

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

INR

Support person present: No

1. My name is INR. My date of birth is 1965.
My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before boarding school

2. I was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland and at the age of three we moved to Polmont, Scotland due to my father's work. My father's name was he died in 2019. As a family we moved around to wherever my father's work took him. We were a bit like a force's family in that way and my sister was born in Israel. So that was one reason I went to board at Edinburgh Academy to stop that moving about.
3. My mother is she is still with us and is 92 years of age. My brother still lives in Scotland and we left him there when we moved south. He is eleven years older than me and at the time was married and had family. My sister is she is nine years older than me and lives in Reading.
4. didn't go to Edinburgh Academy and that was another reason I did, because my father didn't want me to go to Falkirk High, the local comprehensive.
5. I went to Polmont Primary School for three years. I got on fine and had no problems there. This school would have fed me into Falkirk High or the other local one, Graeme High, but my father wasn't impressed with either and didn't want me to go to any of them. My brother had been moved about a lot and this had messed up his 'O'

level studies so that was why dad decided to stop moving me about. My brother left Falkirk High and got an apprenticeship.

6. With my sister being a couple of years younger than my brother my dad decided to send her to Mary Erskine's and me to Edinburgh Academy.
7. I don't know why he picked Edinburgh Academy but he was obviously looking at other schools. I remember we went to look at a boarding school near Stirling. I was with my mother and father and I remember walking into a classroom and the whole class stood up. This was the first time I had ever encountered such a thing and I remember the kids were all pointing and sniggering. That was the only school that I remember us going to look at. I can't remember us going to look at the Edinburgh Academy but it was chosen. It was probably because my father knew somebody that had gone there or because of reputation. I honestly can't remember if I had to do an entrance exam.
8. I started in the academic year 197█ to 197█ but I am pretty sure I didn't actually go at the beginning of the academic year. I have been thinking about this but I haven't discussed this with my mother as she would find it too upsetting and I haven't asked the school for my records because I don't want them. I say that because when I started there all the other kids seemed to know each other and I was incredibly homesick and the other children weren't. I think I maybe started after Christmas of that academic year.

Edinburgh Academy

9. Edinburgh Academy was a private school for boarders and they also had day pupils. The age range was from about seven or eight years, starting in the prep school, up to eighteen years old at the senior school.
10. I can't remember who was in charge of the school when I started. At that age you just focus on the immediate person that was in charge of you and that was Mr

Brownlee. As I got older I remember the name of the rector was Mr Ellis. I can't really remember the staff structure in Dundas House.

11. All I can remember about Dundas House was it was a little house, like a family house in size. You went up some stairs to go through the front door. I think there was a common room on the right-hand side and that you went upstairs to the dormitory.
12. I wouldn't imagine there were any more than twenty boys in there and probably about eight or nine in my dormitory.
13. When I moved up to Mackenzie House I remember thinking it was a much bigger place to be in. All the boarding houses were in the same road near the prep school. Mackenzie House was opposite Dundas House, literally across the road and it looked over the playing fields. It was on at least three floors with a basement and lots of corridors. It had an extension on the side with a stairwell in it.
14. Hamish Dawson was the Housemaster and he and his wife lived in accommodation attached to the side of the house. I would say Hamish Dawson was in his middle forties at that stage. I know now that he had a daughter as it has been in the press but I didn't know at the time.
15. There was a deputy housemaster and a matron and I cannot remember their names. If Hamish Dawson wasn't on duty the deputy was. There were no issues with the deputy or the matron per se. My only issue with them was they must have known what was going on, as must have many others but nothing was said for whatever reason.
16. I would think there were about forty boys in there and again dormitories would be about eight or nine boys again.

Routine at Edinburgh Academy

First day

17. My parents took me down to the school for the first day. I arrived with my big trunk of clothes and belongings but I can't remember if there was somebody there to welcome us. I just thought it was the most cold, surreal place and wondered what my parents were doing to me. I was eight years old and couldn't understand why I was being put into that environment. I still can't to this day understand how my parents could put me in there. I speak to my sister and she couldn't understand it either. She was desperately upset that one minute I was there and the next I was gone.
18. I started at Dundas House, which was the junior house and Mr Brownlee was the housemaster there. My first and only memories of it really are that some kids took my school tie and were throwing it around between them in the common room downstairs. I got upset and I remember telling on them to Mr Brownlee. That was the first lesson I learned in boarding school etiquette and that was that you don't tell tales. If you tell tales you get bullied but that passed.
19. I remember the dormitory in Dundas House. I remember the picture of going in and seeing the characterless beds with teddy bears on them. All the kids' beds had toys on them. I had a pillowcase with a dog on it and they all had teddy bears. We were eight years old and that was what you had. It was just cold and to me it wasn't a caring environment, it was just an institution.
20. I can remember in the junior school, on the first floor in the modern block, in the end classroom, going in there crying because I was so homesick. The teacher said, "Stand up boy" so I stood up and he said to me, "What's your name?" When I said **INR** he again said, "What's your name?" Again, I said **INR** to which he replied "No, your name is **INR**." That was like 'Woah' and I can remember walking out the classroom, down the corridor and crying uncontrollably and that was homesickness. I think all kids go through that.

21. I can remember that I was aware or had been told that Mr Brownlee was very strict and that if you misbehaved you got the 'clacken'. I didn't know then what that was but know now it is like a flat wooden spoon. I remember someone saying to me, if you were really bad you would get six of the 'clacken' and it would be used as a bacon slicer. This was the only time this expression has been used to me and I've thought in my mind about that and it is not something I would make up or something I would even think about. I was told in such a way that the 'clacken' came down vertically on your backside like a meat slicer.
22. With that in mind I was very good and that really is my memory of starting at the Edinburgh Academy.
23. During that first year unfortunately I became seriously ill with a massive kidney issue and I was taken to the Western General Hospital, Edinburgh. In the summer of 1974 when I was nine I had a huge operation at that hospital where they had to re-sort out my kidneys, bladder, tubes and god knows what. That meant I was quite a sick, weak child who wasn't able to play rugby and wasn't able to partake in those sorts of activities.
24. The remainder of my time at Dundas house I just kept my nose clean and was fairly quiet as I wasn't particularly well. I was at Dundas House until the last year of prep school when I went to Mackenzie House. I was ten years old, I had got over my illness, I was working hard because I knew what would happen if I didn't and the results showed with getting the [REDACTED] prize and that was great. I remember going up on the stage and being presented with it and that was a big thing. At that stage at the end of prep school I was achieving and had got to where I needed to be so that was good.

