

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

Barbara ROBERTSON

Support person present: No

1. My full name is Barbara Gunn Gray Robertson. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1958. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Background/Qualifications

2. In 1975 I started at the College of Education in Dundee on their primary school teaching course. That was a three year course, however after the first year my grades were good enough to move me onto their degree course. I completed a further prelim year and then year three and four of their degree course. I graduated with a Bachelor of Education.
3. After teaching for two years in Kirkliston, I moved to Niddrie Primary School and whilst teaching there I did a two year part-time course at Moray House College. That was for a diploma in professional studies in early education. This included Nursery. I worked there for five years.
4. I returned to Niddrie part-time in 1987 for a few years whilst having my children and began teaching full-time in 1993 before starting at Edinburgh Academy in 1994.

Employment at Edinburgh Academy

5. I applied for a job at Edinburgh Academy in 1994. The job was advertised in the Scotsman Newspaper and was for teaching primary one to three in the junior school. I didn't know much about Edinburgh Academy at that time. I knew it was an all-boys school, which I wasn't sure about, but I did know I wanted a change.
6. When I first visited the Academy and walked around the upper school, I wasn't sure I could work there. It was very formal, old wooden single desks in rows, and I hadn't worked like that before. Then I went down to the infant department at Denham Green, which was the nursery and primary one and two. Primary three was over in the main building although all the buildings were linked by corridors. Denham Green was in a new building, and very well resourced. I was sure I would enjoy working there.
7. I liked the headmaster, and I liked the head of department who was Mrs Elizabeth Stewart. She was a competent and knowledgeable leader who was trying to bring about change in the infant department, which she led. I liked working for her, felt appreciated and learned new skills.
8. The headmaster when I visited the school was Lawrence Smith. He was not in post when I started in August 1994.
9. When I saw the job advertised in the Scotsman Newspaper, I submitted a written application and was invited for an interview. I was asked for references, and I know the Academy contacted the references. To be considered for the job, I had to be registered with the GTC. There was no probationary period for me.
10. I can't remember if there was any appraisal or monitoring of my performance at that time. Caroline Bashford certainly brought in a form of appraisal when she started at the school a few years later. We were appraised every second year after that.
11. After Lawrence Smith left the Academy, the Deputy Rector, Andrew Trotman, from senior school carried out the role of headmaster within the junior school. He couldn't

stay because he was due to start a new job as headmaster in a private school in York. Campbell Paterson started as headmaster at the junior school in 1995.

12. I was thirty-six years old when I started at the Academy in 1994 and I stayed there until I retired in 2018. I started teaching a primary two class and for a few years taught between primary one and two. I think I was in Denham Green for about six years before I moved to primary three. I did four years there before being asked to teach primary six. I had taught upper primary children when I worked part-time in Niddrie Primary, so it wasn't new to me.
13. Quite early on, I was sent on personal and social development courses. I had attended quite a few of these courses when I worked in Niddrie and they were a real interest of mine. It would have been a SCIS course, Scottish Council for Independent Schools.
14. Following this course, I introduced a programme into the Academy for personal and social development. I ran an in-service day to introduce it to all the teachers. That was in 1995 or 1996. Parts of this programme were still being used when I retired in 2018. The programme was based over six years and was split between classes from primary one to primary six with every class doing the introductory programme.
15. Everyone had to do the introduction at the beginning of term. The children would be asked to come up with rules for the year. That would generally be things like you have to listen to one another, try to work quietly, to be polite to everyone, work hard and things like that, the children set the rules. They would perhaps come up with too many so you would lay them out, the children would put them in order and then choose the six most important ones.
16. Each class had their own set of lessons which they had to cover throughout the year, so primary one would cover level one, primary two and so on.
17. I think Mrs Stewart retired three or four years after I started at the Academy. There was still a head of upper primary, but a new role was created, and someone was put in charge of primary one to three and someone else put in charge of curriculum.

18. Children left the junior school after primary six. They went onto primary seven, but it was at the senior school and was called 'Geits'.
19. We had an assembly most days. On a Friday there would be an assembly followed by hymn practice.
20. At Edinburgh Academy's Junior School in 1994 there was a head of nursery, head of primary one and two and a head of primary three to six. Whenever these heads of department left, the tradition was that the longest serving member of the teaching staff became the next head of department. Elizabeth Stewart appointment changed that; she came from outside the school.
21. When John Brownlee left as head of department, IDO ██████ took over as he had been the longest serving. When IDO ██████ ██████, Warwick Wilson was given the role. Any member of staff could have applied for the post.
22. When Caroline Bashford was headteacher, we had another inspection. The report said there were problems with leadership. Staff in the upper primary department had felt aggrieved about the leadership of their department and spoke of it to the inspector.
23. When Caroline Bashford became head of the junior school, I was looking after probationers and had responsibility for child protection. Caroline Bashford took over the child protection role and got a little remuneration for me, for my mentoring role. Caroline made Andrew Dickinson her Deputy Head of junior school, which was a new role she created. Andrew had been head of curriculum and had made significant improvements.
24. I was asked to take over the upper primary, which was classes four to six. I was initially sharing the role with the incumbent. He carried out administration tasks, and I did pastoral work, liaised with staff, and chaired staff meetings. At the end of that year the incumbent left the school and I took over the full running of the department. I did everything you do as a head of department other than curriculum, which Andrew Dickenson was doing. I was also still teaching.

