wasn't at the school.
34. I went to Glasgow and studied at Glasgow School of Art. I obtained a three-year degree course and then did two-year diploma. I then worked in Scotland and abroad for a and for a local city Council for a period to gain professional accreditation.
35. I have been a lucky person in many ways. I used my first job to get my practical training and registered in my chosen profession. It allowed me to get a mortgage with the bank so I bought the only flat I could afford which was in Glasgow.
36. Three years later the flat was bought from me by a developer and I used the money to take a year off working travelling around the world.. When I came back I got a job with a guy who was my professor at the art school because I spoke a reasonable amount of German. I lived in Germany for seven years and then got a job teaching at a University in Scotland.
37. I met my wife and she thought I shouldn't do anything as easy as teaching so I went back into the private sector. My wife and I came out to Greece and set up a little business. Sadly, she died in the summer.

Impact

38. I put the incident away but I think it has had an effect on my life. I've never really been very good at showing my emotions and kept myself back from being very expressive in relationships. I haven't had children so it perhaps have been something to do with that.

Treatment/support

39. I haven't had any therapy or counselling but I think I am going to pursue it. I have some good friends who are involved in psychotherapy and counselling. I have told them about it and they strongly suggested that I should do something about it because trauma can lurk there. I think it's vital to find the right people. Both of these friends have recommended people. I recognise some kind of therapy or counselling will help. In many ways I feel like I could quite easily carry on but my friends have advised me against that.

Reporting of Abuse

40. I have considered reporting the abuse on several occasions throughout my adult life. However, I always felt that I wouldn't be taken seriously even as an adult. Occasionally these things would come up in the media and I thought maybe I should report what happened to me. At that time, I did consider maybe I was the only one who he was abusing and I was potentially just exposing myself in reporting. When I saw the coverage on BBC Scotland some time ago I realised I wasn't alone and there was something going on.
41. The police have contacted me to advise that they have been made aware of the abuse I disclosed to the Inquiry. I have arranged to meet with them to provide a statement when I return to Scotland in over a month. I have given them the same description of the events.

Records

- 42. I don't have my school records except class reports. I have thought about it two or three times in my life. I have of course thought about it more now.

Lessons to be learned

- 43. I think somehow children have got to feel there is someone who they can turn to. Looking back, it's astonishing that someone in my situation didn't talk to my parents, siblings or someone in the school. One has to have a way to communicate these things. If people can't speak out about this experience, it's difficult for them to get any help with the trauma.

Hopes for the Inquiry

- 44. I hope that something is put in place that ensures children don't suffer from this in the same sort of way. I would like to see my abuser brought to justice. As far I am led to believe he is still alive and running a childcare programme in a care home in South Africa. People like him can't just move around the system. The abuse happened in the private school system. I hope this is a way of preventing it from happening any more or anywhere else.

Other information

- 45. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed..... 

Dated..... 01 December 2022