

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

ICD [REDACTED]

1. My name is ICD [REDACTED] my date of birth is [REDACTED] 1968. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Background

2. I was born in Aldershot. My father is retired [REDACTED] who was in the Parachute Regiment. My father was born in Kirkcaldy and went to George Watsons School in Edinburgh. My mother was [REDACTED], her maiden name was [REDACTED] and she was born in Edinburgh. My mother passed away in 2016.
3. My father went to Military Academy and then did thirty-five years as an Army officer. As a result of my father being in the army we travelled all over the world. My father also [REDACTED] so we were quite a well-known family in Edinburgh.
4. I have two sisters, [REDACTED] who is three years older than me and [REDACTED] who is two years older. Both of my sisters went to St Georges School for girls in Edinburgh.

### Life before going to boarding school

5. Being the son of an Army officer, we spent a lot of time travelling. As a result, we moved every two years. From Aldershot where I was born, we went to India. After that, moving to Germany. In Germany I was four and I went to a British run pre school. A lot of teachers there would come from the UK to work as teachers. Also, some teachers were the wives of army personnel.

6. By the age of nine, my elder sister [REDACTED] had been through four different schools. Her education level, which had previously been of a high standard started to drop because of the frequency of change in schools. It became evident to my parents that the changes in school were not conducive to her education.
7. I was around six when my parents decided we would all go to boarding school. The army had a boarding school allowance and my parents were only required to pay one term for one of us at a private school and the army paid the rest. I think this helped their decision.
8. [REDACTED] was the first to go, she was sent to St Georges for girls in Edinburgh. I had just turned seven and mum and dad just said 'Right, we're sending you to boarding school'. [REDACTED] went the same time as me, she was nine.
9. Edinburgh Academy in particular was chosen for me because it had the boarding facility and because we had aunts and uncles in Edinburgh. My grandparents also lived in Haddington and the others in Anstruther.
10. I don't remember having to do any exam to get into the school. I think my parents did their own due diligence and that was it, it was happening. I had to accept it. They tried to tell me this was the only way I was going to get my education.

**Edinburgh Academy, Henderson Row, Edinburgh**

11. Mum and dad dropped me off at the school for the very first time, this was the first time I had been there. Mr Brownlee, the housemaster and his wife met us. We met them on the steps of number five Kinnear Road, Edinburgh.
12. Dad was still known in Edinburgh for the [REDACTED] before. He was also, by that time, a lieutenant colonel. He was a big lad and an intimidating visible presence, as was my mother to an extent as she was a tall woman. I say this because I don't remember anything unpleasant or bad happening that first day.

13. I do remember going into the boarding house and I immediately had a sinking feeling that my mum and dad were leaving. It was that sense of loss that I had that led to me cry both that day and every time I was dropped off. I cried publicly until I was about ten and then I did the tears privately.
14. All I felt at that age, when I first started was, 'I'm on my own, my mums leaving'. I remember crying for days after it because of the separation.
15. It didn't really help when I was trying to establish my existence, in this new environment and that I was crying all the time. At that time, I was the youngest in the prep school, I was only seven.
16. There were four boarding houses in total in the street. My one, the name of which I cannot remember and three others directly opposite. Those were all next door to each other.
17. My first two years were spent in the house with Mr Brownlee. In that house there about fourteen kids, all the same age. I recall that the following boys were in the house at the same time as me: [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].
18. Brownlee was assisted by his wife. There was also a dark haired lady that helped out but I can't remember her name. It was only the Brownlees who lived there. The woman would come on duty in the morning. In the afternoon and evenings, it was very much Brownlee and his wife who looked after us.
19. There were four boys in my dormitory at the first house. I remember [REDACTED] was in the corner furthest from the door. [REDACTED] was closest to the window and [REDACTED] was in the other corner. I do remember the room had four beds, metal framed ones. There was also a wardrobe between two of us.

