

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

IEE

Support person present: No

1. My name is IEE My date of birth is 1977. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before boarding school

2. I was born in Glasgow and my parents moved to in 1977 or 1978 where my dad was a G.P. I've got two sisters and they both went to St George's School for girls in Edinburgh from about the age of ten. is a year younger than me and is maybe three or four years younger.
3. I grew up in and went to Primary School until I was nine years old. I enjoyed that time, it was good fun but I knew when I went to primary one that my dad had always made it clear that we were going to get kicked off to boarding school at some point. I wasn't really that keen on it and I'm not sure my mother was either.
4. I don't know why my parents chose Edinburgh Academy. I think my dad thought he was doing the right thing for us all. We were going and that was that. My dad hadn't gone to boarding school. He stayed on the Isle of Skye, was at Portree High School and I think they maybe stayed in a hostel there during the week. He went to Aberdeen university and became a doctor. He joined the army and travelled to India and places like that before he came back to the UK.

5. I remember primary one, two, three and four at [REDACTED] and about Easter time in primary four I had to go to Edinburgh to sit a test to see if I could get into Edinburgh Academy. It was kind of like a test to see if you were good enough to be accepted and I thought oh God, this is bullshit. I was quite happy just growing up, messing about on the local farm and playing out on the hills with my mates. I didn't want any of this to be blatantly honest. I sat this test, passed it and knew that in September 198[REDACTED] at the beginning of primary five that was me going to Edinburgh Academy.
6. In the summer holidays I had to go to Aitken and Niven, the clothing store in Edinburgh to get kitted out with blazers, school uniform and get a big trunk to put all my belongings in.
7. I remember all my friends went back to school in the middle of August and I had to hang about until about 9th September to go to school.

Edinburgh Academy

8. The boarding houses were all in Kinnear Road, Edinburgh. Scott House and Jeffrey House were for fourth year and above.
9. The first boarding house I was in was Mackenzie House as I was in the youngest age group of boarders. It was for boys my age which was nine, up to third year which was about thirteen or fourteen years old. I slept in H Dorm when I started, as it was for the younger boys and it took two or three boys.
10. You went down the path and into this big hall with a staircase. On the ground floor there was a reception area, a TV room and a bigger room where we did our homework. You went upstairs to the dormitories and there was a couple of them that looked out onto the playing fields and over towards Inverleith Park. They were the bigger ones that could take up to eight or nine boys.

11. There was a new annex built on the side of Mackenzie House that joined it with Scott House. On the upper level of the annex was H Dorm, a bathroom and rooms for matron and the house tutor. Below that was a games room and below that again there was a changing room where we would go from the boarding houses with shoe lockers and where you would hang your jacket.
12. Latterly, maybe after I had been there two or three years, they took girls in for the last two years of school and the ones who were boarders were accommodated in the top floor of Mackenzie House.
13. The set up was that for each house there was a Housemaster who was usually a teacher, his wife and children and they were accommodated in a house attached to the boarding house. [REDACTED] was the Housemaster when I first started.
14. Every boarding house also had a house matron who was responsible for your welfare, be it from doing your laundry to making sure if you had a cut or a bruise you were patched up. Twice a year they gave you a 'nit' wash putting lotion in your hair. Each house also had a house tutor and in Scott and Jeffrey Houses it was a teacher and they would assist in giving the housemaster a night or two off.
15. In Mackenzie House the tutors were what I would call placement students. They had finished school in their own countries and were coming over to Scotland for work experience. There were ones that came from Canada, Australia and latterly a boy who had actually been at Edinburgh Academy who came back to be a PE teacher. Generally, in Mackenzie House they were school leaver age or not much older than nineteen, twenty or twenty one.
16. When I left Mackenzie house, I went to Scott House for fourth and fifth year but because the number of boarders declined, they then closed Scott House and merged it with Jeffrey House.
17. There was a nursery that used to be at Denham Green in the north end of Goldenacre, Edinburgh but by my second year boarding they built a new one in

beside the prep school campus at Arboretum Road. The prep school was for boys up until primary six. The Edinburgh Academy High School was in Henderson Row which was about a mile and a half walk from the houses. After primary six there was a thing called 'Geits' which was like the first year in senior school so there was actually seven years at senior school.

18. The school was a mix of day pupils and boarders. There were four houses in the school, Carmichael, Cockburn, Kinross and then one that was set up basically with all the boarders and people that lived within a mile or two of where the boarding houses were. Everybody else was split into the other three.
19. My impression when I was at the school, was that compared to other schools like Fettes or Merchiston it was a bit more liberal. You were given a bit more freedom and it was by no means the worst place to be. I got a decent enough education out of it and I can't really complain about that but there were certainly some pupils who had that we are better than you attitude. They had that air of shitiness about them because they went to private school and thought they were better than those who went to state school. I wasn't fussed with that attitude.

Routine at Edinburgh Academy

First day

20. I got taken down the road by mum and dad and went to Mackenzie House where we were met and welcomed by the housemaster and matron. We took the big trunk and belongings in and when mum and dad were going to drive off, I burst into tears. I put up a bit of a fight as I wasn't wanting to stay. I always remember they went out to the car and I was just standing there. When I heard and saw the car start, I just bolted, got out the door and ran down the road after them kicking and screaming wanting to go back home. I didn't want to be there. I got about four or five hundred yards towards Arboretum when they got me, put me back in the car and took me back to Mackenzie House.

