

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

[REDACTED]

Support person present: No

1. My name is [REDACTED]. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1969. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before Edinburgh Academy, Edinburgh

2. I was born in Falkirk and I am an only child. I lived with my parents, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] in the top flat of a big house in Falkirk. [REDACTED] was a chartered accountant and general manager of a factory and my mum was a housewife. I went to Comely Park Primary School in Falkirk for primary one to four. School was as it was for primary age children at that time and it was fine. My maternal great-grandmother left money for me to go to the Academy, where my maternal grandfather had been a pupil. I don't think it covered the whole amount.

Preparation for Edinburgh Academy

3. I sat an entrance exam. Before the exam, my mum bought me lined jotters and I had to practice things. We were told before the exam that there would be bits we wouldn't know and, for example, if you didn't know any French you weren't to do the French bit. There were bits that were French and Latin that I didn't have clue about.
4. We had an interview with the headmaster, Mr Burnett. [REDACTED] was in my year. Mr Burnett was a very nice, eccentric type of man. He had a long history of

teaching in Nepal and he was a colourful character. Mr Burnett asked me what my favourite television programme was. He would expect us to say something by David Attenborough or Newsnight but I said The Pink Panther.

5. The year I went to the Academy I had a big holiday because the local schools finished much earlier than the private schools in Edinburgh. We went to Aitken and Niven on George Street to be kitted out. You had woolly, serge rugby shorts. That was all very strange coming from Comely Park. I was teased at Comely Park because I wore shorts but that was part of the uniform at the Academy. You couldn't wear long trousers.

Edinburgh Academy, Arboretum Road and Henderson Row, Edinburgh

6. I was a pupil at Edinburgh Academy from 197█ until 198█, from the age of nine to eighteen years. I joined in prep five. I was a day pupil for one year, a boarder for two and a half years, and then a day pupil for the remainder of my time there.
7. The school was spread out over three locations. There was a kindergarten and the early primary years at Denham Green. I never visited that. At Inverleith Row there was the Prep School. Across the road at Arboretum Road were the boarding houses. There were three senior boarding houses. They were three big Victorian buildings called McKenzie, Scott, and Jeffrey. The Junior Prep boarding house was Dundas House.
8. What was primary seven in other schools was called geits at the Academy. McKenzie was for geits to the third year in Senior School. Scott and Jeffrey were for the more senior pupils. There was a row of houses on the other side of the road and one of those was Dundas House. The boarding houses looked out over the Newfield rugby pitches. The Senior School was at Henderson Row.
9. You came into an environment where a lot of the kids have been there for at least two or three years before you. You were the one wearing all the brand new things. A lot of kids knew each other. Then again, a whole lot of us arrived at the same time. We all called each other by our second names.

Structure

10. The Preparatory School years were one to six and were all boys. Then you had the geits which was first year at the Upper School. The prefects were called ephors. Both are roles assumed by the ancient Spartans. Upper School was geits up to seventh year. There were about 600 pupils in the Upper School and 300 in the Prep School. About 10 or 15 per cent were boarding. The Academy was primarily a day school with a boarding facility.
11. There were a very small number of girls in sixth and seventh year, maybe twenty. That was a recent phenomenon. I think the girls were imported to give the boys an idea that women were something you could speak to. It was that antiquated. The Academy was set up as a single sex school and there were no facilities for the girls to do sport.

Houses

12. The houses were just used for things like sports days and inter house competitions. They were probably a relic of times past when they had more importance. I was in Cockburn because my grandfather was in Cockburn.

Edinburgh Academy - Preparatory School – Day pupil

First day

13. On the first day you were in awe. The school was so ostentatious. It was a new building but it had so much more to it than Comely Park. You had a big assembly and you all sat in a huge hall. It's quite overwhelming.
14. Outside the art class, a boy kicked me. He had started that day too. He became my best friend and was best man at my wedding. He doesn't remember kicking me. He was nervous like everyone else.

Travel to Edinburgh Academy

15. The journey took the best part of an hour and a half. It was a mile walk from the house to the train station and I got the 7:50 am train from Falkirk High Station. The first week or so mum came with me on the train. The trains were old style with a corridor and individual compartments and were full of annoying children. I pity anybody commuting to Edinburgh. We got up to all sorts once mum stopped coming. There were kids from all the Edinburgh schools and they cliqued together in their own school groups.
16. There were three boys from the Academy that got on at Falkirk. A couple more got on at Polmont and Linlithgow. [REDACTED] was known to the family. He was much older and at the Upper School. He was keeping an eye out a wee bit. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was the year above me in the Prep School. Everybody called him [REDACTED].
17. We met other pupils that came into Waverley Station and I got friendly with [REDACTED]. We made our way to school by bus. You mixed it up and got different buses from different locations. I had a train pass and a bus pass for the full term. You guarded those with your life. I was quite friendly with [REDACTED] but it was myself, [REDACTED], and another chap in the same year as [REDACTED] who I would go with. I can't remember the other chap's name. [REDACTED] was horrible to me.

General Routine as a day pupil

18. We had a great class master, Mr Sneddon. He was also our science teacher. He was wonderful and a gentle soul so I was lucky. He was a good person to have as a class master. The class master took the roll in the morning. We had different teachers for different subjects. The bell would ring and we moved to their classroom. They were the class master for another group of boys. The school did streaming and I was always middle stream in Prep School. When I went to Upper School, they set the individual subjects.

