

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

Giles MOFFATT

Support person present: No

1. My name is Giles Jon Ashley Moffatt. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1972. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before boarding school

2. I was born in Glasgow. My parents were called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. They were both Scottish with my dad from Ayr and my mum from Glencoe. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
3. My dad went on a school trip to Paris when he was fourteen and liked it there. He decided he would like to live there so he got a traineeship with a law firm and then transferred over to Paris. He stayed there for thirty odd years. Initially my mum worked for an airline but I don't think she worked after I was born.
4. My parents went back to Glasgow for my birth. We didn't really live there and I wouldn't remember it anyway. I think we spent six months to a year in Prestwick or something like that before returning to Paris. My first memories of childhood are from our life in Paris. My parents are both now dead but my dad was quite traditional so I think he probably wouldn't have wanted me being born abroad.

5. I was in a French speaking school which was a strict school with nuns. I spoke better French than English at that time. If I remember correctly I started school at four. Before that I went to an U.N. nursery by the Eiffel Tower. Basically my dad decided that I would be educated in Scotland and not in France and this was against my mum's will which I found out in later years. I could tell at that time she was unhappy about it and she suffered from alcohol problems for a long time.
6. I knew I was going to the Edinburgh Academy about two years before I went in 1980 but because I was in the French system I had to do all sorts of extra classes to try and learn the Scottish curriculum at that time. At the age of six or seven I then had to sit entrance exams in France but for the Edinburgh Academy which I think is weird.
7. The reason they chose Edinburgh Academy was because my second cousin was there. My aunt lived in Edinburgh and she was a teacher living in Murrayfield so I had a potential guardian in Edinburgh.
8. I don't think I felt very good about going away to Scotland to be schooled to be honest because in France if you are sent to boarding school it is because you are a bad kid. It was seen as a punishment back then for unmanageable children who are sent to the Jesuits or other such places. That was the perception so going to boarding school was not prestigious as it was seen in the U.K. People would say 'what's he done wrong?' so that wasn't very pleasant. I possibly had a feeling that I had done something wrong. I am fifty and still have a sense of rejection which I am sure is quite commonplace for children who are sent away to school. I know that compared to people who were in the care system that this is trivial but it still impacted me from those early years.
9. The French school holidays are different to the Scottish ones so I did do two weeks at Glencoe Primary in 1979. On that trip we could have had a meeting with Edinburgh Academy however I have no recollection of going to the school before I started there.

10.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I would say that the first seven and a half years of my life were very happy. I just remember that Paris was an amazing place. I had lots of friends locally and there were nice parks. Life was good. My dad wasn't around much as he was always working and my mum did drink too much but I only realised that fairly recently. I just thought she was weird when I was about five as she would behave strangely in the evenings when I was there.

Edinburgh Academy, Edinburgh

11. There were four houses. Dundas House was for the youngest kids from Primary 3-6, Mackenzie for the psychotic teenagers from Primary 7 up to the age of 14, Scott and Jeffrey for the kids once they started to calm down so they would be 15-17 years old and would be doing their Highers and A Levels. All the houses were on Kinnear Road with the prep school minutes away across the main road. The upper school was a twenty minute walk into Stockbridge at Henderson Row.
12. I would say there were twenty-five of us in Dundas House and the youngest boy was aged six with the oldest being ten. John Brownlee was the housemaster. His wife and his sons were also there with all the other boys who were boarding. We were all in a thing called 'big dorm' which was quite a big room which could take about eighteen of us. It wasn't just my age group because there were only two of us so it would be most of the junior boys who were boarding. It was a mix of both bunk and single beds which were metal framed. I think the older kids were in bunks and we were in singles.
13. There was always another house tutor so he was like a kind of assistant and he would be on duty when Brownlee had time off. I remember there were two of them and they were called Mr Dean and Mr Jeff Fisher who was Australian. I remember feeling that these guys protected and sheltered us. They knew Brownlee was awful and we felt comfortable when they were in charge. We felt terrified when they weren't. I think Mr

Dean's name was John but of course we never knew their first names. I think both Mr Dean and Mr Fisher were victims of the structure and hierarchy as much as we were. In a way they were helpless.

14. The Brownlee's had an annexe to live in which formed part of Dundas House. I never saw in their quarters. It was just a door that they would go through.
15. Dundas House itself was a Georgian lighter sandstone villa which was classic north Edinburgh colour and shape. It is now the Polish Consulate. It was on at least three floors with quite a big entrance hall. The boot room was in on the left, a daytime room on the right, TV room in the back and a big open stairwell going up. The bedrooms and bathrooms were upstairs and then there were rooms on the top floor which were generally used for violence and punishment by Brownlee.
16. Edinburgh Academy was not an all boarding school. It was maybe ten percent boarders and the rest were day boys which made it unusual. Boarders were a real minority whereas if you had gone to somewhere like Fettes or Glenalmond they had a very small minority of day pupils. There were about a thousand pupils in total at the school with about 100-150 in the boarding houses. Each year that number went down and the junior house shut when I was there. I was the last of the people in that house before it shut. Mackenzie closed eventually and people really only came to board for their last two years when doing their A Levels and Highers. It was a bit like going to a sixth form college. That would be in Scott or Jeffrey and they lasted until about 2008. I was living and working in Inverleith from about 2005-2007 and I remember seeing the last of the boarders being taken from the house to the school in a minibus. It made me think we were walking in shorts in the snow with no minibus to transport us. I think in the end it was literally eight Chinese guys and a couple of Russians. Boarding was never really a core part of the school and I do think that we were mistreated because of that. It is only my opinion but I think Brownlee got away with a lot of the abuse he perpetrated because life at the school was so contained.

17. Although it was all boys girls did attend the school. I think there were girls in the sixth form when I was in my second year at the school but I don't know when that started. By the time I was in sixth form it was about ten percent of the pupils were girls and we didn't know what to say to them basically having never mixed with girls during our education..
18. Brownlee was deputy head of the prep school and Mr Burnet was the headmaster. I think Mr Burnet was old fashioned but he seemed kind of fair. It is difficult to know what age Mr Brownlee was because everyone looks ancient when you are young. I would imagine he was in his forties judging by the fact he had two sons who were eleven and thirteen. Maybe there was a daughter but I don't know. His sons attended the school. There was also a head of the upper school.
19. In primary four, five and six, our world was the prep school and there was no real interaction with the rest of the school. I believe Burnet is dead and I don't really have anything bad to say about the rest of them. They were kind of 'Prime of Miss Jean Brodie' style as in old fashioned. My first teacher was a lady called Mrs Baxter who I think was probably single and in her late fifties. She had famously failed her driving test eighteen times and then finally given up. I tried to find my reports before I came to the meeting with the Inquiry because I had remembered reading some and thinking they were really weird. I think I have probably burned them when I moved house. I was quite struck by one of the things she said. She was my class teacher when I was eight and the first report said something similar to 'Giles is a strange little boy who doesn't integrate well. Hopefully he will next term'. That was it, no acknowledgement that I had a French accent so of course I seemed different. It was just really weird her taking no responsibility to help me, just observing that I was odd, didn't fit in and hoping that I would do something about it. I just thought if you saw that nowadays when you have people who are head of pastoral care and that sort of stuff it would be so different. There was no one there for things like that, just no one. It was just really quite objective and harsh.