21. I was pretty upset but I got unpacked. There were boys there from all over the world, Hong Kong and places like that and they all seemed to be better at dealing with it than me. Some of them were from military backgrounds and were maybe used to being here, there and everywhere.
22. The house tutor walked us over to the prep school for a meal but it didn't feel right, I just had that feeling in my stomach. The rest of the day I just spent crying and unpacking.

Mornings and bedtime

23. We slept in dormitories and within them we all had a single bed and a chest of drawers to empty the contents of your trunk into. The trunk would go away and you wouldn't see it again until the holidays.

Mealtimes/Food

24. All the boarders had to go to the prep school for our meals so we had to walk over there to get breakfast, lunch and dinner. We had set tables with the younger ones nearest the canteen and the older ones at the back. There was supervision by the house tutors to walk over to the canteen and as we had our meals. When I went to the Upper School, after breakfast we walked down to school and we had lunch in the canteen there between lessons.
25. The food was always served hot and it was okay. Breakfast would be a choice of cereal, toast, fruit juice, porridge and cooked stuff. At lunch and dinner it was always three courses. There was always soup or a starter and then a main course that could range from things like curry to beans on toast to gammon steak. There was usually a choice of a couple of things but if you didn't like it that was just tough. There would be a sweet like crumble or custard.

Washing/bathing

26. In Mackenzie House there was a bathroom that was across from H dorm and on the middle below that there was another bathroom that had five or six baths, toilets, sinks and I think a shower room.
27. After games the day pupils would use the changing rooms at the games pavilion but there were shower and changing rooms downstairs in Scott and Jeffrey Houses for boarders to use.

Clothing/uniform

28. We had the uniform that I had got Aitken and Niven and even the laundering of that was very prescriptive. You put your shirts in on a Wednesday and a Friday and your socks and pants were every second day so it was all written out.

Healthcare and welfare

29. There was nobody you could go and speak to if you had a problem. I suppose the house matron was the closest you would get to that but you just had to suck it up and get on with it. I learned quite early on that they didn't help you because they covered up what happened. Really, you were on your own with your peers.
30. I wasn't happy for the whole first term until I got home for the mid-term holidays in October. I remember writing a letter home to my mum and telling her that I was that homesick that I had been sick all over my bed. Unbeknown to me my mum had gone to the house matron, apologised and offered to send down more bedding.
31. I used to often go to the toilet and make myself sick just through worry and nerves. I had that butterfly feeling in my stomach but I never told the staff anything about it. I was stuck there until October and I think they thought 'well, if he's not home he's not coming and going'. My dad always made it clear that if I wasn't there, I was going to be somewhere.

32. They never did anything to help you settle in but you were always busy. Once you were at school you were always occupied and even after school you were doing activities.

Schooling

33. I can't deny that I got a good education as I left school with nine 'GCSE' and eight 'Highers.' I was taught well, taught how to pass exams and when you see what results friends from where I came from got, we certainly did have a good education. However, part of that reason is probably because we were forced to sit down and work for an hour or hour and a half every night which my friends at home didn't have to do. They could go out and enjoy themselves but we were this institution. The school day would finish playing rugby or some activity and you had to do something after school every night. That would be until about half four and then you would go for your shower before going over for dinner.
34. In Mackenzie House from about 6:00 pm until 7:30 pm or 8:00 pm we had to sit in one room and do a supervised study time. When I went to Scott House you were allowed to do your study in the dormitory.

Sporting activities

35. After school we would walk back up to the playing fields for rugby. On a Saturday we played rugby against other schools and it was a pretty full fixture list. We were forced to do sport but I was lucky because I was okay with that, although there were pupils there that weren't very sporty. They were more into music or arts but they were still forced to play sport, rugby or cricket or whatever else.
36. Sport was part of the curriculum so there was no choice whether you played rugby or not, certainly in the lower years. Once you got into the upper years you could also choose hockey or football but it was very limited as rugby was where you were forced down. Every weekend you would have fixtures against other schools whether it was in

Glasgow or against Glenalmond, Strathallan, Merchiston, Loretto, Heriots or wherever.

Leisure time

37. At night after dinner and studies we got to watch bit of TV before going off to your bed and lights out. Even at the weekends you would be busy playing rugby or whatever sport you were doing and then you would have some free time in the afternoon. You could go into town but in the younger days you would be accompanied. On Sundays it would be church and then just mucking about really, trying to fill your time.

Religious instruction

38. I remember on Sundays we used to have to go to church. At home mum always went to church and tried to get us to go. It happened to an extent but I have never had any time for it. Before I went to Edinburgh Academy, I wasn't going to church every weekend but once there it was a routine that we were made to do.