19. Lunch was in the refectory. We sat at long tables and food was served out in plates, rather than in a canteen style. There was a break and then there were two periods. Twice a week there were two middle periods called games, where you played rugby or cricket. On Saturday you were required to come in and play a game against another school. Games were compulsory. Some pupils hated it. I enjoyed rugby but hated cricket because I was rubbish at it. The changing rooms were underneath the dining hall. We ran out to the rugby pitches. There were three pitches.
20. We wore grey socks and shorts, grey shirts, a blue and white striped tie, a blue blazer, and a cap. As you got the hang of things, there was always a bring and buy sale where people sold old uniform as we grew out of them. We cottoned on to that and these were popular events. There were a lot of people, similar to ourselves, that spent every penny they had sending their kids to these lovely, posh schools and lived as paupers as a result.
21. At gym you only wore gym shorts. The changing room was in a corridor and pupils walked back and forward as you got ready for gym, stripping naked and putting on flimsy gym shorts. There was a culture of those that were really good at sport and played for the First XV. They were the school heroes. That started about this time. I wasn't like that but neither was I the one that hated it. I was middle of the road, like everything.
22. A lot of my first year at the Academy was really good, after the initial shock of the school being more Victorian in its approach. Your relationships with your fellow pupils were not as gentle as they might have been in Comely Park. Even at that age, there was a culture of toughing it out. Anybody that showed the slightest weakness by being more sensitive than the rest, probably had a miserable time. The culture was "we are all playing rugby". If you didn't fit into that, which I kind of didn't, then you were seen as weak. There was no pastoral care and no-one at the school who you could have told about abuse.

The decision to board

23. At some point in prep five, ██████ got us involved in shoplifting. The shoplifting was a can of juice or a packet of crisps. It was like a silly adventure and ██████ planned it all. He came from a troubled household. We had done it for a few weeks. There was a shop at the top of York Place which we went in and the guy caught us at it. We all scarpered and the man from the shop caught ██████ who gave my details.
24. I told my best friend ██████ what was going on. I was really upset that I'd been coerced into doing this. I was sitting at the back of the bus in tears and ██████ was great. ██████ said I must tell my parents. I went back that day and told my parents. They were cross but pleased I put my hand up and said it was wrong. My parents said to get the 7:20 am train instead of the 7:50 am and miss ██████. They said they would leave it at that.
25. However, the man from the shop then came into the school before I got in. He came first thing in the morning, into the classroom. How he'd been allowed to walk into a school unchallenged, I don't know. There was no teacher about and he enquired as to my whereabouts from the people who were in. He said what had happened and left. I arrived and several people were appalled and said they were going to tell the teacher.
26. Other pupils told the teacher and the teacher told the headmaster. I was taken to the headmaster and I was thinking it was serious. The headmaster was rightly angry. I told him I had already told my parents and this was awful. I explained the whole story, including that older boys were getting me involved. I don't know what happened to the other pupils but they didn't get suspended. ██████ had a grudge about me after that and really bullied me in the Upper School.
27. At that point, I was aware that the school had the conversation with my parents to say why not try boarding, otherwise I think I would have stayed being a day pupil. The school probably said it would be less difficult for a young kid. I was only nine and getting the train into Edinburgh.

28. My parents probably thought it sounded like a good idea and said we'd try boarding. They were entirely trying to do the right thing. Mum had boarded but I don't think she enjoyed it. I wonder if Mr Burnett didn't want children running around the streets of Edinburgh giving the school a bad name, so thought let's stick him in the boarding house and keep him out of trouble. I started boarding in prep six.

Edinburgh Academy - Preparatory School – Boarder

First Day at the Boarding House - McKenzie House

29. I boarded in prep six, geits and for two terms of second year. I was nervous on the first day. You get all these things and you have so much more to think about than just your stuff for school. You have everything, your life. I was put into McKenzie House instead of Dundas House. In McKenzie House there were geits, second, and third years. There were four of us from the Prep School in the entire McKenzie boarding house because they didn't have enough capacity in Dundas House.
30. On the first day, mum and dad had left. There was an old Victorian building and a modern bit. You went along the corridor and there were lockers. There were two much older boys having a fight. They were really going at it. This was my first experience and I thought, "God, where am I?" There wasn't anywhere to hide and you quickly learned to toughen up. I was homesick when I started boarding but there was nothing in place to help.

Dormitories

31. We were stuck in a wee annexe dorm at the back of the large geits' dorm. It was big enough to accommodate four beds and we each had drawers for clothes. The beds were steel framed. Most of your personal effects were in lockers on a different floor. Your laundry was left on your bed.

32. We had to go through the geits' dorm of older pupils to get to our dorm. There were at least ten boys in the geits' dorm. I found that difficult. It was intimidating, especially because it was your bedroom. You were running the gauntlet because kids were kids. The basement of the house was showers and changing rooms for sports.