25. I continued to teach primary six for two years until I was given two days out of class, which I appreciated. For the next two years I shared my teaching role with another teacher who was looking to reduce her hours at the junior school and that worked well.
26. The head then made changes to the management structure. It was separated into nursery, primary one and two, primary three and four and primary five and six. I was given the role of looking after primary three and four and one of the other teachers given the role of primary five and six. These were managerial roles, and I was part of the management team and had regular meetings with the head, deputy head, and other heads of department. My title was head of middle years. I moved into that role in 2009 and stayed in the role until I retired in 2018. My line managers were the head teacher and deputy head teacher of the junior school.
27. I was still teaching three days a week and sharing it with my job share partner, who taught the days I didn't. That worked well and my partner was flexible and happy to change her days to suit my commitments in school.
28. When Caroline Bashford moved to a new appointment, Gavin Calder was appointed to head of the junior school. He is the present headteacher of the junior school. Andrew Dickenson also left the school and took up the headmaster's job within the junior school at Kelvingrove School in Glasgow.
29. After a few years, my job share partner was retiring and Gavin said that he would take me out of class. I still taught a maths class every day in primary six. I did that for a year but after that only taught a maths set within my own department. I didn't have a class, but I was teaching every day. I would also take assemblies for my department every Monday and we would give out awards. Gavin Calder set up a system whereby the children gained points for working hard or doing caring things. The children would also get points for Athletics, a maths programme we used, and doing other online tasks at home or other achievements out of school. We were praising the children for whatever they were doing, and I would present certificates at these assembly.

30. The whole junior school would get together on a Tuesday and the headteacher would take the assembly. The children would also have hymn practice at the end of a day. On a Friday we all got together for an assembly which varied between year groups, the Eco-committee, Pupil Council and Charities Committee, which I ran for a while.
31. My relationship with the headmaster and depute was good and I could talk to them about anything I was worried about. We had a management meeting one afternoon a week and met in the Head's office. We tended to bring up any concerns then. It had been called the management meeting but was renamed senior teaching group. If you had something private to say and didn't want to say it at the meeting, you could speak to the head about it privately. Attending these meetings would be the headmaster and the depute, the head of Early Years, myself, the head of upper years and the head of support for learning. Occasionally someone else would be invited if it was felt they needed to speak to us all.

Policy

32. We did have policies for everything in the school. We were given a whole file of all the policies. If any policy was changed, you had to take out the old policy from your file and put the new one in or someone took your file and did it for you.
33. I don't remember but I'm sure there were policies for staff training and such like. I just don't remember the specific policies we had in place, although as I said, we all had our own personal policy files.
34. In terms of a residential care policy, I didn't have anything to do with that side of things.

Strategic planning

35. We would meet as a management team and the depute would provide an input as to where we were going as a school. We always had an input as to what our own

departments could do to help take these things forward. That's what I remember about strategic planning. That would be from my time as head of middle years but also before that when I was head of upper years primary four to six. We would be included in what the future planning was.

36. I don't know if the abuse of children ever came up in those meetings, that's not to say it didn't, I just don't remember. I think that was all covered in child protection meetings we had. These meetings were taken as part of the whole junior school, and it was always a visiting specialist who took the meetings. It was usually Doctor Sue Hamilton who gave the training. These would often involve a workshop on child protection, and it had to be done every two years. Workshops would be about discussing scenarios and how we should deal with them. The scenarios were based on the safeguarding of children. The workshop was initially a one-day course and then it was for an afternoon every second year.
37. The school's strategic approach to abuse was vigilance. It was about being vigilant and if you had any concerns reporting it to the head teacher. If a teacher had any worries, they would probably go to their head of department first. As head of a department, you dealt with all pastoral roles but the headteacher was the child protection lead, so it would go immediately to them. By doing the courses you knew that was the process and you knew the signs to look out for.