Trips and holidays

39. They had an outdoor centre called Blair House which was up in Glen Doll and it was good to escape up there. We all went in first and third year and it was fine, you were out in the open air, on the hills doing rock climbing and things. They would take senior pupils along to help out the teachers. They had some sort of punishment called stone duty or something like that for anybody that had been misbehaving. They would have to go down to the river pick up stones, take them back and clean them, you know that kind of crap. I think it was the type of thing that had been forced on them so they thought they should hand it down.
40. There was the Combined Cadet Forces where we all had to go in fourth and fifth year. There was a choice of Army, Navy or RAF and I was in the army. In at least one of these two years you had to go away on a summer camp and I went to Cultybraggan Barracks in Comrie for a week. You did military drills and did what the

army did. If you were lagging behind you would get shouted at or have to do press ups and drills. There were elements of it that were good fun. We did basic survival skills like map reading, killed hens and rabbits and learned how to cook them. We went up in a helicopter, got to fire live shots in the shooting range, rock climbing and abseiling off the dam.

41. The school did a number of rugby tours and in 1992 we went to South Africa and in 1994 to New Zealand which I was lucky enough to go on. I know the school also went to Argentina on a rugby tour so we did have more opportunities than I would've had at home. However, if I was weighing it up with growing up at home and having a more fulfilling childhood, I would have opted for that rather than being in Edinburgh.

Work/chores

42. At the age of nine you had to learn that you had to change your bedding and how to make it and change the duvet cover. That was the kind of things you had to do just to survive there. That was something you never even had to think of at home. It was a lot of growing up to do pretty quick.

Birthdays and Christmas

43. If it was your birthday the matron would make you a cake but that was about it as far as celebrating your birthday went. At Christmas we went home for the holidays.

External Inspections/visitors

44. I don't remember any visitors or inspectors coming into the school whilst I was there.

Family contact

45. Sundays was the day for writing letters home but getting home at the weekends was difficult due to the full fixture list for rugby. The rugby always had to take precedence. I couldn't say I wanted to go home on a Friday night as I would have to stay and play

that game on a Saturday before I went home. If there wasn't a fixture it was 'happy days' and you could go home but that was very rarely that happened.

46. Later on, probably in the second term I was there, my mum used to come down once or twice a month, pick me up and take me home for a weekend. That was always nice and the first thing I would do would be to get out the car and go off and see my friends. My mum and dad wouldn't see me until the Sunday when it was time to go back.
47. I used to drag my heels about going back and I would feel sick at the thought. I would make myself sick on the journey and I was quite happy if it was snowing in Glencoe and I didn't have to go back. I remember once my mum was taking me back and there was snow at Glencoe so she took me back home but the next day my dad took me back saying there was no getting out of it, I was going back.
48. I remember one night going back I was feeling sick so made myself sick at Tyndrum. I always remember we got to Doune and I was crying, not wanting to go back and feeling sick again. As you come in from Callander to Doune, just as you come into the 30mph zone there is a road you can take off to the left and just before you go over a bridge there is a car park with a wall. I remember my dad stopping to let me out and I was just crying against this wall and making myself sick. He would just joke with me and called it the wailing wall. Every time we passed after that he would come out with some shit like 'there's the wailing wall' just to remind me.
49. Further on in that journey I remember coming into Edinburgh and I was feeling sick again. My guts were gone and I felt like I was going to shit myself so he pulled in just before the Gogar roundabout where the RBS is now and let me out. I went into one of the fields, pulled my trousers down and shit myself. I just didn't want to go back and I ended up having to put on a new pair of boxer shorts out my bag.
50. That was just one journey but I can remember others and coming back down the motorway into Edinburgh you could see the airport, you could see Hillend Ski Slope on the Pentlands, Corstorphine Hill with the red light at the top of it and I would think 'oh fuck we are here again'. It was always unsettling for a couple of days when you

went back. I didn't like it and I never liked the city, it wasn't where I wanted to be but I was made to be there.

Sibling Contact

51. I didn't really get to see my sisters during term times, they did their thing and I did mine, we were always busy. I dare say I wasn't that close to them and they did and still do their own thing. The difference was they had each other and I had myself. I speak to them probably a bit more now with the situation with my mum and dad.

Discipline

52. You had the punishments at the outdoor centre and the camp. However back at the school or in the houses, if you were pissing about after lights out, you would be made to go for an early morning run on the games fields that were outside the boarding houses. The house tutor or master would wake you up at 6:00 am and they could then watch you from the window. We got a lot of these punishments as we were a bunch of young lads in a boarding house getting put to bed at 8:00 pm. The last thing you wanted to do was to go to bed when your mates were still up so we would be chatting or whatever else then they'd come down the corridor and tell you that you were up for a run in the morning.
53. At the actual school the punishments were never physical. It was detention or lines or something to hinder you at the end of the day. There was a distinction made by the teachers between the day pupils and the boarders as they knew us better than the day pupils because we stayed with some of them in the houses.

Prefects/senior pupils

54. In the summer term of the second last year of school they would pick a new intake of prefects which they called Ephors. That was picked predominantly by the teachers. I was one of them myself. A lot of it was folk that were generally excelling at sport or music or something like that and from that the Rector and teachers would pick a

head boy and girl. You got a different colour of tie so that people could tell who you were.

55. The Ephors had the ability to give out lines or detention to everyone in the upper school. I think part of the thing was that they had to check the toilets to make sure no one was smoking and things like that. I don't think there was any sort of initiation ceremonies in the school.