Staff at McKenzie House

33. The housemaster was Mr John Lister. He was fine. We called him Sid Snake. He was strict and authoritarian. If we were mucking about, which we were regularly, then he would come in and tell us to stop. Mr Lister lived with his lovely wife and two children in a part of the house. Occasionally you would get asked through and it was a beautiful house.
34. There was a house tutor called [redacted] who hated his job. He was second in command in the boarding house. He was grumpy all the time but not abusive. I can't see anybody enjoying that job. Mr [redacted] had a little apartment. Some days he was in charge and could hand out punishments. On Saturday he gave out your tuck money.

General Routine as a boarder

35. One of the masters came in and shouted at us to get up. You got up, got dressed, crossed over the road, and had breakfast. Breakfast was in the same dining area as the Prep School. Then you went straight to school. In Senior School, each morning there was a walk from Arboretum Road to Inverleith Row which took you onto the Water of Leith.
36. The boarding house food was okay. There was a boarder's dinner at the Upper School refectory on a Friday night, which was nicer. It was usually fish and chips or something and was for pupils attending after school societies. At Inverleith the food was canteen style for dinner. It was a slightly higher standard than the lunches. You could say you didn't like or want something.

37. Before I ran away in the second year, I wet the bed once. Matron was understanding about it. I went and told her before everybody got up. She took me to sick bay and discreetly dealt with it, so that nobody else knew. I would have been pilloried for it because I was quite old by that point.
38. The school day as a boarder was as it was when you were a day pupil. In the Upper School, you had a period a week with your class master. You spent that reading or something. To my mind, it didn't serve any purpose. There wasn't any pastoral care. The teacher didn't ask if everything was alright or say you could speak to him if it wasn't. That wasn't part of the culture.
39. I have my school reports. If I look at them, I see that if I had a good teacher then I did well at the subject. If I didn't have a good teacher then I really struggled. That could reverse in the same subject from year to year. I went up and down the sets. If I had a good teacher then I could focus my attention. I am still like that. Looking at it now, I think I probably had Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder because I'm easily distracted and untidy. That attracted bullying, especially when I went to the boarding house.
40. After school and games, you went back to the boarding house and had an hour of prep. We sat at big tables and did our homework. That was better for me than doing it at home because there was someone making sure you did it. We went across the road for dinner. After dinner there'd be some free time. You hung about in a group with your friends. You could be in the dorm or the games room or do a bit of music practise. When I arrived, they said bring some games and books. Quickly, like any kid, they lay in a cupboard or got lost or broken. At that point there was no interest in toys so you'd go outside.
41. About 9:00 pm there would be a late supper. Matron had an urn of tea and you got a biscuit. You were given tuck, which was your own sweeties that you brought with you each half term. Tuck was kept until supper and, if you were like me, then you ate it all within the first week.

42. You had bath night twice a week. It wasn't directly supervised. There were two baths, a row of toilets, and a row of sinks. There was no privacy for washing or bathing. You shared the bathroom and if you were the younger boys then you got elbowed out the way.
43. At half term I would always go home. I sometimes brought other kids whose parents were abroad. They only went home for the main holidays. You got one weekend and also one day to go home each half term. I loved the weekend but I hated the day. You just got home and then it was time to go back. It was always a Sunday. I hated coming back to school on a Sunday evening after having not enough time at home. That was a sad time.
44. There was a matron. Her role should have been more pastoral than it was. If you were ill then she was good. You were stuck in sick bay and she gave you a cup of soup. She gave out the cups of tea in the evening and did the laundry. I don't recall her making herself available if you wanted a shoulder to cry on. That wasn't seen as her role. It must have been a difficult job being a woman in a house of adolescent boys.
45. The school was non-denominational. Everyone was going through the motions at assembly. Much later when I was in fifth year, a pupil was Jewish and didn't attend assembly. When I was boarding, we had to have a kilt to go to church on a Sunday.
46. We had classes where there was an inspector at the back but no-one spoke to me about the school. We had trainee teachers too. There was one whose life we made miserable.
47. We had Parent's Nights which were parents and teachers. We got a report which was a wee book. In Prep School there was a sheet. Each class master gave you a report and the rector handwrote in every one. My mum said my reports were like a curate's egg, which means they were patchy. In some subjects I'd have a high mark and in others the mark would be low. It's the way my brain works.

Sports and clubs

48. Games was part of the day curriculum so you all trooped out and played rugby in the middle of the day. School finished at 3:05 pm. Tuesdays and Thursdays were games days and you made your way to Inverleith to the pitches and had an hour of games. As a boarder, instead of using the changing rooms at Inverleith, you used the changing rooms in the basement of the boarding house. The day boys changed at the pavilion at the pitches. They would be supervised by a master.
49. There was a lot of extra-curricular stuff. There were Friday night societies. They had a pretend soldier thing called the Combined Cadet Force (CCF) that was on a Monday. I was in the army. There was a mountaineering club and twice a term you'd go mountaineering. The school had an outward bound place at Blair House. I hated CCF but I loved mountaineering.
50. The school had a debating society. There were a couple of idiots who were holocaust deniers. One meeting I went to was a debate about whether the holocaust happened or not. A Jewish pupil spoke eloquently about how there was and the other two spoke about how there hadn't. Nearly everyone carried the motion that it had happened. Stepping back from it, it was a good way of getting people to engage with a difficult subject and come to the right conclusions.