20. When I arrived, the rules were mostly about the timings. That must have been explained to me as we all knew when we got up and what time we were to be at school. I don't recall who told us this information but we knew what we were doing.
21. The boarding house with Brownlee was not a good place for me. I spent a lot of time crying there. I soon realised, that wasn't helping because it was identifying me as a weak person. Very early on however I became somewhat timid and scared. I hated being there. Part of it was because my mum wasn't there.
22. Following my two years at Brownlee's house I then moved to the house with Mr Lister as the housemaster, he was lovely. I spent a year in his house. In the second house, there were kids from nine to fourteen. I estimate there were probably about fifty kids in total in that one. In the subsequent two houses the same numbers progressed into those houses. Boys left the second house, Mr Listers', at fourteen but I never stayed at the school that long.
23. The prep school was across in Arboretum Road which was just opposite Kinnear Road where the boarding houses were.

### **Routine at Edinburgh Academy**

#### *First day*

24. I don't recall my first day at all at the school.

#### *Mornings/bedtime*

25. In the mornings we were woken up about 7:00 am by Mrs Brownlee or the other lady who worked in the house. They would open the door, switch the lights on and tell us we needed to get up. We got our teeth brushed, washed and then dressed. We went across for breakfast at 7:30 am to the prep school as that's where we had all of our meals. We would come back from breakfast, clean our teeth again and we had about

an hour to get homework done that we may have not done the night before. We then went to school for assembly at 9:00 am.

26. We did classes until about 3:00 pm and then returned to the boarding house. We then went down to the changing rooms and got changed to do sport. That was basically running around a field opposite the boarding house. Some of it was organised, other times it wasn't. The bell would ring and then we would return to the boarding house and have tea which was bread and jam. After tea there would be a prep session for homework. That finished at 7:00 pm and then it was dinner.
27. There was more prep from 8:00 pm to 9:00 pm and then bed. Lights out were at either 9:00 pm or 9:30 pm. I remember we had hot water bottles at night time. They were made for us and put in our beds.
28. It was all very strict when we were in the dormitories, we couldn't really play. It would be noisy until Brownlee turned up. As far as he was concerned kids couldn't play. I'm pretty sure at bedtime we had to say prayers. I was praying to get out of the place.

#### *Food*

29. The food was like canteen food. For breakfast one could have cereal, maybe eggs or sausage. Lunch and dinner were whatever they had prepared. You either ate it or you didn't.
30. We queued for food and then sat down at any table. I generally sat with people I felt safe or friendly with. It wasn't strict as to where you sat.
31. Teachers would monitor mealtimes but I'm not sure if they ate the same food as us. I do know Brownlee ate at home.
32. There weren't any issues with food. You needed to eat what was in front of you, it was more because you were hungry, not because of any punishment if you didn't.

*Washing and bathing*

33. We had everything we needed in terms of bathing however, there was no privacy as we were all in dorms. You could wash and have a bath but everything was communal.

*Clothing*

34. My uniform was from Aitken and Niven. I wore blue shorts, blue jacket, blue and white tie, white shirt, black shoes and blue socks up to my knees.
35. I remember having to wear my uniform all of the time, even after school. We could wear 'mufti' when we went away at the weekends, but otherwise you wore uniform. Mufti is a Latin word for nonmilitary clothing.

*Schooling*

36. The academy was an all-boys school. Mr Burnett was the headmaster of the prep school. He was a fantastic man, the school itself was a haven for me, in as much I would rather be there than across the road at the boarding house.
37. Mrs Baxter, Major Ramsay and Mr <sup>IBL</sup> [REDACTED] were my teachers in the prep school. They were all great. My happy place was in the class three [REDACTED] with Mrs Baxter, she was my first teacher.
38. I remember my [REDACTED] teacher was Mr <sup>ICA</sup> [REDACTED], he was great. The PE teachers who taught judo and squash were all very good. I think all of these subjects were a release for me.
39. I loved Major Ramsay too and I think that because he was previously army and he was similar to my dad and he was particularly good for me.

40. When the bullying started, the classroom was my refuge because no one could bully me there. The bullying became part of my existence at school which was so desperately unhappy.

*Work/chores*

41. The only time we had to do chores was collective punishment for something. We would, as a group of boarders be told go and clean the garden say. We were not required to do anything else around the boarding house.

