

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

FNC

Support person present: No

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

Life before going to Edinburgh Academy

2. I was born in Edinburgh and lived initially in Cramond before moving to the Trinity area of the city. My father's name was and my mum is I have two older sisters called, who is three years older than me, and who is the middle child. My dad worked for the Royal Bank of Scotland in Edinburgh and my mum didn't work when I was in school, but started to work part-time when I was a teenager.
3. I initially attended Miss Malvie's Nursery School in Murrayfield and can recall being thrashed by a teacher when I was enjoying myself playing. I think I was lying on a linoleum floor, playing with building blocks and I realised I could skim them across the floor and they would slide a long way. Clearly the teacher was not happy with me doing this. I think I must have been aged around four at the time.
4. Life before going to school was quite idyllic. There was the usual sibling rivalry and my two sisters were very academic and I was the sporty one. I am mildly dyslexic and this must have been picked up quite early on as Edinburgh Academy were aware of it when I started there at the age of five. Apparently the primary school was known to manage pupils with dyslexia, although I do not recall any additional support and the

school wasn't particularly dyslexia-friendly. My sisters attended St George's School in Edinburgh as Edinburgh Academy was for boys only.

5. The Academy was chosen for me partly because of where we lived in the city. My dad went to Watson's and private school was the option for me, and also my dad could give me a lift to school when he was on his way to work. The school's reputation probably helped and their new prep school had just been built.

Edinburgh Academy – nursery and primary school

6. The prep school was on Arboretum Road, near Goldenacre and was separate from the rest of the school. There was a nursery school round the corner in a big old house that no longer exists. I initially went to the nursery school at Murrayfield at the age of three or four years and then went to the Edinburgh Academy nursery school and spent years 1 and 2 in the separate Academy nursery school that was close to the primary school on Arboretum Road.
7. I had to take an examination of sorts with the primary school headmaster who gave me some tasks to perform. This happened when I was still at the nursery in Murrayfield. I recall being in his study at the time and it was just me who took the examination at that time. It was quite an informal process and my dad took me there and was present when I was given the tasks. I think they were probably checking the family out as much as anything. I don't recall any preparation beforehand and I don't think I went to visit the nursery before I started there.
8. There were a few families in Cramond with kids at the Academy and we shared lifts to school. Sometimes my mum or dad took us, mainly my dad, as the school would have been on the way to his work.
9. I was educated in the same building until I was about seven years old. It was a big, old ramshackle house in large grounds. It was a nice building and there were lots of trees in the grounds. There were no children who were boarding at that age. I think

children started to board when they went to the prep school at the age of eight, but I am not certain.

10. I was one of the oldest when I went to infant school and was in P1. This meant my education was minimally disadvantaged. Because of my age I was initially put in to 3a as in tradition for private schools and this was written in Roman numerals as IIIa. This was in year one of primary and this was also the beginning of prep school. Pupils were streamed according to ability from P3 onwards.
11. I'd enjoyed the nursery school at Edinburgh Academy and I'd got used to things and learned how to behave so I didn't get in trouble. I was now in a separate, new building, from the nursery school. With regard to teachers, I can only recall Miss Scott in the nursery school. I can't recall what the codes of discipline were at the nursery. I'm sure there must have been physical discipline, but I generally kept out of trouble and don't recall any particular incidents.
12. The new prep school building was a typical 60s design and quite clinical with linoleum floors and with a hospital-style interior. It was designed and wasn't bleak. I was educated in that building until I started secondary school. The grounds were extensive, I recall a playing field and a running track and large trees.
13. In the prep school we were generally in the same classroom and we moved around to different rooms for certain subjects like RE and Art. With regard to prep school teachers, I recall Miss McKenzie and she was an excellent teacher. After IIIa, I progressed to IVa and then to Vb. I began to drop grades as I got older and I wasn't producing the same quality of written work as the others. Our work was measured frequently through internal exams. It was quite a big thing to be demoted from stream a to stream b. I was ok with it myself as I knew I couldn't compete with my sisters and I was happy to move to Vb as I wasn't in a class with swots and I had better classmates who played football.