20. There were a few other things written in my reports. Brownlee, as the housemaster had said that 'I could be quite charming at times' and yes I could be very charming at times if it stops me from being beaten senseless.
21. The focus of the abuse at Edinburgh Academy occurred during my time in the prep school but things did change over time. There was abuse in the upper school but there was a shift. It goes from when we were the youngest when it was staff abusing kids and that was mainly Brownlee although there were a couple of other teachers who were sadistic. In the upper school the change was it was other pupils who would bully kids. If I'm honest, I did bully others too. That was the culture.

Routine at Edinburgh Academy

First day

22. I went to Edinburgh Academy in September 1980 and I was just eight. In those days they very carefully engineered your arrival. I went to some sort of welcome event in a house at Inverleith Terrace on the Saturday before I started. I was told I was going to a party the following day at Kinnear Road which was at the boarding house. My luggage was brought in without me knowing and basically I found out my parents had gone. I believe that was the technique in those days and the parents would quickly disappear without saying goodbye. That was very harsh. I hadn't had any other visits before then because I was in Paris.
23. i don't know who showed us around but it wasn't Brownlee. It was probably some of the senior boys.

Mornings and bedtime

24. Brownlee had a thing about coming into our dormitory after lights out. If anyone was awake he would grab them and drag them over the linoleum floor and he would be kicking them before he would leave again. Sometimes it would be Mr Dean or Mr Fisher who would supervise us overnight and they would sleep in their own quarters within the house. We loved it when they were in charge as things were a bit more humane. We didn't have a fear at bedtime that they would punish whoever was awake and they never lifted a finger to us.
25. I don't remember having any chest of drawers or anything like that next to my bed. There wasn't any personal space. Funnily enough my daughters, against everything I believe in, have gone to boarding school but they went when they were much older and it is more like sixth form college for them. I was amazed at how everyone has their own space and they could put things up on the wall. They were encouraged to personalise their room. We were in what were basically army barracks at the Academy.
26. In Dundas House there was a loud bell that would ring at about 7 am. It was straight over for breakfast then back and over to prep school for the day. The rest is a blur.
27. The normal routine for Dundas House at bedtime was teeth, pyjamas, into bed and shut up at 8 pm in the first year. It might have gone to 8.30 in the next and 9 pm for the year after but I can't remember the exact timings.
28. In the Mackenzie, Jeffrey and Scott houses these were a mixture of dorms which were used until you were fifteen. They had 4-6 people in them. I went to Mackenzie first and then I got my own room when I was fifteen when I was in Scott House. I was never in Jeffrey House which was more for the anarchic boys. Scott House was for the well behaved more serious boys. It seemed to work that way and it was a choice as to which boarding house you went to between Scott and Jeffrey.

Mealtimes/Food

29. We didn't eat in the house as we would eat in the Edinburgh Academy prep school dining room for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Dinner was about 5 pm. It was literally just a two minute walk across the road from Dundas House.
30. Generally the meals were pretty bad. Things like spam fritter, deep fried pizza and not very nice haggis. I can't eat roasts and have a pathological hatred of them because of things that happened at the school. I had never eaten something like roast lamb sliced with all the potatoes and vegetables with mint sauce. I can't stand that stuff. It sounds ridiculous but mint sauce actually upsets me because I associate it with eating with Brownlee at the table. I discovered that type of food through meals with Brownlee.
31. Breakfast was things like Weetabix, Cornflakes, Frosties and some toast. It was that kind of thing.
32. You sat by house, and for Dundas House lunch was brought to the tables and breakfast and dinner you went up and queued to choose what you wanted from a choice or one or two things. Having come from Paris I found the food at school quite disappointing. Sometimes we had French students who came over years later and they would literally go out to restaurants for lunch and then come back.

Washing/bathing

33. In Dundas House I think we had a hot bath about once a week. I don't remember there being showers. You had a day a week when it was your time to have a bath. I think there were like three or four baths in the room. There was no privacy. The loos were private as they had cubilces and that was it.
34. In the upper school there were showers and it was kind of up to you as to how often you showered. You would certainly shower after sport. There wasn't a rota like there

had been in Dundas House. There was no privacy in the school showers either which is weird because there would be no reason for it to be like that.

Clothing/uniform

35. When I started the uniform was navy blue blazers and shorts no matter what season. We wore black shoes and a blue and white striped tie. I think it is similar to what it is now. I remember we had to go to that awful place Aitken and Niven which is not a happy memory place for me. It was like being kitted out for World War One. You had a trunk that had all your stuff in it.
36. We were given a wash bag which you filled with dirty laundry and handed it in to be laundered. I do remember we were way more unkempt than the day pupils. I have photos of sport's teams and stuff like that and everyone had neat haircuts apart from us boarders. You had to look after yourself basically. I remember being very jealous of the smell of washing powder on the day boy's clothes because our stuff was just starched.
37. We polished our own shoes. You were literally on your own and I say to people I left home when I was seven as that's how it feels. That is useful in some ways as you are independent and get on with it but I wouldn't have done that to my children.

Leisure time

38. In prep school there was very little leisure time during the week as it was school, prep, food and maybe a little bit of TV. In Dundas House we could have activities like extra art in the evenings and weekends. There was no playground in the school grounds but we had playing fields. You could kick a rugby ball around until it was time to come in.
39. We had a limited number of toys and we were allowed a few each of our own. The annoying thing was that they had to be initialled with marker pen and that is how to ruin a toy. There must have been board games for us to play with. Between the kids

the atmosphere was good in Dundas House but it was like we had the shields around us marching together. It was like we would form up and be very much us against Brownlee.

40. Occasionally we would do something like an excursion with Brownlee or someone else. It was preferable when it was someone else. There was usually some sport on Saturday mornings. Excursions were things like going to North Berwick on the train as a house or a small group or we could go to the Lodge Grounds. I remember we walked across the Forth Road Bridge and went to Dalkeith Adventure Playground. I really liked the playground, which was good. Brownlee would bring his sons sometimes but his wife was never really around. I always thought she was a victim of the set up although I heard some people call her his accomplice so they maybe had a different experience.
41. Brownlee's attitude varied over the weekends and when on excursions. You were never safe with him from any kind of attack of rage. In three years I don't remember him ever doing a kind thing or saying a kind word. There was no evidence that he ever realised that someone may need some sympathy. There was nothing positive at all. I would describe him as efficient in public. I think we were 'safeish' if we were out and about but we were just all very nervous around him.
42. I don't remember there being a library in Dundas House and I don't remember being encouraged to read in the house.
43. We had limited TV. I remember watching Top of the Pops once a week, The Fall Guy and the Banana Splits.
44. The furthest we were allowed to walk was Goldenacre but we had to go as a group with an older boy. We were allowed to go to the fruit shop there and a toy shop called Toy Tub with our 30 pence pocket money which our parents gave the school. Brownlee was in charge of that and gave it out at weekends. He would only dish it out if he felt you deserved it. That pocket money didn't go up noticeably over the years however as time went on and I was in the upper school we managed our own money as we had

Post Office savings books. There wasn't really much opportunity to spend it on anything to be fair. We were pretty much 24/7 within the school.