Peers

56. I think you had to be clever to survive. I tried to tread a line where you got on with most people and I can think of boys that didn't. They were bullied senselessly as it was that fine a line, so you just had to kind of keep your enemies close. I probably still tread that line and speak to most people. I'm not confrontational or in anybody's face looking for a fight but those characters were there at the school and if you stepped out of line or if you didn't fit in to the norm you would be weeded out. Some boys had a pretty rough time from pupils because they didn't fit the mould of things.

Abuse at Edinburgh Academy

57. My issues at the Academy were with the house tutors. The first one was a guy, [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. He was a Canadian who had gone to [REDACTED] College in Canada and used to always walk about with the felt jackets and baseball boots like the American college kids wore. There may have been a relationship with the academy and that college as I think there was others from there before.
58. He assisted with PE at the upper school and rugby coaching. He was about five foot seven tall, had short brown hair with tight curls on top and a fairly stocky type of guy. I googled him not that long ago and recognised him from the photograph there was. He was working with kids in Canada doing rugby coaching. I can't remember if it was back at [REDACTED] College or as a [REDACTED] for Canadian schools.

59. I remember one night in about 1987 or 1988 after lights went out about 9:00 pm there were three of us were talking in the room in H Dorm and I got hauled out by [REDACTED] IEF. His punishment was that he would take you downstairs to this games room. It had like saloon type full glass swing doors that opened both ways and what he would do was stand you with your back against the wall, with your hands by your side. He would then pull the door back into the other room swing it right round and slam it against your face. That would knock your head back against the wall and he would let the door bounce away. It was really sore and he chipped my tooth doing it.
60. I think he got a shock with what he actually did to me and he was all kind of apologetic. The way he had slammed the door he had the intention of hurting me then realised he had maybe gone too far. He had done it to me two or three times before and had done it to the other lads as well so he knew what he was doing.
61. There was quite a bit of blood coming from my mouth and my nose and he kind of panicked a bit and took me up to the matron. I always remember the two house matrons were firstly Judith Reilly and then it was Linda Warner. I can't remember for definite but I think it was Judith's last year but it was one of the two that were that night. The matron was probably in her forties so was a good bit older than [REDACTED] IEF. She kind of patched me up and saw that the front of my tooth had been chipped.
62. The other lads that were in the room, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] knew what he had done to me. [REDACTED] may have been there as well but I'm not certain he was. They had been there when I was taken out the room and I know from speaking to them when I went back to the room, they had heard the commotion.
63. They told me that he had done it to them as well. Not on the same night as me but I think one of them had it done to them the same week. I remember it happening a few times that week. I can't recall anybody else getting an injury like I did.
64. Although he had done this to me before, after he chipped my tooth he never touched me or them again. I think this had been the winter term and he left not long after maybe at the Easter time after.

65. Generally, the house tutors were usually only there for a year or two. The ones in Scott and Jeffrey house were there longer as they were actual teachers in the school. They were always okay and there was never a problem with them. They were your teachers and they were a bit more mature.
66. Once ^{IEF} [REDACTED] left that summer term there was an Australian guy who came over called ^{IEG} [REDACTED]. He became our house tutor and was helping with PE and teaching. As we were a year older, we had moved out the annex and were in an older part of Mackenzie House. ^{IEG} [REDACTED] had this thing where he would give you what he called 'A kick in the ring.' Again, I think it would be if we were pissing about or chatting after lights were out that he would get us out and give us 'A kick in the ring'.
67. Sometimes it would be just one of us, other times two or three or some nights even five or six of us. This would happen nightly and he would line us up in the corridor outside the dormitory, hands against wall with our legs astride. He would walk down the line and boot you on the backside as hard as he could. Sometimes you would be lying on the ground not able to walk because you had been booted that bloody hard. The back of your leg could well be bruised at times. That was part and partial of it.
68. I remember it was kind of joked about getting 'A kick in the ring' and even the housemaster Tim Blackmore knew full well about it as he would joke about it as well. He used to say to us if we were mucking about that we better watch or we would get 'A kick in the ring.' He knew it was happening but he would never do anything about it. It happened to us all and I suppose we kind of made light of it at the time but when I look back at my time at the Academy it was bloody sore.
69. [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and his brother [REDACTED] were all in Mackenzie house with me. They all suffered the same and would all be able to corroborate getting 'A kick in the ring'.
70. After ^{IEG} [REDACTED] left, there was a house tutor who I think was called ^{IEH} [REDACTED]. I think he had [REDACTED] before and his punishment was that he made us do wall

sits. You would have to crouch in a stress position as if you were seated with your back against the wall in the TV room or even the study room. If you were mucking about in the study room he would make you do it in there whilst he was supervising.