Routine at primary school

Mornings and bedtime

14. In the mornings I would be dropped off at school by my dad or by one of our neighbours. In school there would then be prayers said in the main hall and this was led by the headmaster. The ethos of the prep school was to build character and remind us to behave in a civilised manner and do the best that we could with what we had. They did that through strict discipline. At prayers there was a strict lining up of pupils and we were not allowed to talk to each other. After prayers we would disperse into our class groups.
15. By the end of prep school some of the pupils were boarding. I never saw the sleeping arrangements for the prep school pupils, but was aware of where their boarding house was. I didn't have any friends who boarded at prep school and I know very little about their evening routine.

Mealtimes / Food

16. In the hall there were different tables for different classes and at lunchtime there was a lot of chatter. School dinners were provided for nearly everyone, but a small number had packed lunches. I had school meals. I don't remember the school meals in prep school, but by the time of secondary school they were bad. The staff were present and eating with the children. I can't remember if they had a separate table.
17. The boarders had their tea in our lunch hall. Sometimes, if there was an event after school, we would stay on and have our tea with them. It was a big hall, designed as a performance space and wasn't very bright and it always struck me as not being a happy place to have tea at the end of the school day. It wasn't homely at all.

Clothing / uniform

18. Our uniform was blue and with medium length shorts, grey shirt, tie and a jacket. We had to wear this from when we first started at the school.

School

19. With regard to the curriculum in the prep school, we followed the English model generally. Most of the teachers were academically very bright and straight out of Oxbridge. SNR [REDACTED] was Mr IGG [REDACTED]. The school was divided into four houses and I was in Cockburn. The house colour was blue, which was better than being green or yellow. Yellow was the colour for the boarders. The houses were really for sporting team purposes, so we could compete against each other. The boarders tended to be more close-knit and better at sports.
20. The nursery school was for pupils from the age of four up to six, then prep school was for seven to eleven, before moving onto secondary school at twelve and at a different site within Edinburgh. When I was in P3 there were three classes, by secondary school there were four classes. In prep school there were a couple of hundred pupils and in my class there were about twenty-five kids.
21. The school was aware I had dyslexia. At the start there was possibly some unspoken understanding of it, but it wasn't continued. I don't recall any of the teachers making any allowances for my understanding of the school work and there wouldn't have been much understanding of dyslexia in those days.
22. In the prep school I had a form teacher who would be my teacher for all of that year and took nearly all the lessons. It was only at secondary school that I had different teachers for different topics. It's difficult now to recall the names of teachers, but I recall there was another form teacher called Mr Wares. I can recall we had a separate PE teacher at this time who was very good, but I do not remember his name.

23. In prep school there were both boarders and day pupils. I don't recall any real rivalry between day pupils and boarders, but the boarders were noticeably close-knit. I was becoming more aware of them from the age of eight.
24. In prep school there may have been about twenty teachers and the standard of teaching was mixed, but reasonably good. They tried to be quite progressive in primary education and follow modern thinking. Mr [GG] [SNR] was quite nice and calm, but not to be messed with. We got a lot of homework and I got on ok with the extra school work.

Religion

25. There was grace said before lunch and we had RE lessons.

Leisure time

26. There was a break time in the morning and no food was involved. After lunch we were allowed outside to play. After the school day had finished the boarders had strict prep time and I heard stories of them being punished at prep time. I don't know where in the school they did their prep, but it was done after school and before tea. There were sports for all of us after school in prep school. Football was strictly played at break time only and not encouraged as the school was all about rugby, and cricket in summer.
27. Unlike the upper school, which was more traditional and formal, with the new building there was an appearance of being modern and less stuffy. There were no strange school rituals that I recall. The boarding pupils had leisure time after dinner and they got out to play sports.

Visits / Inspections

28. The boarders had visiting days. They were allowed to leave school premises overnight twice a year in term-time. In the school holidays they either went home or if they

couldn't go home they stayed on the school premises. I think that the parents could visit anytime if they wanted, but often they lived overseas and that was why their child was in a boarding school. I think they were encouraged to write to their families and there was a letter writing session once a week on school paper.