45. I think when we were twelve we could go into town unsupervised but in groups of three. Things were very rigid the first three years with Brownlee but after that things did relax. I think our savings account changed to a cash card at some point although it is difficult to remember that kind of detail.
46. We had compulsory Combined Cadet Force (CCF) and there was one guy who managed to talk his way out of doing CCF by claiming he was a Conscientious Objector. The school responded telling him that that was fine but seeing as he feels so strongly about that every Monday when CCF is happening he was to go around and clean all the toilets. This was in 1986-87. I think that that was a slightly barbaric attitude and it was meant to humiliate the person because they had beaten the system.

Trips and holidays

47. Sometimes, but very rarely, we would go to the school's outdoor activity centre called Blair House up in Glen Doll at Kirriemuir. That was usually during the summer and I remember two things about going there. Firstly, this was my first introduction to hills and mountains. Brownlee made us walk thirteen miles when I was eight. We were up and down mountains and it took all day. I remember thinking that it was hell. The day saw us getting dropped off in a car, up to Loch Brandy and right along all of the right hand side of the Angus glens on peat bogs. It just went on and on. I don't know why that didn't put me off hillwalking but it didn't. I think it was a bit excessive.
48. The other thing I remember about that trip was that Brownlee was actually nice to us. What I mean is that he pretended to be nice and that is because there were some other staff from outside the boarding house environment. That made these trips enjoyable and I wonder to an extent if that is why I like mountains because it was the first time I felt safe with Brownlee because there were other teachers and their wives

were there too. He was a very Jekyll and Hyde character where he could be psychotic with us and then super charming with parents or other people.

49. I was in the upper school before I went on holiday and these were ski trips to France and Italy when I was 14-15. My parents paid for them. They were not well supervised by staff which was the appeal at that age. The staff would be busy in the bars getting to know each other but no one was injured or killed.
50. I had a couple of holidays up at the school's activity centre when I got older because I enjoyed the mountains so much. That would just be for a week during the half term to save me going home. I think my mum was a bit offended that I chose to stay at school rather than going back but I was in a mountaineering phase at the time.

Schooling

51. In prep school we would have classes until 3.30-4 pm and then prep before tea. In the upper school prep was done after tea in our houses.
52. In prep school we had subject teachers for things like French, English, maths, science, art and PE. The science teacher was great and art was good fun. I think Mrs Baxter taught a few things but I don't remember what she taught.
53. I had to do French and it was [REDACTED] who was the French teacher. He would sit there reading the newspaper while I stood up at the front of the class telling them how to pronounce words properly. He figured that my accent was better than his. I didn't mind that and would count that as smart use of my French language. What was I going to learn from sitting there?
54. In my opinion the education I got was variable. I think it was very selective so if you were one of the superstars then you were given all sorts of help and attention. They would write people off very quickly. My first language was French so they put me in the worst possible set for English along with the school boxing champion and the

people who were not academic or interested in poetry. I was in with those who were not interested in participating in the class. I got a C at GCSE English literature but then I got a first at university for the same subject. That is because someone spotted when I was sixteen some form of ability in the subject. It took until then and it took one person. It was basically a very biased set-up. If you were good at sports then you were kind of idolised and if you were academic you were supported. The rest of us who were not seen as assets were just left to get on with it or written off.

55. I got three As at A Level, five Highers and twelve GCSEs. I got better over time as I got more confident and was not constantly being told I was crap so GCSEs were pretty average with Highers good enough to get into university. I had a place at university and I breezed my A Levels the following year. I was enjoying the work and doing things I was good at. That was all thanks to one teacher who completely changed my school life. He was called Alex Zambellas and was a very inspiring teacher who managed to get sixteen year old boys to take an interest in drama and poetry. That was quite a challenge when all they think about at that age is sport and ladies.
56. In the upper school prep was supervised until you were about fifteen so it would be food at five, 6-8 or 7-9 pm prep every day apart from Friday. We didn't have any school at weekends other than sport. In your final two years you managed your own prep unsupervised.
57. I think the school taught me certain skills to equip me for later life. I learned survival but I don't think that was deliberate. I am sure they tried to teach certain skills and it was fairly classic subjects. I got involved in the drama side of things and theatre lighting. That helped me professionally later but that was just an accident.
58. I don't know how my parents were updated about my progress at school other than reports at the end of each term. They were sent home so I did see them when my parents opened them. I wouldn't have seen them prior to that except for one which I intercepted because that was the GCSE year and I knew they were going to send a really bad report saying I was going to fail everything. I knew that my dad in particular

would believe it and do his 'not talk for a month' kind of thing. I intercepted that because they were out the day it arrived and I destroyed it. I was right as it did say I was going to fail everything and it was wrong. I knew my dad would take their word against mine. I drove forty kilometres on a moped, set it on fire and put it in a wheelie bin in a housing estate. I could have gone round the corner but you know when you have a guilty conscience you go to all lengths to get rid of the evidence.

59. I think sometimes there was correspondence between the school and my parents but I don't think I have seen any of it. There were some incidents where there would have been correspondence like an incident when my arm was broken. The other incident was when I accidentally stabbed another boy when I was thirteen. My dad did quite a bit of work in Switzerland and I had come back after half term with a Swiss Army penknife on a keyring he had bought me. I was doing art at the time so it was for sharpening pencils.
60. There was a bully in our year who I am not going to name because it is irrelevant now. He was one of these kids who grew much quicker than everyone else and he was going round the classroom spitting on the smaller members of the class as we were waiting to be given our half term reports verbally in a little side room. I pulled out the knife and told him that if he spat on me one more time I was going to kill him. All the other guys made a collected 'ooh' noise before chanting the word 'kill' repeatedly. For a laugh I chased him around the classroom and went to lunge at him intending to stop short but the idiot stuck his elbow out to protect himself. The blade went into his arm but he didn't notice because if you are stabbed it is not painful. Surface cuts are painful but with deeper stabs you can walk along not knowing you have been stabbed.
61. He realised he had been stabbed because his white shirt went deep red on the edge of his blazer and he just went 'Moffatt I am going to kill you, you have bloody stabbed me'. He got up and grabbed a cricket bat from the corner of the room and was about to club me over the head when a teacher came in because he had heard the commotion. He asked what was going on and the boy shouted that I had stabbed him. The teacher told him not to be ridiculous and I admitted that I had but that it had been

an accident and not how it looked. The bully got two hours detention for bullying and I got one for accidentally stabbing him. There would have been some correspondence with my parents about this unfortunate incident. Strangely enough the knife wasn't confiscated but I was terrified and begged someone to take it away.

Sporting activities

62. We had sport as part of PE. We had rugby in winter. They thought I would be good at rugby because they thought I was French but I had never heard of it. They made me prop forward or something like that and I was so small the next thing was I was beaten senseless during the game. Cricket was in the summer and I really liked that. We would have matches at the weekends.
63. It was quite a sport orientated school and I think the facilities were good for that. You could play squash in the evenings so I took that up.
64. Football was not a big thing. In adult years I went to play five-a-side football with an office team I worked with and they looked at me and asked if I couldn't actually play football. I was 28 and was trying to kick the ball which was going in the wrong direction. I could do the goalkeeping because I played cricket. Some of the kids would play football in the grounds but it wasn't a main sport and it was frowned upon.
65. I played cricket for the school all the way through from the age of nine. I was a bowler and was fast until everyone got bigger than me. Cricket was one of the good things about these years. Both cricket and rugby were mandatory. I did play rugby in some team but I made sure I wasn't good enough. It was a bit like how you have sets one, two and three for school subjects, the same being for the sport teams. I can't remember ever having to watch teams playing. We probably did watch but probably out of choice.