Weekends

51. On Saturday there was a rugby match that you had to do. Then you'd get lunch. Occasionally they had organised days out but other times they left you to your own devices. You wore mufti, which is a military term for your own clothes. When I was in geits, I often went into Edinburgh with my friend on the bus. He got luncheon vouchers from his dad and we looked for places to spend them. You didn't have to get permission and it was unsupervised. It was great. We went off and explored. It wasn't any different behaviour than I would have had at home. I think it would have been oppressive if a master had been saying you couldn't do those things.

52. One time we went up Arthur's Seat. Underneath Salisbury Crags there's a steep slope that's all scree. We slid down that on our backsides. Both of us had bus money in our pocket and that's probably still on the slope. We were stopping folk asking for fifty pence for the bus. That was kids having fun. I'm glad we had these experiences and that we were allowed to do that. On the other hand, they would take us to Berwick Law en masse.
53. On Sunday mornings we went for breakfast and then to the local church and Sunday school. We wore kilts and a tweed jacket.

Pastoral care

54. There was no pastoral care and at no point would you have an opportunity to have pastoral care. There was the housemaster who was okay. He was a nice guy but there wasn't a feeling that his door was always open. There was a feeling you were a pupil and were potential trouble, rather than asking if you were okay and how did you feel.
55. There was no anti-bullying policy or programme. If a teacher caught somebody giving it out in a flagrant manner, then they would intervene. There wasn't an awareness of bullying as an issue that there is now.

Discipline

56. The school had the clacken. It's a wooden bat about forty centimetres long, like a flat wooden spoon. The spoon bit is ten to twelve centimetres wide, with no give in it. It's used for a game called hailes. It's a game with very few rules which was played once a year. You used the bat to hit a ball. There were two teams and you had to get the ball up to the other end. The clacken was also used as an instrument of punishment by the teachers. If you did something bad then they would use the clacken instead of a strap. It was on your backside.

57. We all got our own clacken when we left in the seventh year. That was when we played the only games of hailes. The leavers played the ephors and the whole school came out. You went around getting the clacken signed by your friends.
58. There were house ephors as well as school ephors. They were thirteen years old and were meant to be handing out punishments and keeping discipline amongst ten year olds. It gave them an excuse to belittle you. The house ephors were a terrible lot. If they've not got enough staff to maintain discipline in the boarding house then they needed to employ more staff. They shouldn't employ boys to police boys. The punishments weren't recorded.
59. If you were caught misbehaving in the boarding house the usual punishment given by an ephor was an early morning run. You had to get up a half hour before everybody else, get changed, and run around the Newfield pitch. It was about a mile. That was probably reported to the house tutor and he'd be looking out of his window to make sure you didn't skimp. It's not that bad a punishment where it was deserved.
60. The school ephors were allowed to give out written punishments, for example lines. Looking at it now, the school was absolving itself of responsibility. The school ephors gave out punishments for being silly. When I was ten years old and boarding, I shouted an insult at an ephor and he chased me and caught me. The punishments were ad hoc and he told me to copy out from a passage. It was 1000 lines and I refused. Half of me knew that if he escalated it then he'd be found wanting. I didn't do it and it went away. He'd overstepped the mark.

The decision to stop boarding

61. My parents probably identified that I was miserable and I went back to being a day pupil. I was getting extreme bullying and thought I wasn't having this. The two main perpetrators were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was unpleasant and the class hardman. The straw that broke the camel's back and made me run away was that I was physically assaulted by two or three other boys.

62. I decided to go home. On Sunday morning I went to breakfast and put some toast and marmalade in my sporan. I headed off to run away home. I got almost as far as Barnton roundabout which is quite a distance. I looked like a public school boy out of water. A police car came past and turned around and stopped. The police asked if I was alright and where I was going. I said I was going home to Falkirk and they took me back to school because they said I couldn't walk to Falkirk. I don't remember them questioning me. The police took me back to the boarding house and nobody had missed me. They wouldn't have missed me until teatime.
63. Mr Lister took it seriously. I explained what had happened and the perpetrators were duly sanctioned. I said it was two individuals. When the individuals who were sanctioned asked me, I said I was homesick and had said the bullying was everybody. I told them I didn't know why they had been picked out. They seemed to accept that and there was no retribution. [REDACTED] was matey with me afterwards and then went off to another school. I became a bit of a hero because I'd run away and stuck one up to the man. My parents were informed and things moved to get me to stop boarding. Later, we were at Blair House. We went abseiling and [REDACTED] was crying. That resolved that issue.

Edinburgh Academy - Senior School – Day Pupil

64. We had to be in school at 8:45 am. The whole school assembly was at 9:00 am. Geits sat in the balcony and the rest sat in rows, in their years. The masters and the chaplain sat under the balcony. A master or pupil played the organ as you went in. There were some readings, hymns, and the rector told us any school business.
65. I loved and lived art. Mark Cheverton taught me and he facilitated that. He was a hero in my life. I didn't fit in and I couldn't do this and that however I was good at art. Mr Cheverton said I should take art as a subject. My mum and dad weren't keen and he spoke to them. I was allowed to do art. I was brilliant at art, at school level. My last year at school was fantastic and I still have the same friend group that I had then.

There was less bullying in my last two years. You grew out of it and girls were on the horizon.

66. The school was an Oxbridge machine and then along came Mark Cheverton. Thirteen or fourteen of us sat A Level Art. All but one got an A, which is unheard of in any subject. The school thought it could be an art school too. The Chevertons left and set up the Leith School of Art. He and his wife died suddenly in a car accident the year after I left school and that profoundly affected me.