29. I don't recall any inspections taking place in the school.

Running away

30. I'm not aware of any prep school pupil running away.

Discipline

31. There was strict discipline in the prep school. It was extremely physical. I don't recall a lot of shouting. There was sometimes rage on the part of a teacher who was losing control of the children, but they kept it under the surface as much as possible. I don't recall ever seeing a written code of conduct or rules. A typical punishment might be writing out school rules 100 times. This would be a half-way point before the physical discipline started. The sort of behaviour that would be disciplined included talking in class or anything that disrupted the flow of the class, and generally classes were silent. I never felt it was so heavy that there was no space for misbehaving. There was always some sort of disruption going on so the deterrent wasn't that strong. We knew the ultimate sanction was being expelled and we knew they weren't going to do that because we were fee paying and we felt secure in that.
32. Physical punishment started in primary school with rulers on fingers and a slap about the head. That would be administered by the class teacher. If you were sent to see the headmaster it was a big thing and that didn't happen often as it meant the class teacher had failed. Discipline tended to be administered by the class teacher. My teacher Miss McKenzie was fierce enough that I don't recall her using physical punishment.

33. Part of private school life was to invent a game to play based on some old traditions. We had a game called 'hails'. We were in the first year that didn't play it. It was played with a small hard ball and a flat wooden bat. The game was considered too dangerous to play, but the teachers used the bat to hit pupils on the bottom. I got six of the bat from a male teacher when I was aged ten. I had been beaten by him before. He was really pretty angry at me. I remember I could sense his presence behind me and heard the squeak of his shoes as he hit me because of the effort he was putting into it. This was in front of the class and something like this happened to someone in my class every week and from other teachers. I expect I was left with bruises, but I don't remember them. After the beating, you'd be trying your best to stop yourself from crying and you'd be sent back to your desk in a mess. You did recover quickly and there was some kudos amongst your pals. This teacher used a bat, but women teachers in nursery used a ruler on your hands and I think they would strike you more than once.
34. Other pupils were hurt this way frequently, I can't recall examples, and you knew what they were going through. There was a small group of children who were beaten regularly and I was on the periphery of that. My recollection is that it was a weekly occurrence. I don't recall any record being made of physical punishment.
35. I didn't speak to my parents about physical punishments. I think they would prefer not to know that I'd been naughty. No notes were sent home about punishments, though I assume that would be the next step up. A comment might be made on report cards and I think there were slots available on the cards for comments about behaviour, but punishments were not specified. I think my parents were aware that there were physical punishments.

Abuse at prep school

36. Mr Wares was one of the class teachers and he wasn't my teacher. I think he was the teacher for Vc or Vd. All teachers had nicknames and he was called 'weirdo Wares'. He would stick his hand up some boys shorts and it was as far as the rumours went.

As children we didn't have the language to deal with this behaviour. We'd refer to it amongst ourselves and the level of discussion was fairly off-hand and generalised. The issue was more about the effect it had on the boy, like the physical punishment, and how many they got before they started crying and how they were perceived by their peers. I wasn't touched by Mr Wares as he wasn't my teacher. I can't recall specific occasions of boys telling me he had touched them. His behaviour was just part of general culture and rumour amongst the boys.

37. Mr Wares was middle-aged in his late 30s or 40s with fair, straight long hair. We were aware his behaviour wasn't ordinary behaviour, but he could get away with it because it was normalised. I didn't witness it happening, but was aware it happened in class and in front of the other boys in that class. I don't know the names of any of the boys who were in his class who would speak about it. I had no idea how often it occurred and it was happening when I was in the prep school in year 5 and aged around ten. I had one more year to go before upper school.