71. It was usually for about a minute or whatever and if you didn't do it for 'x' amount of time you had to start again. When he started doing it to us, he had us doing it for thirty seconds to a minute but I think at one point because of the amount of time I had been doing it I could do it for about twenty five minutes. This happened to a lot of the boys in there.
72. We probably experienced more of the discipline and abuse than day pupils due to being boarders. I never experienced or witnessed any physical abuse from any of the teachers at the school.
73. Whether or not it is right to bring this up or not, there was things I read somewhere about a PE teacher, ^{IBU} [REDACTED] who used to make you do your rugby without your boxer shorts on. This happened to us as well. You didn't wear boxer shorts, you were only allowed to wear your rugby shorts for whatever reason. It was always one of these things that if he saw you had them on you got sent back to the changing room to take them off and I don't know why.
74. ^{IBU} [REDACTED] was in his sixties at the time and I think he retired in my second last year so probably about 199[REDACTED]. He was a good teacher and I always felt he treated us with respect although some others might not have. I always thought the guy was alright and I had no issues with him but you know the stories I've read in the press about making us play rugby without the boxer shorts on and standing watching us have a shower after rugby are both entirely true.
75. I never saw any abuse or thought of it as abuse and at the time I viewed it was more to make sure you had a shower before going back to class. I never questioned it and I couldn't tell you whether he was doing it for his own satisfaction.

Reporting of abuse at Edinburgh Academy

76. I reported the incident where my tooth got chipped to the matron the night it happened. I told her what had happened and I think [IEF] might even have told her as well. I can't remember exactly what I told her but she wasn't best pleased with [IEF]. I heard her giving him a row about it. She said that she would make me a dentist appointment in the morning and told me that if anyone asked about it I was just to say it was a rugby injury. I have lived with that until just recently. The house matrons were never a problem, they were always very helpful and were good people but she was covering their backs.
77. I think the housemaster came along to see me whilst I was getting patched up. I'm pretty sure the housemaster at the time was a guy called Tim Blackmore and she would have told him about it. I think there was some sort of discussion about it so I am sure he knew about it and he would know I was having to go to the dentist. They had to know our comings and goings as we would have to sign in and out. I think [IEF] probably got pulled up for it but at the same time it was covered up and I never told anyone, not even my parents.
78. I couldn't tell you whether or not there was one in the boarding house but I'm sure the matron would have kept some sort of book or records of who came to her with a medical issue. I would be interested to know what they put in and had they covered it up in there. There was a lot of people got injuries and ended up going to hospital so you would think there would be records kept.
79. I know the actual school kept records as they had a school nurse so I would presume the houses would as well. They had a duty of care to speak to your parents and keep them up to date with how you were getting on so I don't know what they would have told my parents. I don't know if they told my parents about it.
80. Being told to say this was a rugby injury when I was only eleven or twelve years old at the time wasn't right. When you put it into the context of how I ran away when I first arrived but had to go back, it is kind of like being put in an institution. Basically, you

are told what to do and don't question it. That was really how it was and that was what I did. I thought if I tell somebody, he is going to get into trouble and I didn't think I was going to get the back up. The house matron who should have been helping me had told me to lie. The housemaster knew about it and again he did nothing.

81. I went to the dentists the next again morning in Goldenacre and I remember telling the dentist I did it playing rugby because I didn't have my mouth guard in. That was the first filling I ever had in my mouth. It is still like that today. I have tried getting it fixed but every single time I have got it fixed it has just come away.

Leaving Edinburgh Academy

82. I left Edinburgh Academy in 199█ after I had completed my school years. When you were at the Academy there was always the expectation that you would do your GCSE's and Highers and you would go to university. There was no talk of not going to university and taking on an apprenticeship. That just wasn't going to happen. Results very much mattered to them and they used to keep a table of how many people went to Oxford and Cambridge. That was what they saw as important.

Life after Edinburgh Academy

83. After I left school, I worked for that summer at █ Farm doing the harvesting. I had my own cottage and made a good bit of money. I did this for a couple of years as a summer job. It was great to be free and I enjoyed it.
84. I always knew I wanted to do engineering and construction or something like that and I knew reasonably early on that I wanted to be up in Aberdeen. The reason I chose Aberdeen was that I had a lot of aunties up there from my mother's side. There was also a farmer from █ who is a very good friend of mine who had moved up to Huntly and I used to go up there in the holidays as a kid and give him a hand. They moved up there in 1988 and I would go up there in my Easter and summer holidays

and spend it with them. They were normal people, I could just fit in, be who I wanted to be and they were quite like family to me.

85. I did civil engineering at Aberdeen for four years. Aberdeen wasn't so bad as I had my car and I could escape. During the summer I would go and give my mate [REDACTED] who was a hand at the farm in Huntly for a few weeks then go back home and see my mates in [REDACTED] for a bit before I went back to university.
86. It was interesting when I went to Aberdeen university that I could tell the public schoolboys from the state schoolboys. Within the civil engineering course there was a group of lads that had gone to Aberlour School and I felt they were very like me. They were from the country and I could relate to them and got on really well with them. Then you had your public schoolboys who were toff schoolboys who thought they were better than everyone else and could down a pint in two seconds. I very quickly cottoned on to them and it was very much them and us.
87. Although I started playing rugby at Aberdeen I gave it up as I soon realised, they were just a bunch of the public schoolboys who were loud, obnoxious bastards. The boys from Aberlour were bang on though. You could sit and have a pint and a blether and there was no pretence or arrogance or anything like that with them. They were much better people.
88. I graduated with a 2:1 in Civil Engineering and again my parents' expectation was that I had to get a job in Civil Engineering. In 1998 one of my summer jobs was at [REDACTED] Quarry, down opposite [REDACTED] I was doing surveying and got involved a wee bit with the blasting, giving a hand surveying the blast holes and setting up blasts. I learned a wee bit, I really enjoyed it, settled in and fitted in well there.
89. When I graduated, I got a job with [REDACTED] based in Inverness as a graduate or trainee engineer. I bought myself a flat in Inverness and didn't really like the Inverness locals. They were very much a clique, even though the ones I had worked with at the Quarry had been a great laugh. People in Aberdeen were easier to get on with.