*Leisure time*

42. On Saturday mornings we were allowed to watch television for two hours after breakfast. We would then go for lunch and then in the afternoons we sometimes had organised activities.
43. Twice a term and then half terms we were allowed to be picked up by parents or relatives and taken out. In my case aunts and uncles. That's also where I went during half term. That was the only time I saw relatives.
44. My grandfather did come one time when he was carrying out duties as the Queens Archers. They were doing a shoot at the school so I went to watch. It was across the street in the playing field. I only watched and it was a one off.
45. I saw my parents during the main holidays for four weeks at Easter, four weeks at Christmas and for eight weeks in the summer.

*Personal possessions*

46. I remember I had a cuddly toy, that was my only possession apart from my clothes.

*Trips and holidays*

47. I never went on any trips while I was at the school.

*Healthcare*

48. Any health issues involving the boys were dealt with by Mrs Brownlee or the other lady who assisted. They would come and take our temperature then they would decide if you had to take a day of school. We were cared for in that respect.

*Religious instruction*

49. We used to have to go to church every Sunday, it was the Church of Scotland on Inverleith Row. We had to sit and listen to a preacher first and then we went on to the Sunday School. That's where I first learnt I was 'damned and going to hell'. I was only seven. It became constant, 'you're bad, you're a sinner, you'll go to hell'. On reflection I'm not sure that was quite the right thing for the development of a young child.

*Discipline*

50. In terms of discipline at the boarding house and the school if you were told to do something, you did it. If you didn't, there were consequences. You learnt pretty quickly.
51. In the boarding house there were occasionally group punishments where collectively we had to do things. For instance, one hundred lines. No television for a week. You learnt for every action there was a consequence. It was staff that gave out these punishments and they were in keeping with discipline, to teach you a lesson as opposed to the physical violence that was handed out on other occasions.

*Bedwetting*

52. I'm not sure if I did wet the bed, I have a vague memory of maybe a couple of times. What I do know is that kids who did were given a plastic sheet and there were two



kids in my dorm that did have sheets. I never got one though. I have no real memory and therefore assume that it was dealt with fine.

## **Abuse at Edinburgh Academy**

### **Peer**

53. I was considered the baby in the boarding house. That was all started by my housemaster Mr Brownlee. It started in the first two weeks. He was the one that highlighted the fact that I was the baby and was crying. He normalised that name calling and it was then latched on to by the others. I would get teased, 'oh look the baby's crying'. That then became 'you're the baby, the baby, the baby, let's see what the baby's doing.' Oh, the baby's crying again'. It just became this verbal abuse for the first term at least.
54. Not only was I the youngest but I was also small at the time. I became very aware, straight away of my place in the house and in the school.
55. The bounce to the head, which Brownlee did, my peers would do that to me. They saw the master doing it. I remember being in the changing rooms and I can remember sitting down with my head against the wall and a kid, [REDACTED] smacked my head against the wall for no reason.
56. It became fairly standard thing the bullying and hitting. It led me to cower and I was very timid.
57. I remember one day, I was about ten years old, I was in the next house up, Mr Lister's and at that age you were allowed to go down to Stockbridge and go shopping there. I was walking through Inverleith Park on my way to Stockbridge, it was winter and it was dark. I could hear someone behind me. It turned out it was a kid but I didn't know that at the time. I cowered in the corner saying 'don't hit me, don't hit me' as he went past. I was just petrified. The kid who wasn't at my school and didn't know me walked past saying he wasn't going to hit me. But that's how I had become, petrified of others, especially males.

58. I put all of the bullying I suffered at the house down to Brownlee and the masters who normalised violence. He set the tone at the place. It was a case of, if you were a kid in there and didn't like the way someone was behaving, slam their head into a table. Why not, it's what the masters did.
59. Once you are that victim, it's very difficult to influence your peers as to who they bully. Because I had been identified right at the start as being different, being the baby. That's why I was chosen. Also, the other difference was, I was living somewhere different every two years. For instance, Turkey, how exotic, but that made me be different to them again.
60. There was a kid [REDACTED] at the school, he had a [REDACTED] in his name. Because I had a [REDACTED] in my name, I was called [REDACTED] disease. It was that constant battering. No one knows when to stop either.
61. I learnt to fight there, because you had to. That's why judo became a good escape for me at the school. I knew how to roll out of something, how to fall. If I got pushed, I knew how to break away and run off.
62. When I got to the older house it was worse, as the kids were older and the bullying became more physical with my peers. We had these changing rooms in the house and it became 'fight club'. You fought. You had to fight for your ability to be respected. You would be told you had to go there at a certain time to fight. They would make sure that you were there, you couldn't, although you wanted to, say no. If you did, you would eventually be carried down there by say five boys to fight. I always lost, partly because I was a small kid. I never wanted to go down but I never had an option.
63. In the older boys' house, I shared a room with ten other boys. There would be fights at night in our dormitory. You could get picked on and you would be curled on your bed with boys beating you up. There was one night when I happened to pull my covers down at the wrong time and I got a cuddly toy or a pillow across the face and