Daily Routine

25. I honestly can't remember what time we got up and this is a problem in that I can't remember the routine in Dundas House and not much more in Mackenzie House

and I'm not going to make anything up. In terms of getting up having breakfast and going to school it has just gone and that is weird.

26. It is a strange thing in that once I left the Edinburgh Academy I just shut it away. I have not kept in touch with anybody from there, I have no friends from there but as a result of the Inquiry I have spoken to a few people from Edinburgh Academy. Building up to this I have been trying to really resource my memory bank and I am seeing a counsellor and she has tried to resource it. I just can't, I literally can't.
27. The incidents where I was abused in Mackenzie House I can remember clear as day but in terms of routine I can't. After I left the Academy I went to another boarding school Christ College, where I can remember all the routine. Whether that was because I was older or because things didn't happen there and it was safer environment, I don't know, but I can tell you everything from there.

Bedtime

28. At Dundas House I remember that when you went to bed Mr Brownlee would come up to the dormitory a short time later to make sure you were asleep. Mindful of what his punishments were you were asleep even if you weren't asleep.
29. At Mackenzie House we went to bed a bit later and Hamish Dawson would always be around the dormitories. There wasn't anybody supervising as such but even although he stayed in a building attached to Mackenzie House he was about the house an awful lot. I would say he was more in it than he was out it. He just used to spend his time wandering about the dormitories.
30. He was a creepy man. If you were getting changed for bed he was always about. I suppose the way I would describe him now with the benefit of hindsight is tactile in the sense that he liked to tickle people. At the time you didn't really read much into that. He was just always there.

Bed wetting

31. Wetting the bed was an issue for some but it wasn't for me and I think it was more so in Dundas House as we were younger. I don't remember making it an issue or teasing people about it. I think the school just dealt with it and I can't remember any ridiculing by them.

Washing/bathing

32. I think in the morning you would just wash your face and clean your teeth. As regards showers I am guessing you just had a shower as and when you wanted one. The shower room was down in the basement.

Mealtimes/Food

33. One thing I do remember at Dundas House was that the kitchen in the prep school burnt down and we had to go and have our dinner in the canteen at a company called Christian Salvesen who had offices nearby and we had to walk there and eat. The only reason I remember that, is because the environment and the food was better.
34. When I was at Mackenzie House we went over to the prep school for meals. I can't remember what the food was like but the only meal I liked was pizza. They used to do pizza, although I'm not sure it could be classed as pizza these days. It was a Scots morning roll with cheese on top and it tasted bloody good. If you didn't like the food there was no other choice and nothing else was offered, it just got taken away.

Clothing/uniform

35. I think it was a blue uniform. A blue blazer, grey shorts, a blue and black stripey tie and I think we had tweed jackets in the winter.

36. The uniform made you stick out and identified where you were from. When you were walking down to the senior school past the botanical gardens, then down the short cut through 'Rocky Path' the biggest fear was if you bumped into the Broughton Comprehensive boys. If you did it was just game on. Sometimes if you were walking along there on your own and you saw them coming along towards you, you used to be terrified. If you were on your own they tended not to do anything other than maybe say a few words but if there was a group of you it was a full-on scrap, chucking each other down the banking.

Sporting activities

37. Rugby in the winter and cricket in the summer were compulsory after school but as I had that massive operation I wasn't able to play rugby and all that stuff. I could do physical exercise but I couldn't risk being kicked in the stomach. We got PE as part of the school curriculum and it was undertaken in the halls at both the prep and senior schools. My injury from my operation meant I could only do light PE.
38. I did play cricket but I wasn't very good at it. I got knocked out and broke my finger on separate occasions. I wasn't really a sporty person. I will give the school credit because, as I wasn't able to play rugby and I couldn't swim the person who ran the swimming club said I could go along to the club. They taught me to swim and it gave me something to do.
39. For a period we used to go to Hillend Ski Centre in Edinburgh every Sunday to learn to ski and that was good fun. The teachers would take about fifteen or twenty of us there and then the instructors took over.

Leisure time

40. In Mackenzie House we got leisure time after school and at the weekends. I was really into making models and in the basement of the house there was a modelling room. I had been into modelling before I went to the academy. As I wasn't playing rugby I just used to go there and make Airfix models. I have always been a bit

solitary and so if I could go and sit in the modelling room, I was quite happy. So I just used to keep myself to myself really.

41. At the weekends there used to be a fantastic natural history museum with dinosaurs and all sorts in it, in Edinburgh and I used to go and spend a lot of time up there.
42. The other thing we used to do was buy a ticket for a bus and stay on it until it stopped and we got told to get off. We literally got on and stayed on it just to kill time.
43. Maybe we did but I can't recall having to sign out when we went off the school or house premises.
44. I'm pretty sure we were pretty much given free reign and in actual fact that freedom could potentially have ended in disaster for me because there was a groundsman that was grooming me. He invited me under the bribe of pornographic magazines and fags to his house. I did go to his house but he wasn't in. I shudder to think what would have happened had he been in and I had gone into his house. It was because of that freedom that this situation was allowed to happen.
45. I can't remember if there was a library but there was a games room upstairs on the right-hand side. There was a table tennis table there that you could play on. I used to hang about in there or in the modelling room or on the pitches out the back that we were allowed to go out and play on.

Trips and holidays

46. The school had an outward-bound centre in Glen Doll which was a cottage up in the Highlands where we would go for a long weekend. I was certainly there at least twice and we would build bridges over rivers, climb mountains and that sort of stuff. I quite enjoyed it as I was away from the school and you tended to be with different members of staff. I don't think Hamish Dawson was there and I don't think that would have been his thing.

47. I remember when I was at Dundas House they had an old minibus and they used to take us to Murrayfield to watch the rugby and that was really good. However what was really bad about it though was we had to go in our uniforms and we stood out like sore thumbs and everyone was saying oh look at them. Even now watching the rugby I like seeing the matches there but actually going as an Edinburgh Academy pupil wasn't really good.
48. In 1979 when I was in Mackenzie House I went to the cinema for the only time on a school trip to see Star Wars.