90. I did that for six months and then I was at home in [REDACTED] one weekend and I got speaking to a guy called [REDACTED] who was doing the blasting at [REDACTED] and he told me there was a job going as the shot firer. I asked him to put my name in for it and I got the job.
91. When I told my mother and father I had taken this job they were not happy at all telling me I was a civil engineer and I should be doing this and that. I told them, 'No, that is what I'm doing' and went to [REDACTED] as a trainee shot firer, did my explosives exams, became a shot firer and eventually I took over as the blasting team leader with four or five guys working for me. I loved it and had a brilliant seven years there. It was hard conditions being two thousand feet up the mountain in the mist and snow. We worked hard, played hard and went into [REDACTED] to socialise. I made some really good friends but my parents were always at me saying that I should be doing civil engineering, that I should be doing better than this. I was making double or triple the money I would as a civil engineer.
92. The quarry started to change and the family started contracting out the blasting. I thought that as time went on and I got older. I wouldn't want to be up on top of the hills. My neighbour in [REDACTED] worked in the Forestry Commission and he was good pals with a guy called [REDACTED] who was a civil engineer for [REDACTED] Forestry Commission. I blethered to him and he said there was a job coming up. I got the job as a trainee civil engineer with the Forestry Commission. I later took over from [REDACTED] when he moved on. It wasn't too bad a job and after a review they centralised and my area became much bigger. I was 'knocking my pan in' whilst the guys doing the same job in Aberdeenshire weren't doing half the work and were getting the same money.
93. After the bad winters in 2010 and 2011 I decided to put my portfolio together and went on to become a chartered civil engineer. I did another job with the Forestry Commission and then started working for a friend of mine whose company had a big contract from the Forestry Commission to stabilise right up the A82 which was about four years of work.

94. After I left him, I went back to Forestry Commission for a while before a couple of jobs with [REDACTED] on the trunk roads. I ended up where I still am now, working for [REDACTED] in [REDACTED]. He is a guy I knew from the Forestry Commission and he said he was retiring in a few years so wanted me to go and help run the company with his son.

Impact

95. I feel I was deprived of my childhood by getting sent away. It was sad and I would definitely say it has had an effect on the relationship I have had with my parents. I have grown up without parents since the age of nine and it might sound a bit callous but I can live my life quite happily and go months without even speaking to them. My sisters are in touch all the time as my dad had cancer and recently passed away. I have never had a relationship with him as such. I grew up without them, I could quite easily just do my own thing and I am still like that. I am quite comfy being on my own with my own space.
96. With my parents I couldn't give a toss one way or another. I grew up without any real input from them as I was at school. It's not like how it was with my kids. When they were growing up, I saw them every night and now my partner's thirteen year old daughter is home every night. You sit down, have a blether or do things. It wasn't like that for me being on my own and I just had to get on with it.
97. Even with friends and girlfriends I tend not to get overly close to people, I am quite comfortable being me and although I've got them, I'm quite happy to be myself, get on with what I have to do and concentrate on myself.
98. I feel that now and that was the way I was brought up. I was landed there at the Academy, I was on my own and I had people around me to survive. I grew up without my parents, sisters, friends or anybody other than my acquaintances or associates I had to get by. I wouldn't class them as friends or being close to me.

99. Although I generally got on with other boys at the Academy, I've never kept any friends from there as I have walked away from it. I didn't want to keep in touch with them and I don't want to know about it. There were two guys I went to Aberdeen University with and shared a flat with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] who I was at school with but I've not kept in touch with them at all. The friendships I made were basically just to survive and to have somebody around you to watch your back. It wasn't like my friends back home in [REDACTED] as they are the ones I actually bother with or have time for.
100. I don't have any happy memories of it all and every time I do remember back it was crap. Once I walked away from it, I was quite happy to do so. I don't ever look back at it as a memory that I care to remember. I don't really have anything positive to say about it as I simply didn't want to be there.
101. You just had to get by because for the first two years at least you were at the academy twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. It wasn't until later on you were allowed a little bit leeway to go into town or whatever.
102. You were never away from it other than when you got home some weekends. When I came home, I could go up to the forest or Glencoe or wherever I wanted and nobody questioned me. You had free range to play and you could be a kid.
103. I always remember the journey where I was sick and had to do the toilet in the field and my dad would remind me of it now and again. If we were ever going up and down that road, he would bring it up and right up until he became ill, he would still joke 'I bet you're glad you went there' and this and that and I would say no I wasn't.
104. I still get that feeling and memory now if I drive down to Edinburgh for the Highland Show or passing through to go to North Berwick. I can think of several spots on the journey when I drive down like Doune and Ingliston and I turn away from it because I don't want to know about it again. It brings the whole thing back.
105. The thing with the broken tooth always comes back and that keeps coming back. Every time it got filled it would come out. Now every time I brush my teeth and look in the

mirror, I can see it and I know exactly how it happened. I was told to keep that quiet and I did do up until probably 2017. I did suffer other abuse at the Academy but the one incident that really gets me the most is the abuse from IEF [REDACTED] from Canada where I got this chipped tooth. Getting a kick on the arse I felt a bit so what but the way he chipped my tooth was wrong and he was an arrogant little bastard. That's what I really felt about him, I hated him. He was only at the school for less than a year.