Staff

38. If I had a new teacher in my department, I would guide them. I oversaw six teachers, sometimes seven if there was a job share. I would have regular meetings with them where we would decide things together. If we wanted to push the children in reading, we would make up a little programme for supporting the children.
39. I did all the planning for trips in my department. We took primary four children to camp for a two night stay every year. I did the risk assessment forms.

Recruitment of staff

40. People who applied for jobs would be invited for interview. Background checks were always done but I don't know if they were done before interview. They were probably done before they were appointed and started at the school. As part of the recruitment process, they would all have to teach a lesson and I would be involved in observing that. Sometimes I was in the interviews but not always. If it was for a role in my department, I was generally in the interview.

41. I know that references were taken, and I believe followed up. I don't know what the references were supposed to cover because I was never involved in that process. I've seen qualification documents being brought in to prove the applicant had the qualifications they said they did. I've also seen passports being photocopied by the head's personal assistant to prove someone's identity.

Training of Staff

42. For a while, I mentored probationary teachers. I carried out that role before Caroline Bashford started at the school and for a while afterwards. I remember having a new teacher and after Caroline became head, having two probationary teachers to look after. I met regularly with them, I'm not sure if it was every week or every fortnight but it was regularly.

43. We would discuss how they were getting on, any worries they had, it was a general meeting to show I was supporting them. Sometimes I was asked to write out policy. I wrote a policy for 'talking and listening'. At that time, we were using the 5-14 curriculum, which was a Scottish Government scheme and 'talking and listening' was a big part of that. There were different areas of the scheme, and the policy document told you which areas you needed to cover.

44. I devised recording sheets for talking and listening which were passed to the next teacher. These sheets were great because you had all your information to hand when you came to write up your reports.

Supervision/staff appraisal/staff evaluation

45. I appraised my staff every other year. It would be about any areas of development that they wanted, how I felt they were doing. If I had any concerns about staff, I would have spoken to them long before the appraisal. I was appraising at lots of other times, but the appraisal was a formal way of doing it.
46. If I felt there were areas of child development that I wanted them to concentrate on, perhaps spelling for instance, I would raise that at staff meetings.
47. I would always ask if there was development the teacher wanted and would put something in place if a teacher wanted to extend their skills or knowledge. It may have been that I thought they would have to move out of the department to expand their experience.
48. I remember one of my teachers wanted to go for promotion and felt that they might want to look at other schools. Although for some reason that didn't happen, I did try to make it happen and I would have covered their class if needed.
49. The children in primary four had a games afternoon and that was a good time for a teacher to go and do something like that. I excused one of my teachers from taking part in games afternoon because she felt we needed a spelling programme within our classes and, although we did have such a programme, she felt that she wanted to change it. Things like that, if a teacher saw a need, I helped them with it.
50. It might be that a teacher wanted to gain experience in support for learning. In those cases, I would consult with the head of support for learning who would then look for courses to aid their development.

51. We worked across departments as well. As part of my development, I wanted to set up a visual timetable for children on the autistic spectrum. One of the teachers in another department, had great knowledge in this area. I was able to work with her on that and she was a good support. There was lots of cross departmental working to help teachers gain experience in things that interested them.
52. After my first appraisal meeting with a teacher, we would always meet a second time. I would ask if they agreed with what I had written and perhaps I would add further comments to the appraisal. Once we had agreed with what was being said and what I was suggesting, I would send the appraisal to the headteacher.
53. Every Tuesday when I was there, there would be a staff meeting. That might be departmental, the whole of the staff together or it might just be a general catching up with what was happening in the junior school. The depute might take that or the headteacher or they would take it between them.
54. It might be a CPD (*continuing professional development*) session where we had a visiting specialist. We did a few weeks on ADHD (*Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder*) and dyslexia, which was a whole programme that we were all doing and I can remember that vividly.
55. There was a school policy in staff appraisal. The policy was dealing with all aspects of your teaching. I think it was Caroline Bashford who introduced it.

Living Arrangements

56. Because our nursery numbers grew, we had a nursery which took place in one of the boarding houses in the morning. There was an after-school class for P1 and 2 children, which was also run in one of the boarding houses. Part of the duties for Denham Green staff was to walk the children over to the boarding house one day per week and make sure they were settled in. That was the only time I was ever in the boarding houses, I never had anything to do with them.

57. I think there were two boarding houses operating when I was at the school. I remember the nursery class was in Scott House and there was another boarding house called Jeffrey House. They were huge houses. I think boarding at the Academy was phased out in 2007 because they sold the houses just before the banking crash in 2008.
58. When I taught primary six there were no boarders in my class. I would have been told that. That would have been 2005. I met with all the parents so I would have been aware if there were any boarders in my class. There were no boarders as far as I know, at that time.