Schooling

49. I can't really say at that age what I would consider the quality of education to be but actually it must have been alright. The reason I say that is that there must be a difference between the Scottish system compared to the English and Welsh one, in that when I went to school in Wales, for my age I was a year ahead as they put me in the wrong stream.
50. I would say that some of the teachers were better than others but that is going to happen wherever you go. There were some good teachers at the academy and I would say overall the standard of the teaching at the academy was better than the standard of my school in Wales.
51. We did our homework in the boarding house. There must have been a set room for doing it as you wouldn't have done it in your dormitory and it would have been supervised but I'm not sure by who.

Healthcare

52. If you had any health issues, like a sore throat, a sore leg or anything the matron would deal with it. She had her own office or room and she always wore a white lab coat. If she couldn't deal with the problem a doctor would come to the school.

53. I remember cutting my head on an electricity box as I was climbing the stairs to go to the upper level of the assembly hall at the senior school. I couldn't see the matron as she was in the boarding house so I went and saw a first aider in the school.
54. I didn't get routine health checks at school but because I had the operation previously I was having regular health checks at the hospital that my parents took me to.
55. I can't remember going to the dentist whilst I was there. The only dentist I remember going to was when I went home during the holidays.

Religious instruction

56. We did religious education classes at school and had to go to Sunday School but we never had to go to church.

Work

57. I don't remember having to do any work or chores around the boarding house.

Pocket money

58. There must have been provisions for pocket money as I did have money as I was getting on buses, had money to buy models and buy cinnamon sticks to smoke on Rocky Path but I don't know how that worked. There was a tuck shop I think that was in the senior school in Henderson Row.

Birthdays and Christmas

59. My birthday was during the school holidays and I can't remember any celebrations for Christmas before we broke up for the Christmas holidays.

Personal possessions

60. The only personal possession I remember having at the school was my pillowcase with the dog. You had a cabinet by your bed but nowhere else really to keep anything as it wasn't lockable.

External Inspections

61. I don't recall there ever being any inspections at the school. You would have thought if there was then they would have asked the pupils at the school for their views but maybe there was and they asked the older kids but in view of our age we weren't asked.

Family contact

62. We went home on some weekends later on. I think at the beginning you weren't allowed to. The school actively encouraged no contact. They advised your parents to leave you alone to settle in during that period. They were told, do not contact your child for the first 'X' many weeks. Do not see them, do not do whatever because they have to break you and they had to break that homesickness.
63. That homesickness was horrible and I can remember it to this day. I was only eight and I was sobbing uncontrollably in the corridor of the school. It was like a bereavement. The only time I have since felt that emotion was a time of bereavement and I'm not saying that is with every bereavement but the year before last I found my brother-in-law dead on the floor in his flat and I was just crying unconsolably because it was unexpected and he was so young. That was the same level of emotion as I felt at school that time. That is how I would describe it.
64. On a Sunday you had to write to your parents. I remember I wrote a letter to my mum, my dad, my sister, my brother and the dog. My father said writing a letter to the dog was stupid and that it was a waste of a stamp.

65. It was alien not having contact with them. The whole set up was alien. Knowing what I know now because of what I have been through, adopting four kids and it is all about attachment because that has been such an issue for us adopting them at various ages. When the baby came along attachment was a big issue but reflecting now on my situation, I will be brutally honest and tell you my parents don't know me. They didn't know what made me tick, they didn't know about my moods, they didn't know about me as an individual because they were not there to see me go through all of that but that was the way it was.
66. My parents never visited the school but after the initial period I used to occasionally go home at weekends. I would have contact with my brother when I went home for the weekend as he stayed near my parents and would pop round for dinner. Given the age gap I was probably quite annoying though. My sister still stayed at home so I would see her.
67. I went home for the holidays after my first term at Dundas House, which I think would be the Easter holidays and I didn't want to go back. I remember getting all my pocket money together, getting on my bike and running away. I was so not wanting to go back to the place. I cycled towards Falkirk and hid in the woods in a village near there. It got dark and I got scared so I went home. My mum was frantic and my brother asked where I had been. I told them I had run away and didn't want to come back as I didn't want to go back to school. I'm not sure if my dad was there or not but nobody asked the reason why I didn't want to go back. I probably wouldn't have told them anyway as I was only eight years old. I told them I had lost my bag of money so my brother took me down to the woods in his Rally car and we found the bag of money.
68. That was me really not wanting to go back. I don't know what the hell I thought I was going to do. I was so scared but I just didn't want to go back as it was so horrible.

Our parents were kept informed of how we were doing through getting school reports that were sent to them every term. My parents weren't aware of what Hamish Dawson or the groundsman were doing and weren't aware of the regime of the

school. I used to go home when the term was finished for the holidays but I never told them about the abuse. They never asked me anything about it or the school just the same as they never ever asked me anything about any of the schools I was at.

Discipline

69. There was no written code of conduct. I don't think they would've dared have such a thing as then it would have been out in the public domain but there was an unwritten code of conduct. The school was a place of corporal punishment. When I went to Dundas as an eight-year-old and I was told if you muck about you get the 'clacken', the wooden spoon, the bacon slicer then that is scary.
70. What the hell is all that about? I had gone from a primary school and living at home with my parents into an environment where it is cold and controlled. Okay it had to be controlled but it was also a place of fear for me, to the extent that after the first term I ran away from home because I didn't want to go back there. It could have been so different but, it was a school of corporal punishment.
71. I wasn't disciplined in school because I was too good, due to that fear and I didn't see it happen with other pupils.
72. As I progressed through school, Dawson was known for using six of the best. He had his menagerie of sticks in his history classroom that he used to whack you with.
73. Outside of Dundas House and Mackenzie House as they were the environments I was living in I can't really say what other forms of corporal punishment were going on as it didn't seem to happen in the school in terms of the education itself. Within Henderson Row you weren't aware of corporal punishment happening but it did.
74. I remember because I was horrible to Mr Orr. He was a lovely person but as part of my master plan to escape through bad behaviour I used to scrunch up paper and throw it at him. He used to send you out the classroom and that was his punishment. I don't recall people being taken to the front of the class and being whacked with a

ruler or a cane because all I can remember is that, that sort of behaviour only went on in the boarding houses.