Edinburgh Academy – Upper school

38. We went on to secondary school a year earlier than in state schools. No preparation was given for moving on to the Upper School and I had not visited the building prior to starting there. I can't remember my first day there. I was still in Cockburn House. I think by then I travelled there by bus every day. I started upper school at the age of twelve and went into the class called Geits. There were prefects and they were called Ephors and the head teacher was a Rector. The teachers wore gowns in class.
39. The school was in a Georgian building that, in my view, was not suited to teaching children. There was an imposing entrance that leads into the main hall. There were five classrooms on each side of the entrance. To us these classrooms were huge and there were smaller ones round the back. There were no green fields, unlike at the prep school. The boarders walked to school from their boarding house.

40. I had friends who boarded at the upper school. My best friend at school was [REDACTED], who lived along the road to me, and secondary to him were my friends [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] IPU [REDACTED]. They were best friends and I tagged along with them as a third person in the group. They were both boarders at the Academy and slept in a boarding house. I never stayed there overnight myself, but I visited it. It looked very similar to the house used for the nursery school. It was an old rambling house and with some modern sections. My own home was just [REDACTED] away from the boarding house.

Routine

Mornings and bedtime

41. In the morning there were communal prayers in the hall and we were all crammed in there. I think there were around one thousand pupils in the whole school including the prep school. I knew the boarders had shared study bedrooms and I saw where they slept in reasonably sized rooms. They had a single bed each, a wardrobe and a desk. There were two boys to each room and they could personalise their room.
42. I don't know what happened at bedtimes, but I believe there was a thing about lights out at a certain time and a house master walking along the corridor to check. There was a house master for each boarding house and he slept on the premises overnight. They had a flat of their own. Mr Dawson was a house master of the prep school boarders. I don't remember any others. I don't remember any character flaws being mentioned. I think if boys were mis-behaving at night it would be dealt with in a similar way as during the school day, by grounding, loss of free time or corporal punishment.
43. There was never any discussion of bed wetting or how that would be dealt with. I also don't know what the morning routine would be in the boarding house. I don't know if the boarders had any chores to do. I can't recall seeing a communal room or any books or toys.

Trips/holidays

44. Most of the boys went home for the holidays, but a small number stayed behind and I don't know what these boys did in the holidays.
45. The school was good at organising trips away generally. We went away to a little cottage in Glen Doll in the school minibus to do bracing outdoor activities. It was supervised by the teachers. There were also overseas trip and there was a school cruise every year. I went on it once, when I was fourteen, with other schools. There were two staff members supervising my year group.

Mealtimes and food

46. For the boarders, each class had their own table and a teacher placed at either end who dished out the food. If you didn't want to eat the food, I think the attitude depended on the teacher involved and how old the pupil was. I never had an issue with food and can't recall a problem with not eating the food. The teachers understood that the food wasn't great.

School

47. In the upper school we went to different classes for different topics. I had no extra time to complete written tasks, but I got on reasonably well at secondary school. My spelling can be quite random. In terms of the quality of teaching, the staff at the upper school were a mixed bag and they could be fairly fierce. The quality of teaching was mixed. There were different teachers for different subjects. The maths teacher I had for three years was not great at teaching my age level. The teachers had come straight from university and had not necessarily obtained teaching qualifications.
48. In O' Level year I got another maths teacher and he was brilliant and he got me through exams. I recall another teacher called Alan Jarman in the English department. He got

me into the top class in English which was my favourite subject. Similarly in History, there was a very good teacher called Mr Harris and my chemistry teacher was good too. There were frequent formal exams internally and I did external exams too. I had support at home with homework from my parents and I was still lagging behind my sisters.

49. There was no help in school in preparation for life after school. There was not much by way of career guidance. I don't think the teachers were trained in that at all. I recall we did a psychometric test once to try to establish what type of career path we should follow and that was the extent of the careers advice. It was assumed that we would go on to university, even the pupils who were not gifted academically got to university, mainly because of where they went to school.
50. We started our day in our form class for registration and prayers and then went to different teachers for different subjects. The school was all boys until I was aged fifteen and then four girls arrived. Up until then there had been two girls doing A' Levels in a separate building. The upper age for the school was eighteen, and sometimes nineteen if a pupil was going on to Oxbridge. We did English O' Levels one year early, then two years in school for Highers and then A' Levels were available after another one year and some stayed on longer for a second batch of A' Levels.