Abuse at Edinburgh Academy

Mr ^{IDP} [REDACTED]

67. Mr ^{IDP} [REDACTED] was the gym teacher in prep five when I was a day pupil. He was ancient. He was horrible to us all and hated everybody. Mr ^{IDP} [REDACTED] had us doing various old school things, for example, going over the vaulting horse. If you didn't do it well enough then he had a giant boxing glove that he hit us with. It stung. He banged everybody as they went past and hit us wherever. When you say it like that then it's pretty wrong. It was like being on an army assault course. Everyone was inured to him and thought we just had to get through this. It didn't upset me but was part of what it was. I think other teachers would have been aware of this.
68. We had to jump on a trampette and do a forward dive roll. It was terrifying for those of us who were less capable. There was a boy in the class who was a terrific athlete. Mr ^{IDP} [REDACTED] lined up those of us who were less capable and we had to kneel. It was like Evil Knievel jumping buses. One time there were seven or eight people in the line and the boy flew straight over. I was put on the end and I was landed on. It was reckless. I was badly winded and upset about that.

Mr [REDACTED]

69. Mr [REDACTED] taught either French or English in prep five when I was a day pupil. Instead of giving you a verbal admonishment, which would have been acceptable at that time, or properly applied corporal punishment, he kicked you. He didn't kick you hard and it more out of his frustration. I was kicked as I left the room to go to the loo. He kicked you with the side of his foot and never toe-poked you.

Mr Brownlee

70. Mr Brownlee taught English to me in prep five and prep six, by which time I was a boarder. He was also the boarding house master in Dundas House. Everybody was in fear of him. If you didn't conform to his ideal of a properly attired, organised, respectful pupil then he singled you out. I was scruffy and disorganised. I didn't come from Edinburgh which was a definite no-no. Mr Brownlee humiliated me and others for various reasons. Mickey taking was across the board in that environment and you gave as good as you got. He was a teacher trying that and it was done with maliciousness. It wasn't done in a jovial, joking way.
71. He would say I came from Falkirk, a suburb of Glasgow. It sounds like nothing but, in that context, it was everything. You were there with a bunch of kids that mostly didn't live out of town and all came from Edinburgh. You were singled out, in front of them, and humiliated. You were seen as a lower class individual. If Mr Brownlee poured scorn on you then you would get the same treatment from everybody around you. There was another boy called [REDACTED] and we were both scruffy arty types that he didn't like. We both ended up being good at art.
72. Mr Brownlee regularly harangued you, not because of bad work, but because of who you were. He was dripping with contempt and made you feel small and unhappy. It felt like he was enjoying that. He had a reputation throughout the school of fear and I think he enjoyed that too.

73. Mr Brownlee had a thing he did which everybody knew about. It was the “Brownlee knuckle treatment”. He did that both in class and when he was supervising break time. He got behind you and put his hand behind your collar with one knuckle sticking out towards your neck. He worked his knuckle into the back of your neck and tightened your collar, to the point you were choking.
74. In the playground, Brownlee had a habit of appearing. You’d probably been up to high jinks and the regular punishment was a punishment exercise or lines. You thought that was fair enough. Brownlee would give you the knuckle treatment and everybody was frightened of this. How could the other teachers not know that this went on? They must have seen him do it. There’s no way the other teachers didn’t know this was going on.

Mr Brownlee’s abuse of others

75. There was a particular incident with [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] asked to leave the classroom for whatever reason. Brownlee found it annoying and wouldn’t let him go. I can’t remember if [REDACTED] got up and went but he was out in the middle of the class. Brownlee grabbed him, applied the knuckle treatment, and shook him at the same time. [REDACTED] collapsed and fainted for a second or two. [REDACTED] recovered and Brownlee was angry with him. He wasn’t concerned that he’d shaken a nine year old boy unconscious. Mr Brownlee thought [REDACTED] was putting it on but he definitely didn’t. I can’t remember what happened after that.
76. I always wondered what [REDACTED]’s recollection of the incident is. Everyone in the class was a bit disturbed and I found it upsetting. To put the incident in context, one time my best friend [REDACTED] got up to go to the toilet. He was feeling ill. He walked towards the door and started to faint. [REDACTED] hit the door post and fell to the floor. Mr Burnett went swooping over and asked if he was alright. The contrast between Burnett’s reaction to a pupil that fainted and Brownlee’s to a pupil that he’d made faint couldn’t be more different. I dreaded going to Brownlee’s class and got upset having to go.

Mr ^{IDZ} [REDACTED]

77. Mr ^{IDZ} [REDACTED] was my [REDACTED] teacher in prep six when I was boarding. He shouldn't have been a teacher. He was an incompetent man who loved the school. He hated me because I was terrible at [REDACTED]. I don't know if I was boarding or not when this happened. It was my one experience of being clackened as a formal punishment. In the refectory we had long lunch tables. The glasses were made of tempered glass. If you break them then they go into a million bits. A glass broke for whatever reason and landed in the pudding of the chap next to me. Mr ^{IDZ} [REDACTED] flapped and went nuts. He ordered the boy to eat his pudding. I stupidly said he might get glass poisoning because I was worried the boy might be forced to eat glass.
78. Mr ^{IDZ} [REDACTED] nickname was Ratty and he hated the nickname. Mr ^{IDZ} [REDACTED] took me to the Masters' Lodge and said he was going to beat me for what I said. I couldn't understand. He said that I had said "rat poisoning" and then I explained that I had said "glass poisoning". Mr ^{IDZ} [REDACTED] said he was going to beat me anyway for being a stupid boy.
79. I had to bend over and he got two strokes in when I stood up and walked out. I was devastated, not because I was sore, but because Mr ^{IDZ} [REDACTED] had punished me after realising that I had not actually done what he thought I'd done. I came out of the Masters' Lodge in a terrible state.