Prefects/senior pupils

75. There were no prefects in Dundas House but there were when I went to Mackenzie House. I can't even remember if I was a prefect but their role was to control the younger children. I'm not aware of them handing out punishments and I can't remember if there was fagging, although I was only there until I was fourteen.

Peer Culture

76. I never saw any behaviour that I would term as abusive from pupils towards each other. After the initial bullying at Dundas House with my tie, I never had any issues with the other pupils at the school. That kind of thing happens in all schools and I don't blame the Academy for that.
77. I don't know if it was because I had the operation but I never had a bad experience. I didn't see a lot of bullying, it does happen in all schools but nothing sticks in my mind in respect of it though.

Abuse at Edinburgh Academy

78. I refer back to my book that I got as the [REDACTED] prize to show what age I was when the abuse from Hamish Dawson started. I got the prize for [REDACTED] in the academic year 1975 - 1976.
79. The abuse occurred in the academic year in 1976-78 and I can say that because in the academic year 1978-79 I was a day boy. Up until 1976 I was doing really well, I wasn't enjoying it but I was doing what I should be doing in order to get the [REDACTED] prize. From 1976-78 is when it all started to go wrong.

80. Hamish Dawson was the housemaster in Mackenzie House and a History teacher at the senior school. In order to get from Henderson Row to Mackenzie House you could either walk which was approximately 30 minutes or you could cycle which was approximately 10 minutes. I didn't have a bike but that isn't to say I didn't cycle as I could borrow one from friends.
81. When you returned back to Mackenzie House from school, Hamish Dawson would often wait at the entrance door. If it had been raining and you hadn't taken a coat or you were later back than perhaps you should have been, then he would send you to the changing room in the basement of Mackenzie House.
82. I remember the first time it happened because I didn't know what was going to happen next. Nobody had told me what was going to happen and when I was told to go to the changing room, my reaction was 'okay.'
83. There was an open plan shower area in there. He would then tell you to strip naked and my reaction to that was 'ah, now what.'
84. We then had to go, one at a time into a freezing cold shower with the rest of the boys watching. Once you were under, you weren't allowed to put your hands over your private parts, you had to stand there with your hands out to the side. He would tell you to turn around whilst reciting poetry, usually Twinkle Twinkle Little Star. He would just stand there and watch you and you were under the shower for the amount of time it took you to sing the whole of Twinkle Twinkle Little Star.
85. Once you were finished reciting, you were told to leave and the next boy would go under. You just got your towel, dried yourself and left. You just wanted out of there and you definitely wouldn't just stand and watch.
86. If you go into a shower room after a game of football, you literally slip your towel off, get under the shower, get out, and that's one thing. The experience of standing naked in a queue with other boys to have a shower is different. Standing in a queue along a wall of tiles waiting to be watched under a shower is pretty bloody humiliating

and degrading and that is what he would do. A grown man was just there, staring at you stark naked, singing a nursery rhyme in front of other boys.

87. This wasn't just once, it was a regular occurrence over that two-year period. I lost count how many times this happened to me. I was never there on my own. There was always a queue of boys of a similar age to me which was about eleven to thirteen years.
88. You never knew when it was going to happen. I remember if you approached the boarding house and he was stood at the door, your heart would sink because you would think 'Oh here we go.' You knew what was coming. Why and what was the purpose of this, he never said why. It was some form of gratification and you were just told to do it.
89. Hamish Dawson had a pet name for me. He called me [REDACTED] because I had a Welsh surname and that is a Welsh name. He called me his 'little [REDACTED]' and he is the only person to ever call me that in my entire life and it sends a shiver down my spine that I was his 'little [REDACTED]' He thought it was funny and he used to whisper in a creepy voice "Come on little [REDACTED] come and stand in the shower."
90. I don't think the other boys and I ever talked about the shower incidents and crazy as it may sound we just accepted it. I think as children we accepted that was our lot. What could we have done, we couldn't form a union and take it to the head teacher. Although we all knew it was pervy and weird we just accepted it.
91. The next incident is so vivid and I can go into detail that you won't believe. The context is, that we read comics. One of these comics was called Warlord and a group of us became Warlord Agents because with the comic you got a pack with an identity badge and other things. As kids do, we took this really seriously. There was another publication at the same time called Bullet and the main character was an agent called 'Fireball.'

92. One evening and I guess it was a Friday in 1977, Hamish Dawson told the house he and his wife were having a dinner party. The reason that he told us was that neither the deputy housemaster nor the matron were on duty so as a group we had the house pretty much to ourselves.
93. About ten of us decided to play a game in which some of us would be Warlord agents and the others would be Fireball agents. It was a bit like hide and seek around the boarding house but it really went out of control. The stairs on the extension were metal stairs with a rubber handrail and when you got to the top to the right was the common room and to the left was the boarding house going along to the dormitories.
94. It was carnage as we were literally running up and down those stairs throwing anything and everything at each other. For eleven and twelve year old boys it was great. We were throwing shoes and trainers, beating the hell out of each other and having pillow fights. It was great fun but it ruined his dinner party and he was absolutely furious.
95. Those of us that were involved were called to his study one at a time. I knew and probably we all knew that we were going to get six of the best. If I am being brutally honest, if you accept that corporal punishment was a thing at the time and you accept that you behaved in such an awful way that you have disrupted your housemaster's dinner party then you accept that you deserved to be punished.
96. However it was what happened next that was wrong. This was the only time that I was in his study and I can still see it now. I went through the door and on the wall on the right there was a rowing oar. The desk was in front of that wall and there was a door over the other side that went into the boarding house. I walked in and Hamish Dawson was angry. He was absolutely raging and he said to me we had ruined his evening, that we shouldn't have done that, that it wasn't the right thing to do.
97. I was petrified because I knew what was coming or at least I thought I did. He told me to remove my trousers and pants which I did. I was scared as I was alone in this

room with him and I felt trapped, I knew what he was like because of what he did in the showers, I had been made to take my pants and trousers off and I didn't know what was coming next. He told me to go and lay over a chair that was like a dining room chair.