Healthcare

66. In Dundas House, Brownlee was really responsible for our health care and he was extremely intolerant of health problems. There were two boys with quite bad asthma who he would beat up if they had an asthma attack and he would lock them on the top floor until they got over it. I remember as boys we hoped that one of them would die, not because we wanted them dead but because we thought then that the whole thing would get out that this man was a psycho. I remember three or four incidents where the boys were locked upstairs. I think once one of the guys was even stripped off before being locked up. The boys were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. There may have been others but they are the two that I remember.
67. I remember an incident when [REDACTED] fell on a lawnmower when we were playing touch rugby or something like that. He fell and cut his ear on the blades that you have for cutting playing fields. We rushed him back into the house and Brownlee attacked him in the hallway for hurting himself. Brownlee knew it was going to mean a trip to the hospital which was inconvenient to him.
68. I remember I got into trouble because someone broke my arm. A seventeen year old kid threw me from a height when I was nine because I threw a coconut Snowball at him from within the dining room. It was just a silly prank and I expected him to throw the biscuit back. Brownlee blamed me for having my arm broken by someone who was seventeen. He hit me with a clacken over my backside with my arm in plaster. He was very angry at having to take me to the hospital and then he told my parents a lie and said that I swore at the captain of the first fifteen at rugby. He said it was my fault that the boy broke my arm which when you think about it is just unbelievable. Even if I had sworn at him that could never be justification to break my arm. My parents didn't speak to me when I went home on holiday that half term. Even if I had sworn at someone I cannot see Brownlee's justification that an older boy could break my arm. He made it look like I had embarrassed my parents. The boy was called [REDACTED] [REDACTED], he was about 6' 7" and was a big guy. I doubt that he meant to break my

arm so really he just had to say it was an accident and apologise. I think there was a staff nurse at the school but this was at a weekend where it was boarding houses only.

69. For absolutely no reason a guy called [REDACTED] ran up and pushed me on the way to church one Sunday. I cracked my kneecap on the school gate. I couldn't walk and went to the Western General then but I can't remember what the outcome was. I couldn't play rugby for the whole season and had to do swimming instead. I was limping all the way to school and all that was said was that I had probably done something to provoke him by the house matron in Mackenzie House. That was it, it wasn't even looked into. Literally I was just walking along minding my own business and this guy who was with another group of kids thinks it's funny to come up and push me. He didn't deliberately push me into the gate but he did deliberately push me and unfortunately it messed up my knee. When I went on a skiing trip in April the following year I had to sit on my own on the chairlifts because I had to face the other way as I couldn't bend the knee. That was six months at least and maybe more after I was pushed. What I remember is instead of any adult asking what had happened it was just an attitude that I would probably have deserved it which shocked me.
70. In Dundas House there was a lady who came in during the week who was the matron and she was nice. I can't remember her name. She was like one of these people who were very sympathetic but powerless. She was nice but she didn't live in.
71. I didn't get regular dental care whilst at the school. I can't recall seeing a dentist at all from the ages of eight to ten. I had an orthodontist paid for by my parents when I was about thirteen onwards for a couple of years.
72. I remember we had hearing checks. It was carried out by someone who came in from outside so NHS would be my guess.

Religious instruction

73. We had church on a Sunday morning which was at Inverleith up on Ferry Road. That was Church of Scotland with the world's most boring minister. I did not follow any religion and neither did my family. We had to wear kilts to go to church.
74. There was a daily assembly which was held by the headmaster or a senior teacher. There would be some hymns, announcements and that kind of thing.
75. Sometimes, there were prayers between meals but that just depended on the teacher. I am spiritual but not religious and had never even heard of God until after I arrived at the academy aged eight. My family were not religious. We went to Sunday school at Christmas for the Santa but that was about it. I was not from a religious background.
76. When you got older you could choose which church you went to on a Sunday if you were a boarder. We found a church with a service that was fifteen minutes long so went there. You had to get up slightly earlier but it was dead quick but we ticked the box because we had to go to church on Sunday.

Diversity

77. ██████ was the only black kid in the boarding house but we had ██████ who was Filipino. We had an Asian guy called ██████ who was the first Muslim I had ever met. In the whole school there were probably three or four black guys out of a thousand. The kids in the boarding houses were definitely not remotely racist. If anything, the boys were curious about new cultures and things like that.
78. There was a bit of anti-Pakistani behaviour going on in the day school that was for sure. I wouldn't have wanted to be an ethnic minority at that school. When we were thirteen somebody created a game called "pelt the Paki". ██████ was the target of the game where he had to duck and avoid being hit by gym shoes we all threw gym shoes at him when he was at the top of the classroom. It wasn't like ██████ was disliked,

he was a friend. We didn't class it as malicious and more like a bit of fun however we didn't know any better. I am not entirely sure that the staff would know about this game.

79. There was nothing specific done by the school to teach us and help us understand different ethnic backgrounds despite the fact some of the boys were from Asia, China, Singapore and Africa.
80. Everyone had to attend the morning assembly which was based on the Church of Scotland faith. I remember one or two Sikh kids having to attend. It was definitely non-multicultural and non multi-denominational. It was like this is what it is, the school had it's routine and everyone had to fit around that rather than being pupil centred.

Work

81. We were occasionally made to dig potatoes in the back garden by Brownlee but other than that we didn't have to do much more. We had to keep our own stuff tidy but no chores or anything like that. We did have some cup washing, taking the rubbish out and collecting laundry to do.
82. In the upper school from the ages of fourteen to fifteen we had to do various duties within the boarding house. One job would be wakening everyone up so you had to go around with a bell. Delivering laundry to different rooms was another, so that was sorting and then delivering the laundry. It would arrive in the kitchen in big bags and you had to sort it depending on name tags. I can't remember any others but there were four or five things that were classed as duties.

Birthdays and Christmas

83. The school did celebrate Christmas but these are bad memories for me. We would go to a carol concert on a Sunday lunchtime I think and all the day kids would go off for a nice lunch somewhere in town and we would come back and invariably someone

would get beaten up by Brownlee for saying or doing the wrong thing. I always associate Christmas with unhappy times at the school.

84. Birthdays were not celebrated in class and I don't remember any celebrations in the house. If anything, we got invited to day boy's birthdays. We were only given thirty pence for pocket money and I do remember we went to [REDACTED]'s birthday in Ratho. We did the best we could with our thirty pence. Brownlee was driving us out to this party and had asked to see what we had bought. He just said it was 'a pile of shit', confiscated it all and we were driven to the party empty handed which was hugely embarrassing not to turn up with anything.

Bed Wetting

85. Some kids did have problems with bedwetting which was dealt with by violence. The bed would be pulled out and stripped.