Culture within Edinburgh Academy

59. I wasn't in the upper primary until Caroline Bashford became head. The school had changed a lot by then. As I said earlier, my first impression of the upper junior school was that it was very formal but when I eventually moved into the primary six class, it wasn't. When I started in primary six, the children in primary five and six were only set for maths which meant they were not all taught the subject by their classroom teacher.
60. As an example, my eldest child was in primary five in 1995, this was before the school changed. He had a class teacher, but that teacher only taught him French, environmental studies and perhaps personal and social development. He went to other teachers for English, history, geography, and science. By the time I moved to upper junior school, the class teacher was teaching their own class, almost everything. We always had science, music, P.E. and art specialists but the class teacher taught all the other subjects. The children did continue to be set for maths.
61. When I started in Denham Green all the staff had coffee together in the mornings. At lunchtime all the teachers at the junior school ate with the children. I ate at a table with some of my children and one of the other teachers would sit at a table with our other children. We all did playground duties; two per week.

62. I really wasn't aware of an atmosphere within the school when I started. One of my friends who had been there longer than me told me that there used to be a male staffroom and a separate female staffroom. My friend said she never mixed with the male staff members.
63. Campbell Paterson started at the school two years after I did. He became the headteacher of the junior school. I don't know if he changed it or if it had been changed before he started, but there was a mixed staff room for primary three to six quite soon after I came in. Other members of staff could use this staff room.
64. The staff at Denham Green, nursery and primary one and two, had their own staffroom. When Caroline Bashford started, she felt one staff room was better for staff cohesion. I don't know if she implemented this immediately as there was new building work being done at the time, but it happened it as soon as there was a staffroom that was big enough for all of us. I felt that it was a positive change.
65. I think the culture then was good, everybody got on well together. I wasn't aware of any factions or anything like that.
66. I wasn't aware of any fagging going on which involved any of the children in junior school. My own children went through the school and never said anything about that to me.

Discipline and punishment

67. We used a system of golden time, which was carried out on a Friday afternoon. That was like a free play section. When Andrew Dickenson became the depute of the junior school, he set up a new behavioural programme, so the children got a verbal warning in class if they were shouting out. If they continued to do it, they got issued with a card called 'stop and think'. We had a little card with a hand, and you would lay it down in front of them and just say to them, that was a 'stop and think'. If they continued to misbehave, it was five minutes off their golden time. On a Friday if they had lost golden

time, they would have to sit out of the activity. That might be for five minutes or ten minutes depending on their behaviour during the week. There was a policy for this, but I don't think we recorded the misbehaviour beyond a week.

68. When the latest headteacher arrived, he brought in a new system with the children earning points. They had a personal sheet on which stamps were placed. These were for work, exceptional behaviour or for going over and above what was expected and all achievements. Once they had twenty stamps, they got their bronze award. This went onto silver and gold.
69. A prefect system started when I went to primary six. The students had to apply to be a prefect and give a reason why they thought they should be considered for the role. Prefects helped in the playground, but I can't remember what other roles they were given. It was a helping role only and they didn't discipline the children, but the system was stopped. Some of the primary six children still came and asked to help in the playground. We would ask them to be at the sandpit or at an area in front of the nursery where the children liked to play, just to make sure everyone was okay. Just supporting the children. They didn't have to do it; it was just if they wanted to.

Day to day running of the school

70. I had a role in running my department. There would be a weekly calendar that would tell everyone in the school what was happening, and I would have to feed into that. When I was running the Eco-committee, I would run eco days with the support of the staff.
71. I would cover for staff if they weren't in or if they were off on maternity appointments, things like that.
72. I think any abuse of children in the junior school would have come to light if it was happening. We didn't have big classes, the biggest class was twenty-four, often twenty two. We were having lunch with the children, went on camps around Scotland with

primary four, five and six and then primary six started going to Holland. We were in the playground with the children twice a week and I was often in more. I don't think you could have not noticed there was something amiss with a child. There was never a child I thought was being abused.

73. I think any ill-treatment of children in the classroom would have come to light. We had people working alongside teachers in the classroom. We didn't have learning assistants in the classrooms full-time, but I was teaching in class every day and would take groups of children out of the classroom, I would always leave the door open when I did that. You would have a reading helper and learning assistant from support for learning in the classroom at least once a week as well. There were lots of adults going in and out. There were also specialist teachers perhaps coming to the door and taking children away.
74. Had I ever been worried about a teacher, I would have done something about it. I don't know how abuse could have occurred in the junior school and gone undetected. I wasn't seeing any teachers like that; I wasn't working with them and I wasn't in their classroom. It wasn't happening where I worked.