it hit my eyeball. I screamed. That caused everyone to jump back in bed and for me to be told to shut up because we would get into trouble for making a noise after lights out. I ended up sobbing and holding my eye.

64. There were other times where I would be beaten up. We had quite a walk to and from school and all the way along there was the possibility of being beaten up by my peers. Fighting became what we did because sometimes on that walk we'd meet up with kids from Broughton High and fight with them.
65. All of these things happened until I met a friend at the school, [REDACTED]. He was a boarder from Sierra Leone, he was a big guy. He became a bit of a guardian to me in my third year of the school but I left the year after. [REDACTED] and I met up at University again and were really good friends until he passed away a few years ago.

#### **Housemaster/Teacher abuse**

66. It was Brownlee who started the name calling about me being a baby and highlighting the times when I was crying. He normalised it. He never did the name calling in front of any other adults with the exception of maybe his wife. He was in charge and usually the only one around.
67. If you did something wrong in the house you got a slap over the head from Brownlee. That was pretty common. I think what was so clear was it was all normalised. It was done in front of everyone. The one I remember most was, you would be sat at your table working in the boarding house doing homework and Brownlee would come behind you and bounce your head off the desk. You basically got the table straight on the head. He would come behind you and just slam your head down. It might have been because you weren't listening. To me it didn't seem like there was anything that anyone had done that was really wrong. It didn't just happen to me it happened to everyone. I would see it and hope it wasn't my turn. As soon as he walked into a room I would automatically think 'he's going to hit me'. That feeling all stemmed from my experience with him at the house.

68. He had this thing he would do to choke us. It was known as the 'Brownlee knuckle treatment'. It would involve him crossing his fingers and then putting them into your collared shirt and then pressing his knuckles into the back of your neck and choking you. The victim would go bright red and then almost pass out as the windpipe and the carotid arteries were closed off. That would be coupled with him kicking you and when he finished with you, he would throw you against the wall. That was standard, you expected that. It happened to me and I saw him do it to others. When I think back, the fact that this was so common place that it had a name is somewhat alarming.
69. I am unsure exactly how many times it happened to me but an example of when it did was that [REDACTED] was at our school as well. He was in the same year. After school we would go to the changing rooms to change and play sports. After, we would shower in the cold showers, very rarely were they warm. Then we would get dressed and rush back up to the boarding house. This time [REDACTED] was last getting ready and for a laugh I switched the lights out as I left. I would have been about eight or nine years old. As I ran up, I bumped into Brownlee who asked me if there was anyone left. I lied and said no. He found out and brought me down to the hallway at the bottom of the stairs in the boarding house telling me [REDACTED] had returned and had told him I switched off the lights.
70. That got me the most severe kicking I had had ever had from him. It was relentless to the point that I was choking, bright red and almost passing out. I was kicked and kicked, picked off the ground and kicked some more. He then threw me against the wall. That beating is so clear in my mind and where it happened because it was so violent. I don't recall if I received any injuries from the beating but if I did, they healed. I never got any medical attention for it and certainly nothing was broken. There definitely would have been marks around my neck. I remember seeing stars because of that experience. I'm not sure if I blacked out. I felt I deserved it, that's what the constant abuse did to you.
71. I saw him do exactly the same one night at teatime to another kid. His name was possibly [REDACTED] or it might have been [REDACTED]. We made our own

bread and jam and this kid spilt jam on the counter and didn't clear it up. Brownlee just grabbed the kid, asking about the mess and at the same time kicking him.