Attending French School

86. When I was eleven my mum persuaded my dad to let me come back to Paris to go to the British School of Paris. I agreed and I went back for a year. Despite the abuse I asked to come back to the Academy after a year. I missed my friends and we had been through some shit together. I also missed cricket as they didn't have cricket at my new school. I often wonder why I asked to return because that year in Paris was great and I was really happy. I think I was maybe conditioned by then to be part of the group I was in so I actively chose to come back. I can't explain why, perhaps something resembling Stockholm Syndrome or whatever.

External Inspections

87. There were no inspections to my knowledge

Family contact

88. We had letter writing which would be after church on a Sunday and which was supervised by Brownlee. You could write home or to a relative. He had a massive book of stamps and he would read your letter before issuing a stamp. That meant you couldn't mention incidents of abuse or anything like that. He did score out certain things so negative things were redacted.
89. I think I have my letters in an attic somewhere because my dad was a sophisticated hoarder and he kept stuff although I may have burned them. They were really sad to read because it made things sound amazing
90. We didn't have a telephone so couldn't call home from Dundas house. There was a pay phone in Scott House but prior to that there were no phone conversations.
91. I got a telegram once when [REDACTED] but that is all I remember and that was when I was ten or eleven.
92. My parents visited the school twice in ten years other than collecting me at the end of the summer term. They only picked me up in the summer holidays when they would come and see the festival. I was involved in drama and they never came to a play and I think they saw two cricket matches, one at the very end and one when I was eleven.
93. You had half term which was only a matter of four or five days back then and I would go back to Paris. I just flew on my own back to France and would be taken to the airport by my aunt, her husband or a taxi. Kids could fly on their own from the age of four in those days. You flew as an unaccompanied minor so you wore a special bib. Christmas was more like a few weeks holiday so I either went back to Paris or I had a grandmother up in Highlands who I would stay with.
94. One of my dad's friends, who was divorced and possibly lonely used to come and visit me. He was a nice chap and would pick me up at random times and take me to football

matches that I didn't particularly want to go to although he wouldn't be aware of that. He was a good friend and was well intentioned.

95. Sometimes, at weekends I would go and visit my aunt who stayed in Edinburgh or she would come and visit me. She knew I was unhappy about stuff at the school but I don't think I was ever able to talk about it really. She was head of English at [REDACTED] school but she died of cancer when I was thirteen.

Positive Memories

96. I actually enjoyed the final two years at the school. Firstly, you are too senior to be abused by staff or other kids and secondly you get quite a lot of independence. Those were the only two years I enjoyed.

Discipline

97. There were school rules which were on the back of the school diary we were given every school term. I don't think they were displayed anywhere else such as a notice board in the school.
98. I didn't have an issue at all at school for getting a whack for being badly behaved and that was mainly later on when I was around fourteen.
99. Brownlee would withhold pocket money if he felt we didn't deserve it.
100. I will never know if Brownlee thought he was disciplining us when he abused us but maybe he was just sadistic. The first night was that kind of thought process of 'rubbing the dog's nose in the dog poo so it doesn't happen again' kind of mentality. His behaviour worked in that we were terrified of him.
101. In the upper school, punishments could involve chores like cleaning the loos which could be very subjective as well. There were things like lines for minor things, detention

for more serious incidents, suspension for particularly serious things and expulsion. I would say the Academy was quite discipline centric. Class teachers could administer the lines and detention. Prefects could give lines but there was no physical punishment by them when I was there. Teachers could physically punish children and they used gym shoes because that is what tended to be available in the classroom. We would be struck on our fully clothed buttocks in public. There were not many teachers who did that. Not only did I get physically punished like that I saw it happen to other boys. It phased out as we got older.

102. I do not believe any discipline was written down and I would be extremely surprised if Brownlee recorded anything at all. What he did were not normal punishments. Detentions would be recorded as there might have been a list of the boys who had been given detention but lines are questionable and I doubt they were recorded.

Prefects / senior pupils

103. In the upper school there were house and school prefects. I don't remember there being any in Dundas House. The power structure in Dundas House was Brownlee and then everyone else. It was like we were all in fear of him and we just stuck together.
104. Fagging wasn't a massive problem and it wasn't called that. I had to warm someone's toilet seat in winter. You just had to go and sit down on it for a while to warm up the seat but that's all I remember and I would have been eight at that time. The boy was probably ten so this was in Dundas House. I didn't mind that to be honest.
105. In the upper school if you became a house prefect you could make people do tasks but they tended not to be personal to you. It was things like helping to sort the laundry out with the matron or clean the windows for the benefit of the house. It wasn't personal slavery and things like that.

Abuse by staff at Edinburgh Academy

106. On my very first night at a fee paying school in Scotland the other boys and I were beaten. Mr Brownlee put us to bed which was at 8 pm in September so you imagine it was still quite light and you might even have the festival fireworks going off as it would be the last Sunday of the festival. The room we were in had a big bay window with a view of the Edinburgh skyline. We were all quite excited and it was an unfamiliar place for us. After he put us to bed he came in 15-20 minutes later and asked if anyone was still awake so we all admitted we were. He then took us all upstairs and beat us with a snooker cue. He beat us hard with the fat end of the cue on the back of the legs and everywhere, it was done indiscriminately. He locked our heads under a snooker table with all of us around it. He just went round hitting every single one of us. I was the youngest and we were all eight to ten or eleven years old. The six year old didn't arrive until the following year. He said that that would teach us to be awake after lights out. I believe this was premeditated by Brownlee. I believe he wanted to teach us that this is how he instils fear and this is how everyone gets welcomed. I also believe that Brownlee had issues and took them out on us.
107. In prep school there was a teacher called [REDACTED] in prep school who is still around and his trick was to drop kick kids basically. He was quite a small chap and he would grab you by the hair and boot you up the arse.
108. In prep school there was another teacher called [REDACTED] who was a [REDACTED] teacher who was completely dedicated [REDACTED] and one time I saw him absolutely pummel a nine year old boy which was very out of character. This was on a coach in the front passenger seat where he was punching him on the chest, shaking him and smashing him back into the seat because I think he had been singing on a school trip or something like that. The boy was called [REDACTED] and his dad was a teacher called [REDACTED] who taught [REDACTED] at the school. I was even more surprised that a teacher was attacking a teacher's son. Nothing ever came of it afterwards. This was completely out of character behaviour for Mr [REDACTED] but there are other examples of teachers who thought it was acceptable to use extreme physical force without worrying about other people seeing their behaviour.