106. I never let on to my parents and don't really have a relationship with them like my sisters do. When I've tried to tell my parents in the past, I've been knocked down so I feel why do I bother. I'm happy that I'm speaking to the Inquiry because I am hoping that somebody's actually going to listen.
107. My parents don't know I'm here today but one of my sisters knows and is quite supportive of it. I might tell my parents one day. That's just the kind of relationship I have had with my dad. He was military and his attitude was you are going and that's it. He probably believed he was doing the right thing but I don't have any real love for him. I can live my life happily without them.
108. Going to boarding school has had an impact on the way I have parented as I would never dream of putting my kids to boarding school. I think sometimes they need a kick up the backside but you just have to let them go with the flow, let them evolve and hope that they find the right way eventually.
109. It has probably affected how I have been in relationships as well. I think in some of those relationships I have had I don't get too close to people and it's all a result of being at boarding school. My relationship with my wife was never that close, we just sort of existed to get on with things and I knew it wasn't right. I tried getting out of it but we ended up getting married when I wasn't really wanting to get married. We ended up having kids when I wasn't really wanting to have kids. I always provided for them and I've always done the best I could for them but it just wasn't right and I had to get out of it. I left my wife in 2017 when the kids were about twelve so I kind of missed out a bit on them growing up as they stayed with her.

110. I've been with my present partner [REDACTED] for about six years now and we get on like friends, really, really well. She's from Fort William as well and she is absolutely bang on. She is actually somebody that I can share a lot in common with, enjoy being with and at last I am happy.
111. One weekend I went up and cut the grass for him and as we were leaving [REDACTED] gave my mum a hug and I just never bothered. I just said I'll see you later. When we got back in the car [REDACTED] said your mum was dying to give you a hug and you just never bothered. She found that strange as she is very close to her parents. It sounds cold but that is just the relationship I have had with them growing up. They weren't there for me growing up and that is how it has manifested itself. Whether that is right or wrong it is just the way it is.
112. I still look back with anger at the times I was at the Academy and in particular the journeys, my first day running away, my tooth getting chipped and told to cover it up. Getting taken down the road despite being sick, crying my eyes out and shitting myself. I still look at all that and go 'well fuck you', you did that to me, you didn't bother so I'm here but I'm not here, get on with it.
113. I still think about these experiences at Edinburgh Academy quite a lot and a lot more than I want to. As I say the thing with the tooth has never gone away. I got it repaired up to about 1999 or 2000 and when I was at [REDACTED] the blasts were initiated with an electric current and I used my teeth to pull the thin copper wire and it pulled the filling off. I've never bothered getting it fixed since.
114. It's a reminder and every time I look in the mirror, drive that road to Edinburgh, hear about the Academy in the news, watch [REDACTED] playing [REDACTED] for Scotland because he was at the Academy with me, it is a reminder.
115. It doesn't even have to be the academy just any mention of another public school like, Loretto or Fettes or Merchiston I just see or hear it and I think of it.

Reporting of Abuse

116. I went to the age of forty before I told my parents, people that I should have been able to tell because of the way it was. I know my kids would have told me now. I mean I was ten or eleven years old at the time and I've kept that until the age of forty. The only reason I told them was probably because I was having a mid-life crisis. I decided I was getting out of my marriage and whilst I am at it, I was going to bring out what had happened.
117. In 2017 I went to the police in Fort William. I don't know what triggered it, maybe I'd read about something that had happened or publicity about the Inquiry and I thought, do you know what I am going to go and speak to somebody about it. I wanted to go and clear it off my chest as I had carried it about for long enough.
118. I had just gone through a divorce, I thought you know what, I've turned forty, I'm going to the police and I'm going to speak about this. I took myself to Fort William Police Station and told them about everything that had gone on. I also told my mother and said this Edinburgh Academy is just bullshit. They viewed it as sort of like a status thing and I never liked it. I don't really talk about it now and I'd like to be able to shut it out.
119. I got a call back from Fort William police station and the guy listened. He lived around there and he got it. I gave a list of names of the boys I had been in Mackenzie House with who had suffered 'A kick in the ring' and he went away to investigate. Four or five weeks later somebody from the police got back to me saying there was nothing they could do as they had no more leads.
120. That has kind of bugged me a bit since then because I know it happened. All I want is somebody to believe me and challenge these guys about what they did. That's all, I want them to face up to it.
121. A couple of weeks after I had been to the police, out of the blue I got a message on LinkedIn from [REDACTED]. I still have the message on my phone and it shows

that it was sent on 22 December 2017. The message was *'I hope you are keeping well, I have a favour to ask. Can you fire over your email address? Have a great Christmas and a top 2018'*. I thought at the time have the police been speaking to him. That was the first I had heard from him since we joined on LinkedIn and I never contacted him or sent him my email address after the message.