Leisure time

51. I was aware the boarders were allowed out of the boarding house after tea until around 9:30 at night and maybe outside of the grounds too. On a Saturday night they were allowed to be out until approximately 10:30. My group had a mutual friend, [REDACTED] who lived half-way between my home and the boarding house and we could come and go from his house. He was actually from the year above us and was from an easy going household. We would very often, certainly at weekends, all meet at his home. So I knew they had some freedom in the evenings, but a lot of it was stolen freedom as they were going out of the school grounds without permission.

52. On Monday there was Cadets and by fourth year we all came to school in our military uniform – army, navy and air force. In theory you had to write an essay and the school chose which one you would go into. I don't think my essay was very good and I ended up in the army. Later on, four of us were excused the third year to go with the Padre who took us to a local charity and we did gardening instead.
53. On Tuesday and Thursdays the whole school got to do rugby, cricket or athletics and if you were any good you would do it on Wednesday too. There was also sport on a Saturday morning. When the school day finished the boarders had their prep time and I think by then they had their own shared study rooms. After sports the boarders had their evening meal with the prep school boarders. I was sometimes there too if there was a school function. The food was notorious in the upper school for how bad it was. The food for tea was quite simple. I ate lunch in the secondary school hall and sometimes stayed on at school for tea if there was an event after school. After lunch there was some recreation time.
54. I think how they spent their leisure time after tea was up to them. I'm not sure if they had a television in the boarding house and I wasn't aware of there being a communal area. In the times I was in the boarding house, I probably wasn't meant to be there and sneaked my way in and wasn't able to properly see the facilities. I don't recall seeing a shower room or bathroom so have no idea what the bathing arrangements were.

Religion

55. There was a religious service every morning with a prayer and hymns. We said grace before meals and religious education was part of the curriculum. With regard to rituals or ceremonies, there were curious anomalies that had occurred over the years. I can't recall particular examples, but there were strange names for things to set us apart from other schools.
56. There was a system of 'fagging', but it probably had a different name. It was in the boarding section for the boarders and the senior pupils had younger boys who had to

do whatever the older ones told them to do. I heard of things that boys had to do as fags that seemed ridiculous and outrageous at the time. The ephors were like the police force in the school and I could understand what they were for, to help teachers with discipline and give boys experience of responsibility, but the fagging system was open for boys to exploit their power over others.

Christmas/birthdays

57. At Christmas time there were some children who stayed in the boarding houses. I don't know what happened over the holidays, but everyone else felt very sorry for them as it was pretty miserable. When it came to birthdays, I don't remember anything special happening for them.
58. Pupils could have visits from family members, but I didn't witness that as it would be at weekends. I don't remember any bereavements for the boys who were boarders and don't know how that would have been dealt with. There was a phone they could have used to call home, but I don't know if there were regular phone conversations.

Sibling contact and contact with friends

59. There were sibling groups at school and one of my friends had a younger brother. One friend became a boarder and had a brother who remained as a day pupil. Siblings would not be sharing a room in the boarding house. I think being homesick was fairly standard in the earlier years at school. If they were struggling with homesickness they could see the housemaster and most of those teachers were married. They would live in a flat in the boarding house and their wives may well have had a pastoral role.
60. My friends who were boarding came to my house for tea. They had to get consent from the teachers and they had to establish it was a genuine invitation and preferably written.

Behaviour of pupils

61. There was probably dabbling in drink and drugs amongst the older boys. There was talk of desperate drug experimentation and vague references to heroin in the boarding houses. I certainly didn't witness that. I think the school's policy would be to treat it as other misdemeanours. I drank with boarders on a Saturday and don't recall getting caught in the boarding house. Smoking was widespread. Parents provided pocket money to the boys as part of the school fees.
62. There was a relationship between St George's and Edinburgh Academy and there were notorious, official parties for both sets of boarders and I went to one of them, unofficially. There was one per term and on school premises. It was minimally supervised. There was alcohol involved. I'm not aware of girls from St George's coming in to the boarding house. With regard to sexual relationships amongst boarders, there was a slightly submerged homoerotic thing going on which was part of the atmosphere and seems inevitable in a single-sex setting. In the boarding house, behaviour was much more extreme than things were at home and people were less inhibited. I don't remember any inspections when I was in the upper school.