109. Brownlee also assaulted the day pupils as well. He had a clacken which was like a wooden bat which was used for beating children. It looks like a large wooden spoon-like paddle which was about two inches thick. Originally it was used on the very last day of upper school where the prefects played against the non-prefects in this game called hailes so it was a sports thing to start with. When I arrived at the Academy it was used by the more sadistic staff as the main means of punishment and assault. The Academy was very proud of this book by Magnus Magnusson called 'The Clacken and the Slate' which celebrated the history of the school. Half of the title related to beatings and they were proud of this ethos. Brownlee's technique was to put their heads in the lockers at the side of the classroom so that when he hit them they also banged their heads on the top of the locker. It was like a double torture.
110. Another of Brownlee's things was to throw you in a cold bath if he was in anyway annoyed with you. That wasn't bath time that was just being chucked in a cold bath as a punishment.
111. Brownlee would pull boys who wet the bed out of their bed by the hair and would throw them in a cold bath. They would be humiliated in front of all of us.
112. The six year old boy who joined the school in my second year in prep was [REDACTED] and he was incontinent in both ways in that he would soil his shorts and things like that. Brownlee was very intolerant of this to the point where one Saturday we were all taken outside to the side garden and he stripped [REDACTED] off and inserted a hose into his rectum. Brownlee said, 'that will teach you a lesson about shitting yourself'. That was done in front of every single child in the house. We all just went back in again after that and we never talked about it. I don't think we dared talk to each other about it. [REDACTED] just looked permanently petrified and this didn't change anything really. It was horrific and actually we should have been able to take him aside to see how he was. I don't remember anyone talking to him afterwards. We were all so shocked and also we all had to try and protect ourselves in those days. If you sided by someone who got victimised you would get hassled from Brownlee. I remember this incident

vividly and I find myself wondering how [REDACTED] is these days. I hope he is all right but that would be a difficult thing to forget. I only remember the names of two people in that group who had to watch this and they were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. For a long time after I found myself thinking that it didn't really happen but it did.

113. There was an incident which I did not witness but heard of. There was a black boy there called [REDACTED] and basically Brownlee always called him 'nigger' instead of [REDACTED]. That was all year round and I did witness this regularly. He would also make [REDACTED] serve meals at the table because he was black but I did not witness this because I think that stopped. [REDACTED] would have been a year older than me, maybe two, with his parents paying the same school fees as everyone else but he was humiliated in a deeply racist way. What I understood was that when he had to serve a roast dinner once he had grabbed a knife off the table and pinned Brownlee to the wall. This was a nine year old boy pinning a forty odd year old man to a wall. He said very politely 'Sir if you call me 'nigger' one more time I will have to kill you'. This incident happened in the dining room the year before I was there. I had heard this legendary story and had my own version of it that it was at a Sunday lunch for Christmas. What I now understand to have happened was Brownlee had actually beaten up two boys outside the dining room because he felt they were hanging around with the wrong kind of people. They boys who were the 'wrong type of people' were [REDACTED] and the other was [REDACTED]'s brother. [REDACTED] came back into the dining room and that is when he threatened him with the knife. There will be other people who were [REDACTED]'s contemporaries who will have more detail on that. This was another one of the incidents, even though I wasn't present, that really stuck in my head. Especially the use of the knife and the fact [REDACTED] managed to overpower Brownlee because we all thought we were powerless against this man.
114. I was hit a lot with a gym shoe across my backside when I was around the age of eleven. There was a guy called [REDACTED] who did it every [REDACTED] lesson and it was my suspicion that he did it more out of some enjoyment rather than anything else. He will be dead now. In the end we kind of beat him because we used to go in early and get all the gym shoes, tie them altogether, put them in a locker and have one

under the black and red notebooks. Someone would provoke him and he would tell us to queue up and he would try to pull the gym shoe out but about 42 gym shoes would come out. He would spend the rest of the lesson just untying the laces and giving us a lecture on us being juvenile.

115. Hamish Dawson was at the school for a couple of years when I went into the upper school. He had what he called his 'instruments of torture' which were different things for beating kids with. He was very proud of these but by the time he taught me I think he was too frail and too old to get involved in hitting people. I did not see him do anything but he did have a pretty bad reputation in the school for hurting kids.
116. ^{IDX} [REDACTED] was the housemaster in Mackenzie House and was a regular user of force. He is dead now and it is maybe debateable whether it was justified or not. He would give six to ten strikes with the clacken. It is extremely painful and very excessive. It happened to me when he dragged me out of bed in the middle of the night to beat me. I had been sleeping. He felt I had committed forgery because we had got hold of these detention slips that someone had left lying around and I wrote a joke one for a friend and put the teachers initials on it which looked roughly like their handwriting. The boy had shown it to his mum who reported me to the school. It was just a joke. He beat me like that two or three times because I was in his house for two or three years. I can't remember the reason for the other incidents.
117. Mr ^{IDX} [REDACTED] and Mrs ^{IDY} [REDACTED] victimised me and were unkind and I could never work out why. There was a change in how they behaved towards me and it came out of nowhere. In hindsight this comes across as a funny story but in a way I was judged on the back of this. It turns out they told my aunt [REDACTED] that I was a pervert although neither they nor anyone else spoke to me about any concerning behaviour. It wasn't until I was in second year at university when I woke up in the middle of the night and worked out what the problem was.
118. Basically, when my aunt was ill with cancer every time I was back in Paris my mum would give me something to take to her as a little gift. Often it was cheese which stank

out my luggage. One time at half term she told me she had something for [REDACTED] and asked me to remind me to put it in my luggage. I completely forgot and arrived back in Edinburgh where my aunt picked me up from the airport. When I got to the boarding house I open my suitcase and there was this cardboard box. I didn't know what was within it so I opened it and to my absolute horror it was a pair of silk knickers within. I was a thirteen or fourteen year old boy in a boarding house full of blokes and I had lingerie in my room. I decided the best thing to do was hide it in a drawer even though I knew they were for my aunt who had been too prim to ask if I had brought her pants. I intended to see her at the weekend and tell her I had found them in my luggage.

119. I went off to school and when I came back that evening they had gone. I can only guess Mrs [REDACTED] had searched through our stuff for flick knives, porn mags and all the stuff that boys bring back from holiday and she has found the knickers. She must have assumed it was my mum's underwear which is pretty freaky. This is simply my theory as I never got to ask. Instead of asking me why I had a box with knickers in it she has just thought I was a pervert and bullied me as a result. Everything was just assumed then you are labelled and treated badly when you have done nothing wrong.

Peer Abuse at Edinburgh Academy

120. I feel there were two phases of abuse with Brownlee being responsible for the majority of the abuse perpetrated on me and other children in the prep school. I don't think I was struck by any staff in my teenage years and don't really remember seeing people being physically abused once we got past the ages of eleven or twelve. At that point the violence was more between kids in the upper school.
121. There was a guy called [REDACTED] who was really badly bullied. He was overweight and his dad had been murdered by Zulus. Some of the kids thought that it was funny to wind him up about it. I remember he challenged someone to a fight in

the judo club one night and he got completely destroyed with blood everywhere. He didn't come to school for days and then I heard he committed suicide a few years later.

122. There was a climate where this stuff was going on for a couple of years when we were fourteen or fifteen. I think it was when some boys grew up quicker than the others. My theory is that the staff had set the tone and created a group of kids who only knew how to assert or protect themselves through physical violence.
123. The year above me had quite a lot of unruly kids who were terrifying but then the final years when I was sixteen or seventeen it was much more harmonious. We had better housemasters by then. The housemasters in Scott and Jeffrey houses were really decent people. A guy called Rob Cowie who was a really understanding guy. He made the occasional mistake with teenager psychology but was generally compassionate.

Reporting of abuse at Edinburgh Academy

124. My parents were not aware of the regime at the school as I never spoke to them about it when I was at the school. I don't know if I thought about telling them but if I had something must have stopped me.
125. The bit that I don't understand is why when I was sixteen or seventeen and kind of settled, respected and untouchable in a physical way because no-one would beat up A Level students, it didn't cross my mind to confront the Brownlee thing then. He was still teaching at the prep school. I have only thought about that now as part of this process. I think I was coming from behind because you were treated so badly then that you are constantly trying to prove yourself and be treated well and be respected. Instead of thinking that this was wrong and getting out of there I was thinking what I have to do not to be treated the way Brownlee treated me. Thinking things like I have to get into the first eleven cricket team and be a prefect will make life okay for me. It was more about seeking approval rather than taking on the system. In many ways I was blaming myself and had a belief I had done something to deserve it.