Concerns about the school

75. I'm not aware of any concerns ever being raised about a child in the school.

Reporting of complaints/concerns

76. I don't remember a complaints procedure, but I know that a parent or a child would know they could go to the headteacher and that they would be seen at any time. The headteachers were approachable and their door would always be open.
77. We always had circle time, that was part of our culture. Children could talk about anything and say if they didn't like something that was happening. It was generally

things in the playground, someone being annoying, or children not being allowed to play a game.

78. I feel the junior school was a very caring school. The children had committees for Charity, Pupil Council and Eco. The children could choose to be considered for each committee and would give little talks to their classmates about why they should be chosen to represent their class. Their classmates then voted for the various roles. Children would give regular information to their class about what was happening on the committees and would ask for ideas to take back to their committee.
79. I think children raising issues would be done in a general circle time. The children would be told that if they had worries, they were best to talk about them. I can't remember what parents with concerns or complaints were told but I do know parents did come to school to discuss concerns.
80. There would be complaints about things that had happened in the school and of the teaching. The parent might come into the school and tell you about a difficulty their child was having at school, something we were not aware of. Part of my role was helping children resolve playground disputes. I would try to help them negotiate with one another by explaining how they were feeling and try to resolve it that way.
81. Any complaint from a parent would always be recorded. Records of these were kept online but in a folder for management only. If the child's teacher changed the following year, they would always be informed of a complaint or anything they needed to know about the child. You always met with a class teacher when you were passing on a class and you would go over everything, tell them any concerns and things that they would need to know. If a family had separated or were in an acrimonious divorce, things like that would all be passed on.

Article in Scotsman Newspaper – Teacher at Top School Accused of Bullying Colleagues and Pupils

82. I have been handed a copy of an article which was published in the Scotsman Newspaper on 29th March 2002. I am aware of the contents of the article which is as follows:

Teachers at a leading Edinburgh private school have been accused by fellow staff members of verbally abusing colleagues and pupils.

Fourteen female members of staff at the Edinburgh Academy's Junior School signed a letter to the headmaster, Campbell Peterson, outlining a climate of low morale and distrust.

The leaked letter referred to "serious instances of verbal harassment both of colleagues and boys by certain members of the management team", and suggested the situation was even dissuading parents from enrolling their children at the exclusive 1,588-a-term school.

The letter also referred to an "offensive and intimidating" tone taken towards female members of staff.

Mr Paterson said, "The document was a private document directed to me expressing some concerns from a group of teachers in the school. It was never meant to be made public."

"Both sides feel bruised that someone has decided, for their own reasons, to make this public and I think it is mischief making."

"Many of the issues have been discussed and [staff] are happy with the progress that has been made."

Regarding the serious accusation of verbal harassment, Mr Paterson said, "What we are talking about is a different approach by some teachers when they are addressing the boys. In school, you have some teachers who shout, some who growl and some who are nice to the boys."

He said there had been no specific complaint about harassment by colleagues.

Mr Paterson rejected suggestions the all-boys junior school was struggling to attract pupils, saying that numbers had risen from 300 to 341 in recent years. The maximum capacity is 370.

The spokeswoman for the group, Barbara Robertson, a teacher who has been at the school for eight years, said, "I am an extremely happy member of staff. I've never achieved the level of satisfaction that I have here."

She said she stood by the letter but wished it hadn't become public.

83. At the time this article was published, my role at the junior school was mentoring probationary teachers. I didn't have a title and I was still a classroom teacher.
84. I was not the spokesperson for this group. Campbell Paterson asked me to make a statement. I wasn't given prior warning about having to do so. I wasn't the person that instigated the letter, I was happy to sign it, but it definitely wasn't meant to be public, and it was mischief making.
85. I wasn't hearing the offensive and intimidating tone; it wasn't happening where I was working. I was still teaching in Denham Green at that time. My concern, which was also part of it, was that I had a probationary teacher who had just started and was having to teach three classes of history per week, as well as teaching her own class. She was teaching the primary five class history lessons and then having to write three sets of reports, about seventy-two reports at the end of term whilst the boys class teachers were taking them for games and didn't have any reports to write.
86. At that time as I said earlier, someone would take all three classes for history, another teacher would take them all for geography.
87. I felt that was unfair and had broached it with Campbell Paterson to say it was too much work for the probationer. Teachers were asking me if I could do something about it and I told them that I had tried, that I had raised it. I met regularly with the probationer. She was doing a really good job, but I felt this was just too onerous for her. I felt that there was an unfair balance of what people were being asked to do. That's why I signed the letter, but I wasn't the spokesperson and didn't instigate the letter.
88. I think staff felt things weren't right, although not where I was working. Primary four to six wasn't being run particularly well and the teachers were concerned about it.
89. I'm not sure if anyone had gone to the Head of Upper Years about the way things were being run or whether they felt they couldn't speak to him about it, I don't know.