Healthcare

63. If a boarder was unwell there was a matron on the staff. I think she would be shared amongst the four school houses and there was a room for sick boys who would be under matron's care. I don't remember any incidents. Boys would be taken to hospital because of rugby injuries and I don't know if a staff member would take them in their own car.

Discipline

64. The upper school was more traditional, hierarchical and strict than the prep school. The ephors were like a private police force and had their own room in the school building. The staff had their own entrance and their own space. The prefects were in charge of behaviour and discipline in communal areas for offences such as running or shouting. I am not sure how they were selected then, by the time of my year to be chosen it was done by election. Myself and some others were not put on the ballot

paper as we were not considered the correct material. I think around a third of boys became prefects, from four classes of twenty-six pupils. The 'ephors' took delight in finding reasons to punish the younger boys. They could give out lines for boys to write out. If you were sent to the ephors' room it meant a beating or a shouting. I can't remember being beaten by them, but I went there to be shouted at a few times. I was very aware of the head ephor when I was in first year.

65. Ephors could beat boys and this happened to my friends for pretty gratuitous reasons. Their reasons were not like the ones teachers had for punishing us when they were trying to run a class. Ephors picked on the weaker members of the community. I can't recall if any of my friends were beaten by them. I can't specifically recall if any of my friends were beaten with the clachan, this was the name of the bat that had been used in the game of hails. I remember it being a terror. Certainly in first year they terrorised the younger ones.
66. The culture might have changed over my years at the school. I don't recall the ephors in my year beating children so often as when I was younger. It was common to see physical punishment and it was threatened daily. There was interest in how many you got and your demeanour afterwards. The teachers were not interested in what the ephors did to punish boys.
67. Discipline at the hands of the teachers varied widely. Some teachers were known for it and some were not. One or two of the teachers had the tawse leather straps. Mr Dawson, who taught English, was known for taking delight over his instruments of punishment and he gave them names. There was a tawse in his desk and my school friend ██████████ told me he had a clachan on the wall behind his desk. It would be frequently referred to and it was supposed to scare the boys, but not in a scary way. He was almost being titillated by it I imagine. I recall that Mr Dawson was in his early 40s, I think.
68. I was punished by Mr Dawson, although I can't recall any particular instances. I was also sent to the Rector's room a few times. He was called ICH ██████████ I went to his room when the teacher got fed up with repeat offences. I was always careful to keep my

behaviour outside of the trouble makers, but without making myself too much of a goody. At [CH] office I think I got a talking to, I don't recall it being a beating. Like all teachers, Mr Dawson, gave punishments in the classroom. I'm not aware of any record being made of the punishments given out. I can't remember thinking the punishments were excessive at the time, but looking back it all seems excessive. With regard to the impact on my year group, at the time it was so normal that that it felt part of the furniture. It was not discussed amongst my peers, but in society generally it was discussed more amongst adults.

69. My parents were aware of physical punishments. If I told them about being punished at school I don't think I would have got much of a reaction from them. If it was reported to them by the school it depended on the level of misdemeanour. It would have to be very serious to get a letter sent home.

Abuse in upper school

70. Mr Dawson took a delight in trying to be a friend to the boys and being funny. Part of his routine was to tickle boys. He would talk about 'acres and acres of pink tickly flesh' and home in on you. At that stage we were dressed in long trousers, but he must have uncovered us to some extent through our shirts, perhaps by undoing buttons to get to the 'tickly flesh'. He had a reputation amongst the boys for being what we called, a 'poof' and we had no other language at this time. Mr Dawson was also a prep school boarding housemaster and he was also married and lived in the boarding school. He had a reputation for behaving weirdly at shower time in the boarding house and it was referred to in such a way that that I still cringe and can imagine the scene. This was general knowledge.
71. Mr Dawson taught us history and was my form teacher for one year in upper school. In class he had started to home in on me as one of the boys to tickle. At one point he overdid things so I pushed him away and told him to get away from me. That was quite shocking thing to say to a teacher, especially as he was someone with a reputation for beating boys. He was the one with weapons in his room.