72. He was big into kicking although I was never kicked when I was on the ground.
73. Everything became normalised with that type of abuse, the slamming of the head on the desk and the slapping of the head. That constant normalisation of violence against kids was what I grew up with and it's not a good way for kids to grow up. It's like Lord of the Flies, the hierarchy normalising the violence.
74. I remember being in the changing rooms and I can remember sitting down with my head against the wall and Brownlee smacked my head against the wall. It became a fairly standard thing.
75. I also have memories of being thrown down a flight of stairs by Mr Brownlee but I can't remember the detail around it.
76. Brownlee didn't beat me every day but there may have been some kid that he did. There were fourteen, sixteen other kids in the house.
77. The only other master who abused me was Hamish Dawson, a teacher at the school. Again, it was a public beating. I wasn't even in his class. We had a period where we had to sit and do homework. He was basically monitoring us. I had gone to the tuck shop and I had put some crisps in my bag. We were meant to be silent and I reached into my bag to grab a pen or something. I rustled the crisps. All I heard was "who is eating?" I think my face went bright red. I was summoned to the front of the class. He was sat down and he put me over his knee. He grabbed my balls over my shorts and caned me on the backside. The standard was six but it might have been four I got that day. He had a basket with a variety of sticks and it was something that came out of the basket that he used. I'm not sure what. The whole thing was done in front of the class. There was nothing sexual about it nor was the grab painful it was just the embarrassment.

78. I never saw anyone else being caned by him. I was only ever in his room once and that's what happened. I didn't know him at all, I knew of him though and I knew of the basket.
79. It became apparent during my first few years that I was petrified of males. All males, including my father. The reason, because of the way Brownlee treated me.
80. My thoughts are that Mr Brownlee was just the wrong person for the job as a housemaster. I think, had Mr Lister, who was my housemaster in the second boarding house at Edinburgh been my master from the start, he would have been ideal and it would have been different I don't know what the vetting system was back then but Brownlee had a temper and he took it out on eight and nine year old children. His idea was that it was discipline. Personally, choking and kicking a child is not discipline, its abuse.
81. I did see Brownlee after I left the school. I was at University and I was playing in the Stirling County Sevens rugby tournament. I saw him walking with a friend. Obviously, I was a lot bigger then, compared to when I was a child. I thought to myself 'right I'm going to beat the shit out of him'. I walked up to him and he remarked to his friend that my dad was [REDACTED] and he was talking about my dad. I looked at him and I thought 'you're an old man, it's not worth my effort to drop you'. It would have been so easy to do but I just realised it wasn't worth it. During our encounter there was no realisation or recognition from him as to how he may have treated me in the past. Perhaps he too had normalised it and that it was a case of 'that's how you educated young men then'. Dropping him wasn't worth it, what I am doing now is more worthwhile.
82. I reckon if I had been living with my aunt and uncle in Edinburgh and commuting to the school as a day pupil, life would have been different. The fact was that the place, became, in essence, an emotional and physical prison for me. Where I was allowed out to the yard for my exercise and then back in for the abuse. Day school would have been fine. It did happen to day pupils as well from people like Hamish Dawson though.

### **Leaving Edinburgh Academy**

83. There was a chap called [REDACTED] who was a day pupil at the school and I heard him talking about leaving the school and going to Glenalmond school. When I heard this, I immediately thought 'I can move schools?'. I was eleven at this point. I didn't know where Glenalmond was, it was just somewhere, anywhere away from the Academy.
84. Glenalmond had this junior entry which meant you go in at twelve without sitting a formal exam.
85. That holiday I told my parents I wanted to leave and go to Glenalmond School. I made up so many different excuses as to why I wanted to go. At that point it became really apparent to my parents that I was deeply unhappy at the school. As it transpires, I was likely to have been going there anyway because my grandfather and uncle had been to Glenalmond.
86. Knowing that I was going to another school was the biggest relief for me.

### **Reporting of abuse at whilst at Edinburgh Academy**

87. I never reported what happened at the school by Brownlee or Dawson to anyone. I internalised everything. I didn't think there was anyone I could tell. I wasn't going to tell my parents.
88. In my mid twenties, I was already serving at that point, my mum brought it up. She told me she hated dropping me there. I suspect they knew I was deeply unhappy but it was the choice they had made.