90. I knew what the teachers were telling me at the meeting was happening, they weren't making it up.
91. I see there was a suggestion of staff being verbally harassed. I was never harassed, and I can't remember what that was about, I really don't know. The letter says that the harassment was by more than one member of the management team, but I can't think who would have been. The management team at that time would have been Campbell Paterson, Warwick Wilson, Leslie Becher, who had taken over as head of primary one to three, Andrew Dickinson, head of curriculum and probably the head of nursery, Eleanor Denholm.
92. We were all invited to a meeting which was held in someone's house. Not everyone went but most did, fourteen of us, which was almost all the female members of staff. I don't think the probationer teacher was there as she hadn't passed her probation at that stage. I know of one other member of staff who wasn't there, but I can't remember who else. The problems that some were raising at the meeting just couldn't be denied, everyone agreed.
93. We decided to draft and sign a letter from everyone at the meeting and send it to Campbell Paterson. It was only meant for him but someone in our group had to have given the letter to someone else who took it to the press. I can't name who that was because I don't know for sure. Campbell Paterson took the letter to the school rector, John Light.
94. The rector met with us. He was unhappy about the letter. We stressed that it had only been intended for the headmaster and that we had concerns that they weren't being addressed.
95. Things did change after the letter. I don't know if it was the next year, but they stopped splitting the classes and teaching certain subjects separately.
96. In terms of Campbell Paterson's comments about some teacher shouting, some growling and others being nice, I can only say that teachers have their own

personalities, some are always joking, some have loud voices, but I wouldn't have teachers shouting at children. I really can't think of any teacher falling into the categories mentioned by Campbell Paterson. Teachers certainly weren't shouting at children in the middle primary when I was head.

97. In the article Campbell Paterson says that things had been discussed and that staff were happy with the progress. Things did change, not immediately because changes to the curriculum would have been difficult at that time of the term, but they did change. I don't remember having a meeting with Campbell Paterson about it, I can only remember having the meeting with John Light the rector.
98. I don't think I was completely happy about the way they dealt with it. We had staff who were raising issues by letter because they felt they couldn't raise them verbally or if they did raise them verbally, they didn't feel that they were getting anywhere.
99. I remembered the letter was about unfair sharing of workload and perhaps the leadership of the department not being good enough, but I didn't remember about harassment and teachers shouting at children.
100. I think the staff in the upper primary weren't happy about how they were being led. In terms of concerns about how staff were being spoken to, I don't really know about that. It's taken me by surprise, although we must have spoken about it at the time. I can't really add anything to that. Things must have become unacceptable to the staff in the upper primary otherwise they wouldn't have arranged to meet and write the letter.
101. I wasn't the spokesperson for the group. It wasn't my idea to have the meeting or write the letter. I was just asked to go to the meeting, I willingly went and agreed with what was said at the meeting. We all had to sign the letter and we did that in alphabetical order because we thought that was the safest for everyone so that they couldn't see who instigated it. I don't know how it was instigated but it certainly wasn't me.
102. I was just asked to go to Campbell Paterson's office one day. When I went in, he had the phone in his hand, the press had called him, and he asked me to make a comment.

I don't know if he had asked someone else before asking me. I was handed the phone and told that I had to say something. He didn't know what I was going to say, I didn't know what I was going to say because I hadn't been warned about it or certainly don't remember being warned about it.

103. I am not aware of there ever being any policy or strategy in place at Edinburgh Academy for a teacher to raise any concerns about other teachers.
104. I don't recall any official policy to enable parents or children to complain about teachers or staff.

Trusted adult/confidante

105. I don't remember children being told who they could speak to if they had any worries. Maybe they were told they could speak to their teacher. I don't remember that ever changing during the time I was at the school. I'm not aware of any concerns ever being raised relating to the school or the schooling.

Abuse

106. I think any definition of abuse would have been in the child protection policy document which was being taught to the staff by an outside agency and being incorporated into the school policy. I would think that abuse recognised by the school would have been sexual abuse or any physical harm to the children. The definition of abuse would be explained to any one before they started at the school. They would go through a series of inductions and part of that would be child abuse.
107. If someone started in the August, which most people do, then they would immediately go into child protection meetings prior to the start of term. I can't remember when exactly that was introduced but I know it was all logged because you would be notified

if you were to attend. You had to attend every other year. The depute would keep a note of who had been to the meetings and in which years.