98. I was laying over it, gripping the bar under the seat as I knew I was going to get something and then I remember feeling him put his hand on my bum on each buttock, one at a time. He said to me "this is going to hurt you a lot more than its going to hurt me" and he hit me across the backside at least six times. It wasn't just like a hit. It was more of a beating and it was an uncontrolled rage beating. It wasn't six of the best you naughty boy, it was absolute hell. I can still feel the pain to this day and squeezing the arms of that bloody chair. My backside was so sore I couldn't move.
99. When I stood up he was just standing staring at me and I was physically shaking but I wouldn't cry. I wasn't going to give him the satisfaction but I was stood there naked in front of him, physically shaking with a backside throbbing like there is no tomorrow.
100. I am not sure what he hit me with as I couldn't see because I was spreadeagle across the chair with everything on show. He used to wear sandals and I am convinced that is what he used.
101. I pulled up my pants and trousers, left his study and went back to my dorm. I remember trying to look at my bum to see what marks there was because it was so sore. I never got any medical treatment after this. I couldn't sit down and it was over a week before I could do so comfortably.
102. I think that if you accept that at the time corporal punishment was the thing, rightly or wrongly there is one thing to get six slaps with a cane or something wearing trousers and pants as it still hurts. However, being hit with that level of force on bare buttocks whilst you are over a chair, by someone who is literally out of control because that is the only way you can describe it, that is definitely a no.

103. Maybe, I could have accepted it better if I hadn't been naked but it is when you are stripped off and you are so vulnerable and a man has put his hands on your bum, I can't accept that. No other man has ever put his hands on my bum in that way. Then he whacks you and he just stands there staring at you naked again.
104. He was absolutely raging and out of control and to me it wasn't corporal punishment it was quite frankly an assault. There is no excuse for that. None whatsoever. Yes we did wrong but again it is about a balance. As a bunch of kids given the run of the house, whether we were of the right age or not, we did wrong. However, was the response proportional? The answer is no. Was the response a beating as opposed to a punishment? The answer is yes.
105. It is not acceptable to put someone of my age or any age into a room where the door is shut, where you are scared stiff, petrified, you are lying spreadeagled across the chair, with some guy who you know is a pervert, who then puts his hands on your bum and beats the crap out of you. No, no, no, that is not acceptable. It was a beating that was beyond the realms of what would be considered to be corporal punishment. It was a beating and there is no other way to describe it. It lives with me so clearly.
106. When he was watching you under the shower he was a pervy little man but in that instant he was absolutely bloody raging and completely out of control. How the hell a man like that could be left in charge of children is frankly just crazy.
107. That is the incident that really, really gets to me, although there are a few other things but that is the biggie. That is what I call the big incident for me because I can remember it so bloody clearly. I cannot tell you about the time I got up or went to bed or other routine but I can tell you right down to the detail of the room, with the position of the oar, the desk, the chair and the other door and I was only in there that once. That is because of what he put me through. It was just horrible.
108. As far as I am aware I think everyone involved had to go into his room individually and got the same but you know what, the incident was never mentioned again.

109. In his classroom on his desk he had a collection of sticks and canes and they all had names. The two I can remember are the 'blasphemy stick' and the 'expostulation stick.' I didn't even know what expostulation meant but basically it seemed to be a stick that could be used for anything that didn't fall in the category of anything else. If you swore there was a swearing stick, if you said "oh God" there was the blasphemy stick and if you dropped something on the floor there was a stick and basically there was a stick for everything.
110. Basically as he wanted you would be called to the front of the class and you would be hit on the hands with one of the sticks. Then, having been hit you were rewarded with a jellybean. It is funny that I have a real aversion against jellybeans and Twinkle Twinkle Little Star as it reminds me of these things.
111. This happened to me and everybody in the class virtually every history lesson. I think in reality the stick thing was just a silly thing. It wasn't a painful thing as it wasn't really a hit, it was a tap. It gave him another excuse to get close to you and to hit people. I never got hit by one of these sticks and thought that it hurt. It was quite frankly just childish and pathetic but that was just him and an excuse to get people up to the front of the class.
112. Hamish Dawson was very tactile and would tickle the boys. He would come into the dormitory and tickle us. He would say in that creepy voice again "Come here [REDACTED]" but you were a child you didn't necessarily read into what it was all about.
113. To me looking back the biggest issues were the shower thing, because why would a grown man want to watch boys naked in the shower and the incident in the study.
114. At the same time whilst this was going on there was a groundsman who used to come into the boarding house but I cannot remember his name. For reasons I cannot explain I have referred to him previously as someone called INV [REDACTED] but don't take that as being his name. He would come into the modelling room and talk about radio-controlled models in particular radio-controlled boats.

115. He was just really sort of creepy and when you were trying to do something with the model he would sort of put his arm around you. He was being creepy with the other boys that were in the modelling room as well. He would invite us out on bus trips at the weekend. He said that if we visited his house he would give us cigarettes and porn mags and things like that.
116. He had told three or four of us individually about going to his house and what he would give us so on one occasion the three or four of us did go to his house but he wasn't in. I think that was a good thing because then he started telling us stories about "men renting their bums out in Edinburgh" on Friday and Saturday nights. That was his phrase not mine, I was eleven or twelve years old and I didn't know what that meant but I knew it wasn't good. It is an expression that has lived with me ever since. I think at that stage I made the decision that it wasn't a good idea to be associated with this individual.
117. That was as far as it went with him because I then left as a boarder and became a day boy. In some respects looking back now, his behaviour was more sinister in a sense than Hamish Dawson's. Hamish Dawson's behaviour was out there. He was doing what he was doing and as pupils in a boarding house we were like meat on a plate. We were there, whereas this groundsman or whatever he was, he was a far more sinister individual in terms of what we would now describe as 'grooming' because looking back now that is exactly what he was doing.
118. When you start bribing kids of that age with cigarettes and porn mags and say come to my house, all that seemed rather strange but when you start talking about renting your bums out, that is more creepy to me than Hamish Dawson. Whether or not that behaviour was in conjunction with Hamish Dawson's I can't say but as the housemaster Hamish Dawson must have known that this individual was coming into the boarding house.
119. I can't remember exactly where the groundsman's house was. It was a fair walk, not just round the corner but it was within walking distance of the school. He was dirty, unkempt and just creepy. I honestly don't know what age he was. I don't know how

long he was at the school and all I can say is that he was a groundsman around that period between 1977 and 1978.