Hamish Dawson

80. There were teachers who had been at the school for years and were in the woodwork. There was a reluctance to say it was time for them not to be a teacher anymore. The prime example of that was Hamish Dawson. He was an elderly man and had been teaching at the Academy since the fifties.
81. In geits and second year Hamish Dawson was my class master and taught us history. His behaviour can't be excused for any reason other than his perverted pleasure. I was boarding and I didn't have anybody to go home and say what happened today,

not that I think I would have. There were boys not boarding who didn't say what was happening.

82. Dawson had a raft of wrong behaviours both in the class period and in history lessons. Looking at it now, he was grooming the class and the school. His behaviour wasn't invasive but it was wrong. Dawson had a collection of instruments of flagellation. To highlight how much he had groomed the school, these were given to him by leaving pupils. There were clackens, canes, and long rulers. They were given names and he had a box full of them. They might have on them, "goodbye Mr Dawson from so and so". He was getting pupils to be a part of it.
83. Dawson also had a jar of jellybeans and he gave you sweets on the one hand. A typical situation was that you'd do something daft, say something stupid, or get a question wrong. He called you for "spifflication". You went in front of the class and the whole class was tittering along, knowing what was about to happen. He got right into your space and in your face. He thought your space and your body was his to have. No other man except your own father would be in this proximity to you.
84. Dawson touched you and felt you. He got you to bend over in front of the whole class and manoeuvred the split at the back of your jacket. In doing so, he touched and fondled your backside and your genital area, over your clothing. Everyone was giggling. He had almost a Ken Dodd persona. He was clearly enjoying your body for his pleasure.
85. Dawson then selected his instrument of flagellation. It was a middle aged man living out BDSM (bondage, discipline, dominance, and submission) fantasies with ten year old schoolboys. He didn't hit you hard and it was slap and tickle. It wasn't a punishment. It was ritualised abuse. Sometimes he got the whole class in a row and then we all got jellybeans. You got jellybeans for doing good stuff as well but it was all part of the same scheme, to get you complicit in his world of weirdness. We thought it was hilarious and we thought he was great. He wasn't interested in carrying out the same behaviours with the older boys. They wouldn't have tolerated it.

86. It was in full view of everybody. Nobody in that institution must not have known about his behaviour. The teacher in the classroom across the corridor must have known what was going on. They must have heard it and seen it. It was the opposite of in dark corners. A teacher seeing that should have gone immediately to whoever was in authority and say that must stop and he must go. The box of instruments was on his desk for anyone to see. It was unashamed and warped. How dare he do that? It was paedophilia but I was too naïve to know that at the time. Every lesson was like that. He repeated the behaviour upon each class he taught. Hamish Dawson had plenty of redeeming features and nobody is black and white. He wasn't evil but a lot of the behaviour was. He knew what he was doing. Hamish Dawson was a sick man who needed someone to intervene in what was he was doing and stop it.

Peer Abuse

87. The older pupils at the boarding house called me "Scabby^{KM} [REDACTED]" which you learn to accept. In retrospect it's a hurtful nickname. It's not because I had bad skin but I was scruffy. I didn't enjoy being called scabby.

88. Within the room of four in McKenzie boarding house, the dynamic changed regularly. One or other of us would be being bullied by the other three. That's awful to say that. My gran's sister gave me a lovely jumper that was rainbow colours and the other boys said I was gay. Then it was [REDACTED] turn instead. It was always somebody's turn. You joined in because it was what you did. It was a survival skill. If you didn't give it out then you were getting it. There was no escape. It was like being in a prison in some respects.

89. That was going on throughout the whole building. There were some pupils that were never bullied. They were usually the First XV type. Anybody who was a bit different or who didn't conform could be bullied. There are both day pupils and boarders who were. That environment must have been encouraged for your forays into the cut-throat business world.

90. One of the ephor's rugby balls ended up in the showers and got soaked. For some reason they thought it was me and it definitely wasn't me. They got me into their ephor's study and bullied me. They were saying to admit that I soaked the ball. I got upset and they reduced me to tears. That was the officially sanctioned process from these boys not much older than me. That memory sticks in my head and that shouldn't have happened. If they were being given any responsibility it should have been to inform the responsible adult and for them to deal with it.
91. In the big dorm, everybody joined in bullying and thanked God it wasn't them. The bullying was physical assault. [REDACTED] hit me with a metal bin. He piled in. You would be curled up protecting yourself and two or three people were beating you up. There was name calling and everything that went with it, such as being shunned.
92. One of the reasons the school got me boarding was this guy, [REDACTED]. I'm assuming he must have had some degree of punishment for what happened. In retrospect he probably had it in for me. He would go looking for me and come into the classroom at breaktime. On several occasions he found me, gave me a "wedgy", and hung me up on a hook by my underpants. It was funny for everybody else. You acted it up a bit and laughed along with it because you didn't want to seem appalled and upset, which you actually are. He would leave and you'd get taken down. I was boarding and I wasn't able to voice my concerns to anybody.