72. When I think back to how I felt then, I must have felt violated to have pushed him away. I wasn't punished in anyway afterwards and he didn't say anything in response. I was probably aged thirteen by the time this happened. Tickling during class had become a regular thing and happened probably once a week, but not in every class. He did this to me and to other boys.
73. About one week after that incident, he asked me to stay behind after class. It was break time after class. He didn't touch me, but he played me Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto on his record player and asked me how I felt about it. He wasn't being threatening at all and I quite liked the music. Something told me I had to leave and I excused myself and left the room. It was particularly strange because he didn't play music during lessons as far as I remember.
74. The tickling in class continued with other boys. He tickled them openly through shirts and under clothing. At the same time he'd be telling the boy why they were being tickled for some spurious reason as well playing a part. I believe that some of the boarders had bad experiences with him and I know a lot of them were messed up for some reason or other.
75. Mr Dawson was a housemaster for one of my friends who were boarders and not the other. He was mentioned in conversation, but in a non-specific way. I never spoke to my parents about it. I remember some of us were getting a lift home in my parents' car and referred to Mr Dawson as a 'poof' and my dad queried it. He told us it was a ridiculous thing to say.

Reporting of abuse at Edinburgh Academy

76. I never reported to anyone when I was at school about the behaviour of Mr Dawson, other than mentioning it in front of my dad that one time when we were in the car with school friends. I never made any formal reports about the behaviour to the school or police.

Life after being at school

77. After school I went to University and then developed an interest in education and taught English overseas. I then became a primary school teacher in the UK, but did not enjoy it enough to continue. I don't think my experiences at Edinburgh Academy had any impact on my teaching. After teaching, I went on to train as a joiner and have been in that profession for around 27 years.

Impact

78. The behaviour of Mr Dawson I only realised was wrong and was probably an act of grooming when I reflected back on it as an adult. I believe now that boarding schools are potentially horrendous places that can create deficits in children's lives and take away stability from them. Things may be done differently in boarding schools now, but I still have difficulty with the concept.
79. With regard to any impact on my later life, I'm neutral on that. I generally had a good time in school, but am aware that many did not, and do not often think back to it.

Reporting of abuse after having left Edinburgh Academy

80. One of my friends at school was the TV presenter Nicky Campbell and I know he wrote about his time at the school in his book and also [REDACTED] has spoken out about it as an adult. I wanted to speak to the Inquiry about my experiences in order to offer support to others who may be reporting abusive activity at Edinburgh Academy. I have been involved in discussions amongst adults who were pupils at Edinburgh Academy and after dinner stories about our school days were swapped amongst the group. There were things said like "you'll never guess what happened to me or X at school?" I'm aware that one friend of mine from school, [REDACTED], has had a difficulties in life with a failed marriage, mental ill health and addictions. I don't know

how much of this could be linked to his time in school and I know he's had other challenges in life.

- 81. The Academical Club is an institution that I don't have anything to do with. The old boys network is not for me. I have had no real contact with any of the school staff since I left the school.

Lessons to be Learned

- 82. For the children in boarding schools it is very difficult to replicate family life in that setting and finding a balance would be difficult. I find the whole ethos of the school problematic, where 'excellence' is sought, inevitably there will be winners and losers. In the search for 'character' the dynamics of learning about power opens up the potential for abuse and damaged lives. I'm not aware of any complaints made by pupils about the behaviour of teaching staff, but I've heard since of teachers from the school being moved on from one school to another school. I hope that by sharing my experiences I can help other people express what they have so far been unable to and more generally that institutions can learn from what happened in the past to children in their care.

Other information

- 83. 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.. *24/9/19*.....