

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

Giles MOFFATT

1. My name is Giles Jon Ashley Moffatt. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1972. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.
2. I have previously provided a statement to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry. I wish to add the following to the original statement.
3. In my original statement some words were added, presumably for legal reasons, but they changed the meaning of what I said and should be removed as follows;

Paragraph 16 – final line. Remove “It is only my opinion but I think” – (words added by the Inquiry).

Paragraph 45 – delete “although it is difficult to remember that kind of detail.” (words added by the Inquiry.)

Paragraph 54 – delete ‘in my opinion’ (words added by the Inquiry).

Paragraph 57 – delete “I think the school taught me certain skills to equip me for later life” (words added by the Inquiry).

Paragraph 106 – line 2. Should read ‘as you can imagine’ – current wording suggests my memory is vague, when that is not the case.

Paragraph 116 – delete “This is purely my theory, as an adult now, that” – (words added by the Inquiry).

John Brownlee

4. Brownlee locked us in his garden shed on a couple of occasions. We were made to wear tracksuits and gym shoes. His wife brought us bread and water twice a day, when we were incarcerated.

5. I remember vividly on one of these occasions in 1981 having a £5 note in my Green Flash shoes which my grandfather had sent me. I was in the shed with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. We discussed escaping. I reckoned I had enough money to cover a bus or train fare as far as Tyndrum for the three of us. I explained that we could walk the last part to my grandmother's house in Glencoe Village, where we could find safety. As it was winter, we decided against it - we realised that a walk in winter conditions across mountainous terrain without any warm clothes would be highly risky for 9 year old boys. We also knew that he would make our lives worse once we were captured.

Recommendations

Age Limitations:

6. Boarding under the age of thirteen should be illegal in the UK. Eight year olds are small children, too young, vulnerable and psychologically undeveloped to be put into a boarding school environment. Most abuse historically - sexual and physical - has affected children below the age of 12 (source: NSPCC).

Psychometric testing & psychological profiling:

7. Abusers will always exist and find ways to indulge their impulses. They are cunning and subtle. Recruitment should be designed to identify people with harmful views on children, or any history of violence, aggression or sexual deviance. This should be the biggest priority and supersede qualifications or ability. In the past, too much emphasis was placed on graduates from Oxford and Cambridge, regardless of their suitability to teach or care for children.

Designated Abuse Officer:

8. The power structure at the Edinburgh Academy right up until the mid 1990s worked in favour of abusers. The school's leadership were not only negligent, they were actually complicit in the abuse.
9. Brownlee was able to freely assault and abuse the youngest children, thanks to the absolute autonomy he had in Dundas House over a period of 11 years. During that time no other member of staff or the schools' leadership team supervised his behaviour. Nor did anyone monitor the wellbeing of the children he was responsible for. Brownlee had such power in the day school, as de facto Deputy Head, that he was able to violate the rights of children freely and with impunity. The boys were too scared to report him, and there was no one to report him to.
10. In instances where boys were brave enough to report abuse, the school's management made efforts to cover it up. Judith Wrigley – Mackenzie House matron – asked "████" to tell people his tooth was broken in rugby practice, when in fact it was the result of a physical assault by a House Tutor. When ██████████ shattered my kneecap (1985/6) by pushing me from behind into the cast iron school gates, instead of investigating what had happened, Judith Wrigley blamed me saying 'you must have done something to deserve it.' █████, who was sexually assaulted by Hamish Dawson after a Saturday detention, reported it to his house Matron when asked why he was crying. Laurence Ellis (Rector) and John Lister (Teacher) took no action against Dawson, only dismissing him as 'a bit of an oddball.' Dawson was given free reign by the senior leadership of the school.
11. When ██████████ broke my left arm in 1981, instead of disciplining him (he was 17 and I was 9) Brownlee and the school lied about the incident, blaming me. ██████████ was the son of an eminent military officer, a prefect, and in the first XV. Every effort was made to protect his reputation and deny the assault.
12. Schools should have a designated 'Abuse Officer' who is independent, utterly trustworthy, and empowered to investigate any allegations of abuse, without fear or favour. Having such a person:

1. Makes a very public statement about the school's ethos and culture.
2. Gives all children a confidential and effective channel for any complaint.
3. Sends a message of zero tolerance to all other staff.

Regular Welfare Monitoring:

13. In the past, NOTHING was done at EA to monitor the wellbeing of the children. Physical illness was the only thing the school's pastoral care team ever addressed. Laurence Ellis lied in writing about the conditions in the boarding houses, describing how 'morale was high' and how he and the Court of Directors were 'delighted' with the 'happy family atmosphere' created (he claimed) by the Brownlees. With boys being too scared to expose the atrocities going on in every corner of the school, these official statements were taken as gospel. Deceit was sanctioned, and common across independent schools – Norman Drummond (Loretto), Michael Spens (Fettes) were also habitual liars.
14. There should have been a system in place to monitor the actual well-being of the boys in the boarding houses – managed by an external person such as the 'Abuse Officer'. This would have exposed Brownlee's violence and cruelty. Once or twice a term someone with the right training could have gone into the houses and rooted out the evil.

Make Prosecution a Priority:

15. Time and time again, perpetrators of vile crimes against children have escaped
16. prosecution on grounds of age, ill-health or death.
 1. Loretto School: Guy Ray-Hills (died unpunished)
 2. Edinburgh Academy: Hamish Dawson, Ian Wares (through emigration), Brownlee prevarication.
 3. Fettes: Anthony Chevenix-Trench (died unpunished).

4. Daughters of Charity: 117 civil cases, no prosecutions or convictions.
 5. Benedictines: 26 complainants to Police Scotland, one conviction.
 6. Christian Brothers: 27 civil cases, 2 convicted.
 7. Quarriers/Aberlour/Barnados: 114 complaints, 21 civil actions, 6 convicted.
 8. Sisters of Nazareth: 270 civil actions, 113 police investigations, 4 convicted
17. The impact of abuse is lifelong. On one level, these are just moments in time: a punch, a kick, a grope...an unkind word. The reality is far worse. All these negative experiences add up to so much more. They have an exponential effect. It is very difficult to reverse the damage done to children at such a young age. These people committed a murder of sorts; they killed our spirit and our souls. I can assure you that we will always think we are worthless because of what happened. We find coping strategies to get around that - some healthy, many not. Fundamentally though, these formative moments conditioned us to believe we were unworthy, substandard, weak, and would amount to nothing in life.
18. *The abuser's "curse has something almost supernatural about it, like the bite of a vampire infecting an entire life."* Joyce Carol Oates. This lifelong curse is why prosecutions matter so much.

Additional Comments

19. The Edinburgh Academy leadership took great pains to portray a positive public image, concealing the abject brutality inflicted by Brownlee and other staff from parents and prospective pupils.
20. Laurence Ellis, erstwhile Rector of Edinburgh Academy, gave a misleading and dishonest picture of life in the boarding houses ("morale is very high" and "a happy family atmosphere") in a letter (April 1983) commending John and Margaret Brownlee for their stewardship of Dundas House. The man was a beast, as boarders and day boys will testify. As of June 2023 there are at least 18 criminal charges sitting with the Crown Office in regard of Brownlee, and a long line of survivors with life-long psychological injuries. It was part of the culture to cover up any incidents that reflected badly on the school. Wares, Dawson, and Brownlee

were all actively protected, even when allegations were made by children and their parents. That is not just my opinion; that is a fact borne out by evidence from numerous victims.

Signed .....
DocuSigned by: [Redacted]

Dated 11 July 2023.....