Peer abuse of others

93. One of the boys who held right wing views also didn't like people of colour. He was about my age and wasn't popular because of his views. One of the ephors called [REDACTED] was black and two or three years above him. It was the ephor's last day at school. The pupil called [REDACTED] a "nigger". [REDACTED] reacted badly and physically picked him up and held him. The school punished [REDACTED] and took away his ephorship on the last day of school. The other boy wasn't punished and was protected by the institution. There were not many black or Asian pupils at the school at that point and it wasn't racially diverse. However, the pupil body was progressive and tolerant of race and religion.

94. In my fifth year there was a guy in the class whose life we all made terrible. On my school record it says I was involved in minor pillorying. My mum and dad were not happy. I was caught up in something where I thought it was better to be them than me.

Reporting of abuse at Edinburgh Academy

95. You wouldn't dream of telling your parents. I don't know why. In the first year I was too nervous. Your parents have sent you off to this nice, posh school and you don't want to upset them. Culturally, you were not expected to run off and tell anybody. You'd be seen to be a clipe. You didn't want to get a reputation as a clipe because you'd be shunned by the whole group of schoolchildren.
96. When I came out of the Masters' Lodge after Mr ^{IDZ} [REDACTED] had beat me, ^{IBU} [REDACTED], the gym teacher, was in the yard with a group of pupils. He saw me come out in a terrible state and he came over. ^{IBU} [REDACTED] was a spiky individual but generally fair. He asked what was wrong and I told him exactly what had happened. He told me to go back to my classroom and he would deal with it. He obviously knew it was not right, what had happened. No-one spoke to me about what happened after that.
97. I'm reluctant to say Mr Lister was complicit in bullying in the boarding house. I don't know whether he had the right institutional tools to deal with it in the way it should have been dealt with. He dealt with it seriously when it came to light but it took me to run away to bring it to light. If they'd had the right sort of systems in place to capture bullying as it was happening then it wouldn't have got as far as it did. That is an institutional failing rather than Mr Lister. I don't have any issue with Mr Lister. It felt like ^{IZM} [REDACTED] couldn't have given a 'monkeys' either way.

Leaving Edinburgh Academy

98. I did better at school than I would have done in a different type of education. I left with more qualifications than many other people leaving school. That's what several thousand pounds of education buys you, being cynical. I went to Glasgow School of Art.

Life after boarding school

99. I had four years at Art School which were brilliant. I worked in a field related to my degree until the pandemic. My career hasn't been meteoric in comparison to the other guys. I don't feel entitled to be better although that was the culture at the school. Since the pandemic I've been working in a job that I love but it's a low-paid job.

Impact

100. Large parts of the Academy I did enjoy and it was good. That's the dichotomy of this situation. Some teachers were okay and some were grumpy and shouty. Who didn't have a grumpy teacher? Some teachers were brilliant and everything in-between. I liked playing rugby even though I wasn't that good at it. I quite enjoyed gym apart from the day I got landed on by another pupil.
101. People would ask me if I liked boarding. I'd say, "No, but it made me the man I am today." I said it in a positive way. Having confronted my memories, I realise it has made me the man I am today but that's not necessarily a positive. That seems to be a common thing. I'm not happy about some of my behaviours but I don't know if they are because of what happened. It's difficult to say but you are the sum of your experiences. Negative experiences probably have a more profound effect.
102. You were relieved when you were not getting bullied. It was better than you and I'm ashamed to say that sometimes I was at the wrong end. I have spoken to a friend

about it. It resonated with both of us that the environment encouraged you to behave in that manner. We both realise it is an appalling thing to have been doing because we knew what it was like to be on the receiving end.

103. I was so upset at Mr Brownlee highlighting the fact that I came from outside Edinburgh and didn't conform to this ideal because I was trying to adapt to a school that was very different from the school I'd come from. I'm sure he knew that. It was a definite attempt to belittle and make you vulnerable. He drew attention to the differences and didn't think you were as good as the others.
104. I'm profoundly affected by the behaviour of Hamish Dawson, much more than I realise. I have always brought it up when I meet others who were there. I constantly think back to what he did to us and ask why did we let ourselves be manipulated like that? We were completely within his thrall. I find that upsetting and I have done for all my life. I am angry and confused. I can't understand why we didn't think it was wrong and why we "enjoyed" it. I don't blame myself for Dawson's behaviour. I question why I didn't say stop and this was wrong, like when I walked out, when Mr ^{IDZ} beat me and that was wrong. I've never been shy of speaking my mind. I question why I never went back to the Academy as a young adult and said what Mr Brownlee was doing and that he had to go.
105. I don't have any issues with meeting and greeting people and I don't find people intimidating. That's not to say I don't have inhibitions. My wife and I have a healthy love life but I'm inhibited in aspects of that. Our physical relationship is good but our verbal relationship around that could be better. I wonder why because I'm not inhibited in other parts of my life. I find it difficult to talk about. I think it might have its roots in what happened at school.
106. I have anger issues. Especially when I'm tired, I get frustrated and angry. I don't know if that's come from my dad or my experiences at school. My dad had a temper although I'm nothing like as bad as dad. I think I've inherited a bit of that. Only once in my childhood did my father administer a spanking and what I had done was serious.