126. I remember telling my aunt sometimes that I was unhappy and I think she went into see [REDACTED] at one time to find out why. I had told her they were victimising me. It was my mum who told me that Aunt [REDACTED] visited [REDACTED] to see why I was being treated unkindly by them. That was when they said I was a pervert but I did not hear about this until after my aunt died.
127. I may have mentioned something to my aunt about Brownlee. I think if I had it was that he was cruel but I just expected if I said anything to be in even more in the firing line. I do think if I had spoken to my aunt she would have said something or she might have looked into it.
128. My parents had spent two years and a whole load of money on me to come to this place and I was the first member of our family ever who had the privilege of going to a private fee paying school. Suddenly the whole thing is unravelled. It wasn't an option to tell anyone. I think every other boy probably felt the same with what was happening in Dundas House and they couldn't say anything.
129. There was a really nice teacher at the school called Tony Cook and his wife Jenny. She apparently said to someone that she didn't know why they sent their son to the Academy and the Brownlees when they are so cruel. That tells me it was known in Edinburgh circles that there was something not right going on.

Leaving Edinburgh Academy

130. We had a bit of careers advice but it was pretty random. It was very selective, those who were thought of as the superstars were nurtured. There was no particular support, once you were out the system you were out.

Life after being in care

131. I went to Edinburgh University to do English Literature and got a first. I was going to work in theatre and had a place at the Central School of Speech and Drama in London to do Lighting Design as an advanced diploma. There was only one place but I decided that I didn't want to work in theatre and needed to do something a bit more business orientated.
132. I decided on advertising and applied to the top agencies in London and to my surprise got a job with an American multi-national. I worked in various companies before being contacted by a company which wanted me to run what I would describe as my dream account. I did about eight years back in Edinburgh and worked on some large campaigns during which time my daughters were born. My wife is [REDACTED] and my daughters are [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].
133. When the girls got to five years old we didn't have any family in Scotland and my wife is English. For a number of reason relating to family we decided to move back down south. I then set up my own business for a few years and then I started doing consultancy work. I decided to take a sabbatical to pursue a passion of mine and when I came back we had two years of lockdown. We have moved out of London and took a yearlong break when I have been renovating our new house. We have been concentrating on building up a business in hospitality so I can be at home but commute if there is a need or desire.

Impact

134. For a long time I was haunted by my experiences in my early and middle years at the Academy. That time felt chaotic with a lack of support. There was no support and I definitely felt I was on my own. From 1997-2021 I drank alcohol to a level that was disruptive culminating in me being an alcoholic. I have abused painkillers for fifteen

years. Strong stuff like codeine, morphine and Tramadol to try and give me a calm perspective on things. I suppose to dull things.

135. I have been a good parent but also a bad parent as I have been unreliable, inconsistent and unpredictable. I think stuff I have done has affected my daughters.
136. I still feel a sense of rejection from having been sent away to boarding school separated from my family at such a young age. I think with that comes a lack of self-esteem. On the surface things look okay but you battle with all these impacts privately and they can cripple you.
137. I have carried such anger, a deep kind of anger where I would fantasise about getting revenge on Brownlee. I no longer have this but it was a very consuming rage that was very unhealthy.
138. I have always felt like an underdog who has to try and gain acceptance rather than someone who had got this platform to succeed on. I have had lots of incidences where I have just been unable to take life too seriously because you expect something bad just to happen round the corner, so what's the point?
139. I have not had a steady career like some of my other friends although I know most people don't have a steady career these days. I have not taken a linear approach and I am a bit of a gambler, literally and metaphorically. I take risks and I am not comfortable with stability and consistency. I think that has been good and bad in a way.
140. I don't really trust people that I work with often and don't take them at face value. That has probably hampered me.
141. There have been bad moments with suicide attempts.

142. My sleep is impacted. I wake up at two in the morning everyday so I go to bed at 8.30 pm.
143. There are negative impacts on my family relationships. My parents are dead now but after all this started at school I definitely kept my distance from them and I was never 100 percent trusting in them. I don't know if trusting is the correct word but I lacked faith in them. Whatever it was the fact that this happened really damaged my relationship with my parents for sure. I also think that the whole idea of this cover up and pretending everything is fine followed me through the rest of my life. My wife has a relationship with her parents where they can swear at each other, hug each other, talk plainly and confront things by healthily discussing and thrashing things out. I never had that and I think these experiences created a fake it and grin and bear it kind of relationship between me and my parents. I don't think that is a good thing. It wasn't honest. I never had any of these type of conversations with my dad for example and he only died a few years ago. I never asked him if he felt guilty about sending me away to school and we never discussed any of that. It was just like 'sweep it under the carpet'. It has also been damaging for my relationship with [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] said I was quite nasty to her for a while and then when she found out what had happened she said she hadn't realised and that it explains quite a lot. She didn't know because no-one said a word. You kind of pass on the 'aggro' to other folk who don't deserve it.
144. I believe life at the school showed us how to hide feelings and not deal with emotions. We had to be tough and self-reliant, no-one dared show weakness or express emotion. I didn't believe in therapy and saw it as self-indulgent and a sign of weakness. I now know it is not and failing to face emotional and mental health issues just causes trouble for everyone else. It is better to deal with the issue. In a way I was kind of proud how damaged I was. It is like a scar or war wound and that is fine if it is just you but not when you realise how it was affecting the rest of the family so the impact runs far deeper than just me.

145. I associate Christmas as an unhappy time stemming from Dundas House. We were young children where it should have been magical and surrounded with family instead of Brownlee abusing one or all of us.
146. I associate some foods with Brownlee such as roast dinners and things like mint sauce. To this day I cannot eat those type of foods and they still upset me. I know it seems weird but I can't change it as it is like a trigger as an association to Brownlee and what he did to me and the others. My wife will suggest she will make a roast but I just don't eat that type of food at all even now.
147. I have a kind of shopping phobia now which I partly associate with Brownlee confiscating the birthday gifts the other boys and I had got [REDACTED]. I freeze when it comes to things like buying Christmas presents for people because I expect it to be rejected. It is a tiny thing but it is real to me.
148. As a result of the incident where I accidentally stabbed the boy who was bullying me I now don't own weapons of any kind because I am so scared of there being an accident. In later years I was offered an air rifle but I just didn't want it as I feel trouble will come from this.
149. I wasn't happy with the idea of my girls going to boarding school at all until they became thirteen. They said that they spend most of their time with their friends and they wanted to go. It was voluntary from their point of view but it was still slightly emotional dropping them off. I just have a negative view of boarding schools. My girls are happy and they are enjoying it where they are.
150. I don't keep in touch with many people from school. I have had chats recently about the Nicky Campbell stuff with some people I haven't spoken to for thirty years.