120. He was sinister, he was evil and quite frankly, he sends more shivers down my spine than Hamish Dawson. I often wonder what would have happened if I hadn't become a day boy and my concern is what would have happened had I not got out of there. I don't know if anybody else ever went to his house but I do wonder if anything happened to anybody else with him after I left the place.
121. I never told or discussed with anybody about the groundsman. There would be no point in going to Hamish Dawson about it because he was just as bad and he wasn't going to say anything.
122. I never told anybody about the abuse I had suffered from Hamish Dawson or the groundsman. It was the unspoken thing. Everybody in the school knew what was going on, pupils and staff. Pupils knew for sure but you wouldn't tell your parents that.
123. I absolutely think that the school were aware of the abusive behaviour of Hamish Dawson. The deputy housemaster and the matron must have been aware and therefore, I take the view that as they were staff members of the school that the school was aware. They must have been and that is why my anger is directed at the school as an institution. I take the view that Hamish Dawson and the groundsman were sick in the head but they are human individuals, they are not an institution. These things were happening on a daily basis and the school knew what was going on. They had to and they did not do anything about it.
124. Nobody at the school ever asked me why I had gone from being [REDACTED] to being an unruly, hateful individual.

Leaving Edinburgh Academy

125. In 1976 I got the [REDACTED] prize for my work. I was top of the year. I then went into the senior school and I started encountering Hamish Dawson and the groundsman. So there I am in 1977 to 1978 where I have Dawson, who is doing what he is doing, I have this creepy groundsman and I am thinking I have got to get out of here. I had to get out of the boarding house to escape them so in my simple childlike way, the only way I could achieve that was to be horrible and misbehave and that is exactly what I did.
126. I went from being a model pupil who won the [REDACTED] prize to being a little git in order to escape and it worked. My behaviour really started to go downhill. I started not to do my schoolwork. I became unruly in the classroom and unfortunately for him the focus of my unruliness was Mr Orr who was a Latin teacher. He was a lovely man who wouldn't hurt a fly and yet I was particularly nasty and horrible to him. Unfortunately that suited my master plan to escape in order to achieve my end goal. It was him I had been throwing the scrunched up paper at and all this I imagine was getting recorded by the school.
127. I got up one day at home and was speaking to my father as he was shaving in the mirror. I can remember his exact words. He said, "There's a horrible smell downstairs, don't worry it's not a gas leak, it's your school report." I remember thinking 'Oh yes I had got what I wanted.' He was livid and as far as he was concerned that was a major let down. I had disappointed him badly. He told me "You are either going to be expelled or I am going to have to pull you out and you will have to commute every day." As far as I was aware it was the school that forced the issue and I said, "Bring it on."
128. So the good result for me was that for the academic year 197[REDACTED]7[REDACTED] I was a day boy and was commuting from Polmont on the train every day. As soon as I became a day boy I was away from the grooming groundsman and Hamish Dawson in the boarding house environment. I could cope with his stupid sticks in the classroom but

I knew he wouldn't be watching me in the shower and I knew he wouldn't be having me in his study. As far as I was concerned that was it, I had escaped.

129. My father never forgave me and it had a huge impact on the relationship I had with him. He had sent me there to get what he considered to be a first-rate education, he had plans for me to be a professional as he put it, as there had never been a professional in our family. I had gone from getting the [REDACTED] prize for which he was extremely proud to effectively being this wild child and getting thrown out the boarding school. He must have wondered why, but he never asked why. Even if he had asked I probably wouldn't have told him.
130. When I went back as a day pupil I started behaving a bit better but the problem was the damage had been done and I wasn't engaged in the school. It was hard to come back to where I had been. I needed a fresh start and I needed to go somewhere else.
131. At the end of that academic year in 197[REDACTED] my father moved the family down to Wales because he was going out to the Middle East to work and our family came from Wales. My father's intention from the start was that I was going to be at Edinburgh Academy right through. He was absolutely devastated with my behaviour and having to pull me out of boarding because it messed up everything that was planned in order for me to carry on. He put me into Christ College as a boarder and started again.

Life after Edinburgh Academy

132. It was quite an odd feeling moving from Scotland to Wales and I am disappointed that my father sent me to another boarding school when we got there. I had been a day boy for a year and when we were moving there was a really good school in the locality in Wales but he wanted me to go to another boarding school which again I found odd.

133. It's quite interesting in a sense that when I left Edinburgh Academy I went to another boarding school in Wales where there was no corporal punishment. If you played up or misbehaved at Christ College the punishment was to go and pick stones up off the rugby pitch, run round the pitches or up a Roman road. It was much more physical in that sense. Bearing in mind I left Edinburgh Academy one year and went to Christ College the next year there was no corporal punishment or sexual abuse to my knowledge. There you have a direct comparison of two institutions where in one it was rife and the other there was none of it.
134. For me the issue there is the direct comparison between two institutions at the same time with two completely different cultures. To me for the Edinburgh Academy it was an institutional issue and I can only say that as I went directly from one to the other. Christ College still has its boarding houses and it is interesting to me that Edinburgh Academy got rid of theirs. To me that is frankly the best thing they ever did.
135. That is not to say that I enjoyed the second one as I was bullied to hell because I had a Scottish accent in a Welsh school. It was a level of discrimination, almost racism where I was called [REDACTED] because I had a Scottish accent. That was the only thing that set me apart and that was hell. However, in terms of behaviour none of what happened at Edinburgh Academy happened to me there and to the best of my knowledge it never happened at all. I have checked the internet and there is absolutely nothing about the Christ College school having any of these problems.
136. Although I was bullied to hell there, I managed to get through that as I learned from my time at Edinburgh Academy not to tell on the bullies. All I did was concentrate on my work.
137. I was older and what happened to me at the academy was still having an effect on me but it was a completely different environment and the housemaster there Mr Francis was lovely. He knew I was having a hard time and when he and his wife used to go out he would let me go in and babysit his children for him. There were teachers there that you didn't want to get on the wrong side of. One was ex SAS who

made you run with big packs on your back but it wasn't let's go and watch the boys in the showers or beat hell out you with 'clackens' or sandals.