### **Glenalmond School**



89. I moved to Glenalmond at twelve. It was a very different environment to the academy. The transition happened perfectly seamlessly as far as I can remember. It may have been the relief of leaving Edinburgh Academy.
90. In terms of the teachers at the school there was nothing that they did to me that I did not merit. I did get a caning but I had assaulted another pupil with a plaster I was wearing. I also got a caning from the headmaster for being a lout.
91. There was however bullying. I did get assaulted once by a pupil who hit me with a golf club. It only happened the once and after that I avoided him.
92. I got teased because we lived in Australia. I would come back after the winter holidays with a tan and everyone else was white. I got called chalky. Anything that could be seen as different was made a bad thing.
93. The main difference between Edinburgh Academy and Glenalmond was that I was a bit older and I could get away from the school. In Edinburgh Academy I was in a city and I was in a boarding school where you stayed and all interaction took place there. As I was older at Glenalmond I had my free time to go and pursue my own things, say climb a mountain. I had my own free time to develop as a teenager. My free time as a boarder at Edinburgh was in constant turmoil due to the behaviour of the master or the bullies or other kids. I felt there was no escape there, whereas Glenalmond it was different in that I could escape.
94. The other difference was, there was an understanding of teachers and masters at Glenalmond as to where boundaries lay. The housemaster at Glenalmond, David Willington, he was respectful, if you crossed boundaries, you would be told off.
95. There was no abuse that happened to me or that I saw at Glenalmond. Overall, the school was much better than Edinburgh Academy. Bullies I could deal with.
96. I left the school at eighteen.



## **Life after school**

97. Just before I left Glenalmond the school ran an expedition trip to the Himalayas for three months. We crossed with a school in Kashmir then went and climbed a couple of mountains. By this time, I was big into mountaineering. This was where adventure came in and I think it was around this time that I decided I was going to join the military.
98. After I left school, I went to St Andrews University for two years and studied ancient and medieval history and Russian literature. I told my father I was wasting his money and so I left. I had a short stint as a ceiling fitter and then I went to Military academy.
99. I spent eighteen years in the military.
100. I was married to my first wife but unfortunately, I learnt that she was bipolar and an alcoholic. We separated and I am married again to my current wife who I met in West Africa. I have twin daughters who are now twenty fours old.
101. I now live in Indiana as my wife is a professor in the [REDACTED]. I teach self defence, boxing and run a gym on the [REDACTED].

## **Reporting of abuse**

102. I have never reported the abuse I suffered.

## **Impact**

103. The impact Edinburgh Academy had on me happened almost straight away. One time when we were living in Turkey, I was eight or nine years old at the time. My dad bought me a really nice watch. I don't know if it was lost or stolen in one of the changing rooms, I don't know what happened to it. My dad asked me at half term

where my watch was. I choked, cowered and said, 'I've lost it sir'. He was amazed that this is what I had become. Any male who was older or larger than me I was scared of. I learnt very quickly to choose the path of least resistance, to become the grey person, become anonymous. I think it was the constant normalised behaviour that I was subjected to at the house by the housemaster and my peers that led to it.

104. I have been seeing a therapist since May 2022. One of the reasons I sought out a therapist is because when I'm stressed, I'm very verbally and physically harsh on myself. I also have nightmares and struggle to sleep. If I get really angry or upset, I hit myself, hit my head hard because I am punishing myself for fucking up basically and it's my fault. My mind says I deserve to be punished so that's what I do. I thought this stemmed predominantly due to my eighteen years in the army and what I experienced during that.
105. That said, when all of this came out about Edinburgh Academy, I sent my therapist the Nicky Campbell podcast and told her we may have to unpack it. As we have done that during my therapy sessions, I can see that a lot of my subsequent behaviour in adult life stemmed from my experience at school. I have been doing a lot of cognitive behaviour therapy work and during this you look at stick points. These are events or situations which make a person react or think in a certain way. I have twelve of those, one of them is the death of a close friend. Most relate to my time in the military however some definitely come back to my childhood, 'I'm a bad person, constantly being told I'm a bad person. I deserve to be hurt'. That cross over definitely exists and I talked about it with the therapist on Monday before this session.
106. As the PTSD started to take hold if I was angry, I would punch a wall or take it out on myself rather than inflict violence on others. That is a direct correlation to what happened as a kid. The triggers maybe be completely different, the triggers are what I saw in Iraq or Sarajevo. They are not what this is. The self abuse thing has been with me for a very long time, whatever the triggers are. I am constantly saying things are my fault and how much of a failure I am.