Child protection arrangements

108. When I worked in Denham Green there was a teacher who oversaw child protection. That was something I was interested in so when that person moved on, I asked the headmaster if I could take on the role. I didn't write the policy so can't remember how long that had been in place.
109. In the role I had to present to all the primary six parents the 'feeling yes feeling no' programme which was being taught to the primary six children. It was a Canadian programme and was groundbreaking at the time. That would have been around 1996.
110. Following that, Edinburgh Council then devised their own programme. I can't remember what it was called but Doctor Sue Hamilton was in Lothian Region, and she was in charge of their Child Protection. I think she had written the programme which was for primary one and primary six children. For children in primary one it was about them knowing their name and their address and what they should do in a shop if they lost their mum and dad.
111. I seem to remember presenting that programme to the parents before we started the programme. We stopped doing that after a few years. I was told it was known in the school and I didn't have to keep doing it.
112. Child protection work was kept in a file by me initially and then by the headteacher, so everything was recorded by hand. These records were of any concerns you had. The records wouldn't be kept in the classroom, they were kept separately. No one ever came to me with child abuse concerns but these forms would cover these.

113. I don't remember if there was anything in the policy which said children needed to be treated with respect but there would have been. I just don't remember. Guidance on protecting children from abuse would have been given in the child protection course.
114. Child protection wasn't part of the staff training when I started at the school, it was something that came in quite soon after, maybe 1995.
115. The year before I started at Edinburgh Academy, I remember going to a meeting at a Holyrood High School in the east side of Edinburgh. There were clinical psychologists and a reporter from the children's panel there. It was all quite new at the time. Not long after I started at the Academy, I went on a course, it wasn't a child protection course, it was personal social development, but it was about child protection.
116. Child protection would provide guidance on how to handle and respond to reports of abuse or ill-treatment of children by other staff or adults. I would say that before child protection came in, most teachers would just know you had to pass something like that on to either the headteacher, or your line manager.
117. I think the child protection practices which were to reduce the likelihood of abuse or ill-treatment or other inappropriate behaviour by staff would be the open culture, doors open, staff moving in and out of classrooms and all staff having to go through police checks.
118. When we were at camp and I was the teacher in charge, I would be in and out of the bedrooms making a big thing about being tidy, you were there if the children wanted to talk to you. Even just popping in to see how your staff were interacting with the children, an overseeing role by the head of department.

External monitoring

119. There was an inspection in September 1994.

120. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Schools carried out the inspection. I don't think the inspector spoke to the children. The inspection which would have been in 1994, resulted in Elizabeth Stewart becoming head of primary one to three and of the curriculum throughout the junior school. It said in the inspection report that the changes that she had made in primary one and two should be replicated throughout the junior school and that she had the ability to move this forward.
121. The second inspection resulted in the head of upper years role, being split between myself and the incumbent until the end of the academic year. I then took on sole responsibility for the post.
122. Leadership issues were raised by staff during the inspection. I think that was reflected in the report.
123. The inspectors would take a group of children out and speak to them. I don't know if the children were spoken to individually, I can't remember that, but the group was a very small group of maybe three or four children. We always got feedback from the inspections.

Record-keeping

124. I always kept a file on child protection and anything that came to me. When the head took that over I passed on my file. Any concerns were always logged on the computer but not on a shared area but in an area where only management could look at them.
125. Every classroom had a policy folder, and the teachers would be told to take their folder to meetings with them. Any new policy would be given to everyone to put into the policy folder at the same time. The policy folders were kept in the classrooms.
126. I know that you would always hand on any record you had to the next teacher. Sometimes a teacher would tell you something about a child that wasn't written down.

If a parent came to visit you, you always had to record the meeting, this was always done. There was tight record keeping for those sorts of things.

127. No child ever reported to me anything that I thought was abuse, ill-treatment, or inappropriate conduct, not to me personally or in my role in child protection.

School investigations into abuse – personal involvement

128. I've never being involved in any investigation on behalf of the school into allegations of abuse or ill-treatment of children at the school or inappropriate behaviour by staff or others towards children.

Reports of abuse and civil claims

129. I've never being involved in reports or civil claims made against the school by former pupils concerning historical abuse.

Police investigations/criminal proceedings

130. I was never aware of police investigations into alleged abuse at the school. I am aware of what's been said and the school's response from what I've read in the newspapers. I've never given a statement to the police or given evidence in court about any abuse of a child at the school.

Convicted abusers

131. I don't know of any person who worked at the school who has been convicted of the abuse of a child or children at the school.

Knowledge of specific named alleged abusers

132. The following names are of staff members from Edinburgh Academy who have been named as alleged abusers of children. I have been asked if I know these people and if so what I know about them.

John Brownlee

133. I never saw John Brownlee with the boys and knew nothing about him. He was only there for my first two years before he left. I remember hearing he was fierce, but I don't know if I heard that at the time or since. It must be since because I didn't know anything about him and never asked. I don't think I ever spoke to him.