138. Apart from the bullying, Christ College was a great school. It was on the banks of the river Usk, you were fishing all the time and it was a good school. I got sixteen GCSE's and I got some 'A' levels.
139. I left Christ College and went to the Dorset Institute for three years where I got a degree in law. I left there in 1986, went to law school. In 1987 I started with a local law firm where I still am to this day. I married in 1991 and am still married.
140. I practiced as a fee earning lawyer which is a client facing lawyer and did that until 2014. I have hated it, it was never what I wanted to do but it was what my father wanted me to do. I wanted to be a forestry commission manager on the west coast of Scotland but he wanted a professional in the family and that is what I did.
141. In the year 2000 my wife and I adopted the first of our four children. We then adopted other ones in 2002, 2003 and 2004. Those children have come from a mother who was an alcoholic and drug addict so have had a whole myriad of problems. They have alcohol spectrum disorder, you name it they have it. We have had to deal with all of that and what's come as a result of it which at times was incredibly difficult. It was very difficult for me to balance being an equity partner in a law firm whilst bringing up four children with the level of needs they had, whilst I was suffering from a degree of anxiety about absolutely everything.
142. In 2014 I gave up my equity and became a salaried partner in the law firm working three days a week and not doing any client facing work. I now do all the things like complaints, claims, staffing and all that sort of stuff but I am not under the pressure I was. My clients now are the partners of the firm.

It hasn't been easy, we have had a lot to contend with but I think a lot of the training I have had over the years in relation to the children in dealing with attachment and all that gives me a slightly different or more balanced approach to what we are talking

about in relation to myself. I have had to confront abuse and that sort of thing within the family and the circumstances they have come from. So I can see how it all pans out really.

Impact

143. I think the impact that boarding at Edinburgh Academy had on me was that it made for an extremely unpleasant childhood. I did not have a good childhood. From the ages of eight to thirteen I was living in a cold, abusive environment. For the last year that I was there I had upset my relationship with my father which never recovered. I had let myself down in terms of my education in order to escape the situation that the school had put me in. I don't say my father put me in it because my father didn't know.
144. I then left there and went to another boarding school where I was always looking over my shoulder for the rest of my education. It wasn't until I left school and went to university that I wasn't in that fearful surrounding.
145. In terms of childhood if you want to call childhood up to the age of eighteen what happened at the Edinburgh Academy impacted on all of that.
146. It makes me cross because as children we are supposed to enjoy our childhood not live like that and that is why I am so angry with the school. Nobody is ever going to tell me different because the school knew what was going on and they did nothing about it. If they had done then I might still have suffered it but countless others wouldn't have done.
147. In terms of abuse, it is not the worst ever type of abuse but it has impacted on me as an individual. It hasn't impacted on my career but as an individual I have always been a very anxious person and I just wonder where that anxiety has come from. I've been told by the counsellor that I am seeing that when I was at the Edinburgh Academy I was hyper-vigilant.

148. I was always anxious and then when I went to Christ College I was constantly anxious in case it happened again and you would sort of get programmed to be anxious. The interesting thing is I have never, ever spoken about this with my G.P. I don't know why because I am not like that. I am one of these people that just wants to get on with life but this is just lingering now.
149. It is interesting that after being [REDACTED] I became that unruly, hateful boy that when I went to be a day pupil and when I went to Christ College my performance went up again, I got my sixteen GCSE's, my A levels and then went on to get my degree.
150. It was the environment I was in that I had to get out of there. I had tried to get out of it once before by running away but I was much younger then and I had failed. I suppose I took the view that what was worse, being in that environment or being shouted at by my father? I took being shouted at by my father.
151. My biggest problem though was having been a day boy I was put back into the boarding school environment and I was absolutely petrified that what had happened to me at Edinburgh Academy was going to happen to me at Christ College. It was absolutely terrible.
152. I remember walking into the dormitory with my big trunk and I was thinking 'Oh my God, here we go.' I was looking over my shoulder the whole time as I just didn't know who to trust and who not to trust. I used to sleep fully clothed on top of the bed and it wasn't until I left Christ College that I stopped looking over my shoulder because I was then not in that environment.
153. I didn't enjoy my time at Christ College for two reasons. One was the bullying because of my accent and the other one was that constant fear of what happened at Edinburgh Academy would happen again. Over the years, as it wasn't happening, that fear didn't fall away completely but it ebbed, as you knew it wasn't that sort of environment.

154. After I left Christ College, I went to university and I buried it all. It used to come into my mind from time to time but I had buried it pretty much.

I have never been back to any Edinburgh Academy reunions and I don't have any friends from my time there. I am in contact with some people from there now but that has only happened since all this came out.

155. I have been affected. I am a very anxious person and I just put that down to what happened at the school.

156. When I was at Dundas House I left taps on which flooded the house and I was so scared that I was going to get a telling off but I didn't. As my wife would tell you, even when I first met her in 1987 I had OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder) in terms of taps to the point where when I left the front door I would go back and into every room where there was a tap and put my hand under it to make sure there was no water coming out. I could see there was no water coming out. Then I would go outside shut the door, go back in and do the same again. That came from flooding Dundas House as I was so scared of the trouble that I was going to get in.

157. In about 2004 Nicky Campbell's book 'Blue-Eyed Son' The Story of an Adoption was published and because I had adopted children I bought the book. I didn't even know at that stage that Nicky Campbell had gone to Edinburgh Academy. In the book he talks about going there and he said "I had a great education and made some lifelong friends at Edinburgh Academy. The hide qualities of the school have been aired elsewhere many times and where I believe were symptomatic of a darker age. Kids are far more savvy now. Back then we knew it was wrong but we did not know it was right to tell."

158. Bearing in mind, I didn't actually know Nicky Campbell, that is pretty much what I've said. Then he said, "There were to my knowledge two certain teachers in my time there who took an unhealthy sexual interest in small boys and another who took an unhealthy interest in hurting them. I suffered at the hands of the sadist and was

touched by one of the perverts but not in the appalling way one of my close friends was.”

159. When I read that, I thought bloody hell, that's it. Someone has actually said what I knew and experienced. I went to my wife and said to her “read that” and she did. I said to her ‘I could have written that” and that was the first time I had told anybody about it and it was because of that book.
160. That then set a problem for me because it re-awoke all the stuff that I have talked about and I had buried it. It became not quite an obsession but it wouldn't go away so on 31 October 2017, I sent an email to Nicky Campbell at the BBC to ask him if one of the teachers to whom he referred to in his book was HD. That was all I said. I never received a response to that but I don't blame Nicky Campbell for that. I just sent it to the BBC and they probably get millions of emails.
161. Every time something has happened like Jimmy Saville or Rolf Harris or any of that lot it was like, ‘god it's happened again’ and all these memories happened again. I then just let it go. I didn't know what to do. I didn't know whether to go to the police. Were they really going to listen to me as it was forty years ago? Were they going to be interested? I thought probably not so I just left it.
162. Then of course Nicky Campbell appears on the television and in the press and the matter is catapulted into the public domain which has been great because it has vindicated everything that others and myself have said.
163. A few weeks ago I saw a picture of Hamish Dawson and that is the first picture I have seen of him since I left the school and that triggered in particular the study incident. That's where I am at and that was when I rang up the Inquiry.
164. I have thought about the abuse every day since I read the book and although I know it sounds strange, I think why the hell did I send an email to Nicky Campbell in 2017.