107. When I look back as a kid, my head was banged off a desk or off a wall, so when my therapist asks why do you do that, hitting your head? it's because that's what happened to me as a little kid and what I did to myself as well. There is a direct correlation between what I do to myself now and what happened to me, there has to be.
108. I self-harm and I hit my head at times when I get really anxious because that's what happened to me when I was young. It's my fault or that's what I think. I always volunteer for things. It's almost a masochistic pleasure putting myself through hard work or pain or physical demands. All of that stems, I believe, from constant physical abuse that I received at that school. It's my fault is what I was taught at the school, I'm to blame for everything that goes wrong and that's where the self abuse comes from. Last year was the last time I did the self abuse, there would have been a reason, it could be something as simple as dropping eggs from the fridge but on top of not sleeping, having nightmares then that's enough. I'd swear at myself, get angry and self-abuse.
109. I also push myself really hard. So much so that I ended up pushing myself so much physically that I ended up in hospital not long ago. My muscles had been worked too hard and were eating themselves away due to lack of sleep, lack of hydration and overexertion. I basically wasn't sleeping and working myself to the bone. It all came on following a challenge I took on by some of my students because I didn't want them to beat me.
110. Pushing myself physically all started at Glenalmond where I pushed myself at rugby and was so self determined not to make a mistake. In addition, my escape from being bullied was to be good at sport, particularly at Glenalmond. I was first fifteen rugby. Second eleven in cricket. I was in the tennis team, won triathlons, it was one thing after another. I could escape the bullying doing sport. Skiing and mountain climbing became my happy place.
111. In terms of the self defence training I do. I do this because sexual offences in the US are very high. Also, because one of my daughters was sexually assaulted at college

and I wanted to teach my daughters how to look after themselves. I think there may well be a link to my childhood and impacted my decision to undertake to train others in self defence because of how I was treated as a child.

112. In terms of nightmares and not being able to sleep that is purely down to army and not the school.
113. My experiences at the school have certainly made me a tougher individual. Mentally it has definitely taken its toll though. When you create a child that is constantly reacting to violence at such a young age it is bound to. I really don't know if the past made me choose a path in the army, that's a hard one because my father was in the army so I don't know.
114. As far as I was concerned it was all done the day I saw Brownlee at the rugby. I also saw [REDACTED] but really I'm not sure because of all the things I've subsequently learnt through my treatment with my therapist. My wife hopes that after today it may help me even more.

### **Records**

115. I have never sought out records about my time at the Edinburgh Academy.

### **Lessons to be learned**

116. The reason I contacted the enquiry was because my sister [REDACTED] reached out to me once she knew I was seeing a therapist. She sent me the link to the Nicky Campbell podcast. I contacted Nicky Campbell and he then gave me the link to your enquiry. That was the first I heard of the inquiry and I hope telling my story lessons can be learned.
117. Vetting of Housemasters and vetting of people who are in charge of small children has to be thorough and has to be one of the main lessons. It should be yearly vetting like it is over here. It needs to be changed.

118. Alternatively, you don't allow boarding of children at such a young age. I thought it was terrible at the time but I know my parents did it for the right reasons.

**Hopes for the Inquiry**

119. In an ideal world I just want the school to admit responsibility for this. To accept there were things wrong. An apology of some sort. To my mind they have brushed it under the carpet.

120. I also really hope it's still not happening. I have my doubts as a friend of mine had children at Edinburgh Academy not long ago and they had to move the child due to bullying. I understand bullying happens but it's the way that it's allowed to happen and it suggests to me that the masters are allowing it or in my case the masters started it.

121. I would like the school to create an environment that is nurturing and conducive to education rather than one which requires you to fight for your very existence at that school. Yes, it's made me a tougher person but what would have happened if I had been in a more nurturing environment. Would I have joined the military? I may have, may not have. Would I have been as physical, maybe, but I wish life had let me find that out rather than forcing me down a road because of what happened to me.

122. 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..... 19 January 2023 .....