122. It kind of angered me that this guy had been contacted, had an opportunity to say something and he has either said or he's not said.
123. I would imagine these boys have come through life and I don't know if any of them have come forward and may be like yeah, yeah, yeah and just forgotten about it. A lot of them in many ways were different to me. They seemed to fit into boarding school life, were from cities or their parents lived abroad.
124. Maybe with you doing this Inquiry these names might crop up somewhere and somebody else might come forward and say the same, then you know there is something there.
125. I've not made any report to the school because I don't think they would have listened. How could I go to them when it was covered up when I was a kid, it was known about and nothing was done.
126. Like going to the police in 2017 and nothing was done, it actually angers me that nothing is done every single time. It frustrates me that nothing is done as I sit there constantly reminded by it and it's not memories that I want to remember.
127. It is just the anger and frustration that nobody seems to be listening, nobody wants to listen and it's not the image the school want portrayed so just forget about it for now. It's just like my parents when I went to [REDACTED] as a shot firer, they wouldn't tell their friends about that because that's not the done thing.

Revisits

128. I have driven past the Academy but it wasn't specifically to have a look, more just a glance over as I went past. It didn't feel good and I still think thank fuck I am away from there. It was an institution, it was set in its ways, it had a structure. You had to fit into it and dare I say it was kind of Victorian. It's not a good way and yes you got opportunities, more than I would have got at home but it's not really the opportunities that make you a better person, it's your friends and the people you grow up with. My friends at home are the ones I keep in touch with.

Treatment/support

129. I have never sought any treatment or support for what happened. To be honest without trying it I don't know what good it would do me.
130. What is probably more value to me now is to actually be able to tell you and hopefully somebody is listening that will pick it up. What happens with that I don't know but at least I've got it out there.

Compensation

131. I have not tried for compensation but how do you get compensation because they never admit anything. They are reluctant to admit anything and they probably thought everything would be brushed under the carpet and that's what they did.

Records

132. I haven't tried to get any of my records from the school and I wouldn't even know how to go about doing that. To be honest it would be another reminder by having to go back through them again. The beauty of this is I can speak to you guys as friendly

strangers who are willing to listen and maybe from there these records will be traced. I went to the police and whether they tried to get them or not, I got nothing. If I went and got these records and gave them to the police, are they going to do anything with it?

Lessons to be Learned

133. I think the kind of way the school was set up as an institution where it always wants to be the best at this, that and the next thing and doesn't give a toss about your well-being was wrong. It was all about performance with the best grades, being the best at everything and they were too focused on trying to get that out of people rather than look at their well-being.
134. Folk that didn't make the grade struggled and it was survival of the fittest. Even having to sit a test to get in at the age of eight or nine was daunting. The primary school I first went to, you just turned up and got on with it.
135. It's just that these institutions aren't a pleasant environment. Even the buildings are cold when you go into them. Even to look at the Academy, you've got this stone front that is kind of like big buildings that were mansions built with slave money and you think they are just cold and the people in them are cold and institutionalised. It was certainly very polarised.
136. The vetting of the staff should be better. The three guys that I have told you about that were abusive were young guys that were just out of school. Should they really have been doing that role or in that position? Were there any controls, as it seems there was nothing that I could see? Even when the school knew there were problems, they didn't deal with it. I know one of them had been at the Academy but I don't know what the background of the other guys were, other than one had come from ██████████ College and the other had come from Australia. If I was a parent, I would like to know who was looking after my children.

137. I don't feel that the school prepared me for leaving school and going into adulthood. It gave you the grades and qualifications to try and be better than other people but actually the real life experience and practical life skills that my friends in state education got meant they were far more grounded. They didn't have the air of arrogance about them of thinking we are better than you because we went to a public school and I just think the people running these schools have no idea.

Hopes for the Inquiry

138. I hope that the people who have carried out the abuse will be held accountable. I hope that as many people as possible come forward to tell about their experiences. I know it is not just me. I have listed a number of people who have experienced the same and they might not connect with it as abuse but it was. If you are lying on the ground hurt after getting kicked by somebody that is meant to be looking after you it is actually abuse. Likewise, that incident with my tooth and I will have that thought until my grave. Every time I look at it, I will be relating it to the abuse at that school.
139. It wasn't just the sixties and seventies that this was happening. It was the eighties and nineties as well. I hope people come forward and show them up for what they actually are. They sit there trying to be on a pedestal and think they are better than everybody else but actually when you get under the skin of them it is a shithole of a place. That's my thoughts on it.
140. Coming and telling you guys about this has been important because I think at last people are beginning to realise what actually went on in these places and seeing them for what they are.
141. The more people that can come forward and actually say that this is what these places are like the better., They are not perfect, they weren't great environments and there are a lot of people I know who I have listed, who were abused. Whether they come forward or not is up to them. I found it strange that guy got in touch with me on LinkedIn.

Deep down these guys know and it needs them to speak up and that is why I think this is so important.

142. I hope these places have to answer the questions because they have hidden it and got away with it for so long. They have charged a fortune to families under the guise of a charity as well. I hate to think what my father paid for my education but I wouldn't pay it and I wouldn't put anyone through it.

143. At the state schools you might not have come out with the best of grades but you would have had a life and a more rounded upbringing and real life.

Other information

144. 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 15/3/23