165. Up until I had a letter from Police Scotland in January 2022 I thought about it virtually every day. Since I have had the letter and everything else has been coming out I do think about it every day. It has become an obsession. The first thing I do in the morning is I look on my phone and google Edinburgh Academy Abuse and that is just because I want it finished. I want it done. It annoys me that it takes up so much of my head space. It's a weird thing because it is just there.

I have dreamt about it but only really since this process started. It is not a nightmare but is a horrible dream that I am back in that boarding house with Hamish Dawson in that study. That's the most vivid thing. That oar on the wall, all that sensory stuff that's pulled in from that one incident but I was so scared to be in that room with him. It was horrible. The shower thing and the classroom thing. I was with other people but that was the one time I was on my own and he put his hands on me.

Reporting of Abuse to Police

166. In January of last year I got the letter from Mark Riddell at Police Scotland saying 'in furtherance of an investigation involving a certain boarding school of which I believe you may have been a pupil, I believe you may be in possession of information which could assist the investigation.'

167. When I opened that letter I broke down. After it being triggered in 2004 and thinking I had let it go I realised I hadn't, as I had sent the email in 2017. I realised all that time I had been thinking about it. Nicky Campbell didn't respond so I let that go and then that letter arrives and suddenly I think 'shit, this is real' and I broke down.

168. I got in touch with Mark Riddell and he was absolutely fantastic. He contacted Poole police and arranged for me to give a statement to them. Poole police said it would be someone specially trained that would take my statement but when I went in it was just a PC. They took my statement, I signed it and it was filed internally with Police Scotland. I have not had an update since. I don't have a copy of the police statement but the one I have been referring to today is another one that I wrote out.

169. The statement I gave to the police is exactly what I have told you. Nothing has changed. Nothing that has been in the press has changed what I have told you. All the stuff in the press came subsequent to the police statement that I made.
170. When I got the letter from the police I told my closest friend what had happened and he said he thought it was pretty heavy stuff.
171. After that I got in touch with some solicitors to look into it for me because it had become an obsession.

Treatment/support

172. I had CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) in 2003 that at the time wasn't attributed to this directly but it was all to do with my anxiety and my OCD at the time. This was all I had until last September when this was all getting too much.
173. My heart wouldn't stop racing and it was all just too much. The stress bucket was overflowing and too much was going on. I just felt that the Edinburgh Academy weren't taking it seriously at all. If you google Edinburgh Academy abuse, the first thing that comes up is the Edinburgh Academy saying how sorry they are but I don't think they really are. That is the PR machine. I don't think they are taking it seriously enough as an institution. For me, actions speak louder than words. They need to step off the fence, just accept it and stop faffing about.
174. It all got too much and in September last year, I spoke to the mental health advisor at work. She asked what was the matter with me and I told her. She said I needed to get my head straightened out and referred me to a stress counsellor.

Originally I was only going to book in for six sessions but it keeps coming back like a bad dream so I have kept seeing her. I see her once a month just to keep parking it. She tells me I have to compartmentalise things so that I don't over stress about things that I can do nothing about. She is teaching my brain to say if I am thinking

about it, think about something else, otherwise it becomes all-consuming and it has helped a lot. I have never been on medication because of any of this.

Lessons to be Learned

175. For me bad things happened at Edinburgh Academy and they shouldn't have. There is a lot of negativity out there about these things but there were also good things and it is about getting that balance. There is putting over what happened as it shouldn't have happened but it wasn't all bad all of the time. Good things like, going to Hillend, and Glen Doll happened there.
176. Abuse impacts on people in different ways. There are some people out there where everything is overshadowed by that and absolutely everything is negative because of that.
177. Everybody's outlook is different. My wife and I adopted four children. Their mother was an alcoholic and a drug addict. All my children have additional needs. I deal with it and have a huge amount of involvement with the police and all manner of things. It sort of builds you up to getting a balance. You have good days and you have bad days.
178. I firmly believe that institutions whether it be schools, social services, the courts or anybody else should be held accountable if they don't do what they are supposed to do in order to safeguard children. Everything that I have had to do is all about safeguarding children and as a child I was not safeguarded and that is it.
179. For me I am angrier at the Edinburgh Academy as an institution than I am at Hamish Dawson and the groundsman because in my mind they had an illness that made them behave the way they did. The Edinburgh Academy knew what was going on but did nothing to stop it. The Edinburgh Academy as an institution let us down and it didn't just let me down, it let others down and it let my parents down.

180. That is my position which in many respects I accept may be is different to other people's position.

Hopes for the Inquiry

181. I believe that there should be total transparency and no fear by anyone in the school in the event that they whistle blow. That is really what it comes down to. The primary consideration of any institution like that should be the welfare of the children. In fact the Children's Act provides that the primary concern in anything to do with children should be the welfare of the child. The welfare of the child should be above the reputation of the school, end of.

182. Any member of staff, any parent and any child of whatever age should be able to report anything like this without fear of reprisal in any way, shape or form.

183. That is what I want this inquiry to find moving forward. Much of what happened at Edinburgh Academy happened in the boarding house and thankfully they have all gone but that is not say that that they shouldn't be held accountable in other schools still with boarding houses and those other closed environments.

184. I don't believe that private schools are under the same scrutiny as public state schools. They should be equally accountable across the board, private, public or whatever institution and there should be no fear at any level to report anything. That is what I think needs to come off the back of this Inquiry.

185. The Inquiry needs to send a firm message to establishments like the Edinburgh Academy to just accept that what happened, happened, to apologise sincerely for it and to make good.

Moving forward a message needs to be sent out to every school, residential facility, even a prison or anywhere that looks after people that they have got to get this right and to make damn sure that if it goes wrong that they are really brought to account.

Other information

186. 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..... 19th June 2023