IDO

134. IDO taught both my sons at the school, and I never had any inkling about him being abusive to children. He was at the school a long time and maybe left after five years of me being there. I would speak to him and knew him more than I knew Brownlee. I never had any suspicions.

135. IDO had been a French teacher and was made head of upper years after John Brownlee left. He was a primary five teacher. I wouldn't have thought he was a shouter, maybe quite firm with the children.

136. I didn't have any concerns about him. I would only really speak to him at the end of term, ask him if he was going on holiday or something like that. I didn't know him well. I'd been to see him as a parent in staff interviews because he taught both my sons but that was it. I would see him in assemblies but not with children especially.

137. I never saw him discipline children, abuse children and never heard of him doing so. This is the first time I have heard that said.

ICA

138. There isn't a hope that ICA ever abused anyone. He was the gentlest soul going. I would never believe that of ICA. He was at the school for six years after I started and then he took ill. I can't believe he harmed pupils and am quite shocked at his name being mentioned.
139. ICA was a class teacher although he seemed to have the responsibility of running the school assemblies and there was an assembly nearly every morning. I think after becoming ill, he did some CCF (*Combined Cadet Force*) in the senior school and didn't return to his class. He didn't have any other responsibility that I knew of.
140. I just remember ICA was a gentle person. I didn't know ICA really well but would chat to him. I never actually worked with ICA and wasn't in the same department. After ICA left he would come to prize givings and I would chat to him and his wife.
141. I never saw ICA with children or discipline children, I can't even imagine ICA shouting. I never saw ICA abusing children nor did I ever hear of him abusing children.

IFN

142. Around 1997 or 1998, there was a teacher in junior school with the surname IFN. I can vaguely remember what he looked like, he was young, maybe late twenties and he had dark hair. I remember he was solid and of average height. He was in the upper primary, either primary five or six.
143. One day I was summoned to the headmaster's room. That was Campbell Paterson at the time. Mr Paterson told me that Mr IFN who also worked in one of the boarding houses had had friends in the boarding house over that weekend. He told me that one of the friends had looked at Mr IFN's computer and found sexual images on it. I can't recall exactly what Mr Paterson told me, but I think the sexual

images were of children. I'm ninety nine percent sure that was what I was told. I asked Mr Paterson if he wanted me to do anything, but he said no I wasn't to do anything with the information. He didn't say what he was going to do but Mr IFN didn't return to school. I never heard any more about it. I don't know who the friends were that had seen the images and have no further information on the matter.

144. This is the first time I have ever spoken about this, and no one ever mentioned it to me after my meeting with Mr Paterson.
145. Mr Paterson told me this because I was the child protection officer at the time. I don't think Campbell Paterson would have dealt with this matter alone. I think it would have been John Light, who was the rector at the time along with the Court. I think it would have been too serious not to have included these people.
146. The Court was like a school board and had six or so people on it. The Court was made up of people like lawyers and accountants and sometimes ex pupils. The Court would have various support meetings and help to guide the school on various matters like Governance, safeguarding, education and policy, finance, audit and risk. I think the matter with Mr IFN would have gone to the Court or individuals on the Court.

David Standley

147. David Standley was the depute in the senior school. He was there for a number of years. He was in the senior school, so I never worked with him.
148. I didn't know him very well although I knew who he was. We often did things with the senior school at the beginning of term. Sometimes we would do some in-service there, we would work in groups with Senior School teachers, but I don't remember working with him. I never saw him teaching children, never saw him abuse children nor did I hear of him abusing children.

IDX

149. I remember IDX; he may have been the bursar. I don't know if I ever met him but I do remember the name. He was maybe there for four years when I was there, but I couldn't be sure. I'm not sure what age he was but he wasn't a teacher.
150. I didn't see him with children, didn't see him discipline children, didn't see him abuse children and never heard of him abusing children. I wouldn't think he would come into contact with children, but I don't know.

IDY

151. I don't know that name.

ICL

152. I don't know that name.

Working at Edinburgh Academy

153. I had a very happy time at Edinburgh Academy. More so with the last headmaster, who is still there. That was the best of my years, the happiest. By the time I left, I think the school was in a very good place. Children were having an interesting education with many opportunities. Both schools were outward looking. There was a new management structure in the senior school.

Helping the Inquiry

154. I think children must be told that if they have any concerns, there is a person to go to. Maybe there needs to be two people they can consult, because the person they're told to go to may be the person carrying out the abuse. So maybe they should be told they

can go to any adult and that they will be listened to. Perhaps it needs to be written down and the child gets a copy of what was said. The staff member should sign it so they can't not do something with it. The parent would have to be involved unless it's about the parent. If it's criminal, then it goes immediately to the police. I do think the child should have a signed written copy of what was said.

Other information

- 155. 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..... 31 July 2023