107. I do feel sorry for [REDACTED], despite him being responsible for some degree of my unhappiness at school. He was not a happy soul at school. I met him when I went to Art School, at the train station, and he wasn't doing anything. I thought he was a poor soul. He was the big fish and now he was a nothing. I didn't get any satisfaction out of that. There was no support structure to stop bullying and maybe [REDACTED] would have benefitted from that too.
108. Mr Brownlee is still alive. I would like to say to him that children hated what he was doing to them. I'd like to ask him what he was doing teaching if he had so much contempt for children. I'd like to know what frustration he had in his life that he took them out on ten year old children.
109. It's been good for me to acknowledge the events at school as traumatic. They have caused me a lot of consternation over the years. It's been good to find out, for example regarding Hamish Dawson, that it is outrageous and appalling behaviour. Everybody should be justifiably upset about that. It makes me disappointed and angry that teachers and the headmaster must have known that these teachers were doing these things. It makes them complicit in it. They also sent teachers like that away, with a reference, to some other poor children.

Reporting of Abuse

110. When I made my application to the Inquiry, the police contacted me and asked if I'd give a statement, which I did. Two police officers interviewed me at the house. I told them about Mr Brownlee and Hamish Dawson. I minimised it all.

Treatment / Support

111. I've never had any support about what happened. This is the first time I've opened up about it. I've not wanted any support. Whether I need it I don't know. I have the information if I need it. There's catharsis and closure for me in the Inquiry process. I'm

not sure I'd want to go on and have therapy. It's helped that I've been able to be open about it with my wife and with other people, such as Nicky Campbell the radio presenter. He has been supportive and I've exchanged emails with him.

Records

112. I gave the police permission to get my records from school. I didn't think they'd still have them but apparently, they do. It is interesting in terms of Freedom of Information and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) that they still have records about me from forty years ago. *Where do they stand legally on that?* I don't want my records. I have my old report cards and that's enough.

Revisits

113. The school had a reunion last year. I went along because ninety per cent of the time, everything was good. Thank goodness, there were no masters that I didn't like. There was one pupil who, throughout the school, was sensitive and as result got a miserable time from everybody. He was the victim of all sorts of horribleness and must have had a horrible time at school. This chap came in wearing an immaculate silk suit. You could see this was an incredibly successful, wealthy chap. He was gracious to everybody. Someone said that was who this is. I thought that was brilliant and good on him.
114. I had been to a reunion one other time. Both times, they asked if you wanted a tour of the school before the reunion. Both times I have not bothered. I'm not interested in looking, especially in certain classrooms although I did once look at the art room and it was wonderful. The art teacher is carrying on the tradition of Mark Cheverton.
115. Several years after I left school, I used to meet up with friends at the Accies Rugby Club. I played on and off when I finished Art School. If you want to be a non-playing member then you have to work behind the bar. It was an all-male rugby club and everyone was boisterous and loud. I went in and Mr Brownlee was behind the bar one

day. Mr Brownlee was a small, effete man. Everything behind the bar had to be clean and neat and tidy. It struck me that Mr Brownlee was the way he was because he had a degree of inadequacy regarding everybody else. I didn't engage with him. I thought, "You're not so big now, are you?"

Lessons to be Learned

116. If teachers have enough contempt for their pupils that they must kick them or strangle them then perhaps they shouldn't be a teacher. There should be a process where other teachers can identify them and they are answerable to what they have done. You forget that we were really young. If you look at a nine year old boy now and you think, "Were we that small and receiving this robust, physical treatment, with no pastoral care?"
117. There should be somebody for pupils to speak to. Even if it's every month, a trained person should ask if everything is okay and if anything is troubling you. A responsible adult should point out to children the behaviours which are not acceptable towards them. Children should know that they can report unacceptable behaviours. The responsible person needs to come from outwith the institution.
118. Teachers at the Academy walked past Dawson's classroom. They must have heard conversations amongst children speaking about what he did. They must have known what was going on. There was institutional blindness. If a responsible person sees behaviour towards children which is inappropriate then they need to know that they can go to a certain person outwith the institution. There should be some way of compelling them so that they have no choice other than to do something about it. It should be professionally required of teachers that they blow the whistle.
119. Hamish Dawson lived out his life at the Academy and died comfortably without ever being held to account for his actions. That makes me feel frustrated. You hear about people who have done things years ago and get hauled up when they're ancient. The point of that is that serves as a warning to anybody else that we don't forget these

things. They may have happened four decades ago but that doesn't make them any less appalling.

120. It boils down to the institutions putting their reputations above the welfare of their pupils. There are lessons to be learned in how we, as a society, didn't respond correctly to many significant, bad things. The lessons were not learned until decades later.

Other information

121. There was much in the institution that I enjoyed, liked, and still respect. I would wish that this process makes sure that what happened to me doesn't happen to current pupils. I don't wish to see the edifice torn down. I want to see the edifice learn from the past.

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..... 22 / 5 / 2023