Treatment/support

151. I had a huge amount of codeine July 2021. I didn't know I was doing it and I couldn't understand how I could get up in the morning and half an hour later I would pass out. I went for hospital tests and stuff. Then [REDACTED] found me floating [REDACTED] [REDACTED] so she decided I was going into a clinic. I went into this rehab clinic in Bedfordshire where I was treated for alcoholism even though when I arrived there it read nothing on the breathalyser. It wasn't alcohol it was that I took [REDACTED] codeine in a week. This is what has caused some brain damage which causes me to stutter sometimes.
152. Up until then I have avoided all kinds of therapy and that kind of stuff because I thought it was self-indulgent and a sign of weakness. I felt people had bigger problems than me. I also had such anger about Brownlee that I thought that no-one could resolve this. I have considered over the years getting him back, not seriously but fantasising how I could do this. I kept an eye on newspapers and such to see if he had died as I wanted to disrupt his funeral and tell everyone the truth about the type of man he was. It was all stuff like that which is not good and just really unhealthy. I don't know if I can really paint a picture of how much hatred I had for him.
153. I did CBT in this clinic which centred on abuse in Dundas House at the hands of Brownlee. I was there for five weeks and after three weeks they had completely cured me of my anger and hatred. They did this exercise where they made me write him a letter one week and it was so vitriolic I was ashamed of it. They said that next week although it may seem impossible I was to write him a letter of forgiveness. I told them I didn't think it was going to be possible but what I would do is write a letter explaining that I might one day be able to find a process whereby forgiveness could be possible or a good thing for me.
154. The following week this guy did this exercise with me where we started off with him asking me on the scale of resentment and hatred where was I out of ten to which I replied fifteen. Then he did this thing which is part of the twelve steps Narcotics

Anonymous thing where instead of just being from my viewpoint they make you look at it from every viewpoint. This is where I, whether I am right or wrong, began to believe that the man was not a bad or evil man and wasn't someone who persecuted me on purpose. He must have endured some horror of his own to become so cruel and unkind. That might be idealistic but it worked for me. Afterwards he asked me where I was on the scale and I went zero. I said it's not my fault but it's not his fault. I spent the next week trying to get it from zero to one and I couldn't and I still can't.

155. That was a major turning point. I no longer feel anger and before I used to see people who looked like him and a year ago that would set me off. I would fear them. There is a guy who plays cricket and to start with I couldn't look at him and this year it has been a lot easier.
156. Since leaving the clinic I speak to someone once a week. That is helpful just having someone to talk to stuff about.
157. I am curious as to why Brownlee treated us the way he did but that is his problem and it is not mine. It is not constructive for me to carry the anger through my life however in the times where I did I caused trouble for my family and for myself.
158. I probably saw Brownlee in Raeburn Place in 1994-95 as he was quite a fan of the rugby on a Saturday once he retired. We spoke briefly and were civil. I have spoken to him since leaving school but have never confronted him about any of the things he did.
159. About six or seven years ago I explored the possibility of contacting my abusers. Basically I had been checking for years whether John Brownlee was still alive. Not to do anything other than as part of this anger thought process to turn up at his funeral. I contacted the school to say I had a letter for him and would they ask him if it would be okay for me to have his address. They responded that he would be happy to be contacted but I was to contact him through them. I never did anything with it as I was just testing the lines of communication.

160. I went to a reunion a few years ago, probably 2019, and that was a mistake. I was sitting beside John Brownlee's son at dinner. I asked him how his dad was and he said he was fine. I told him to pass on my regards. That was it. The event was just full of people who behaved like they had had a fantastic time there. I did not enjoy that event at all. I went because over the years I kept getting invited by Rob Cowie who was one of my housemasters and who was a good guy. I had promised him I would go to a previous one and not gone so I felt obliged to turn up on a following year. I didn't think it would be that bad. I had been at the school for ten years minus that one year and by the end of it things worked out much better for me but it was a mistake. I shouldn't have gone. This may well have impacted on my subsequent breakdown and going into rehab.

Reporting of Abuse

161. I did tell my parents after I left the school when I was older and initially they didn't really believe me and then they did and felt bad over time. [REDACTED], my wife, has said something interesting. She said if they were still alive they would probably be quite pleased that I am now doing this. I have a friend and he said he doesn't want to do anything because he doesn't want to upset his mum who is still alive. My thought is our parents were victims of the same cover-up, system and failings. They were duped into thinking it was wonderful, brilliant and great for their child's future. You look at all the reports and letters and it is all wonderful when in fact the reality was completely different. I do believe they are victims too and yes it might be harder for them to either see it that way or come to terms with the fact they sent their children to a place like that. With my kids my wife and I are on it the minute there is anything remotely happening and that is from when they started primary school. We intervene immediately if there is an issue or we are not happy with something.

162. When I came out of the clinic in October 2021 I felt I had been cured of all the anger. Then there was the thing with Nicky Campbell and a guy called Alex Renton. I thought I recognised that name Alex Renton and it turns out he was a friend of a guy I went mountaineering with. I thought I would get in touch with him to find out what was going on and if there was any momentum so I spoke to him and he said he had 300 unread emails about this subject and he had just been inundated. He told me Police Scotland were now taking an interest and spoke of the SCAI as well as a couple of law firms. After speaking to him I felt it actually had a chance of something coming out of it.
163. I did a bit of reading online and went to the police because I learned they take it a bit more seriously nowadays unlike how it once was dealt with. I went to Hastings Police Station and I knew they would refer it to Police Scotland but I wanted to physically go in somewhere. That would have been about 2 August 2022. Hastings did refer it to Police Scotland who got in touch with me very quickly and they were going to send someone down. I said I would go up as I wanted to do it in Edinburgh if I am honest. I viewed it as I went through this portal to this world of hell in Edinburgh and I thought I can come back out of it in Edinburgh.
164. I gave a statement to the police at Livingston Police Station and was with them for four hours. They were great and again it is just a nice surprise it is taken so seriously. They talked me through my statement at the end but they don't give me a copy of it. The police asked me how often I wanted an update and I said when something significant happens. The first thing I did after that was to drive to Dundas boarding house. I took a photo outside.
165. I wanted to get involved in reporting the abuse to the police and SCAI. Not so Brownlee goes to prison. If he does great but if he doesn't then that is just the way it worked out. If there is a testimony from me and it helps everyone else then that is a good thing. I also feel that I can think that the universe is fair in the long run. Some people actually listened and some people actually acknowledged it.

166. I actually contacted Mr Fisher about a month and a half ago. He is headmaster in a school in India now. There were only two adults in the house other than Brownlee's wife in my time there. I thought it would be useful for the police to get their perspective if they felt there was anything odd going on. This is purely my theory, as an adult now, that they were both in their first jobs and Brownlee was a very tyrannical character. He was second in charge of the prep school and people feared him. I wondered whether they could tell the police from an adult perspective at that time what they thought was going on. I emailed him and he got back to me immediately and we had a conversation on the phone. He said he felt very bad that everyone suffered so much. He said he hadn't seen too much of it but he would think carefully about it and that he would help in any way he could. I put him in touch with Police Scotland as I said I didn't want him to tell me anymore as it was not my job to investigate. I just thought he would be a useful guy for the police to talk to. I also suggested to Police Scotland that they try to find Mr Dean.
167. I have met with Digby Brown solicitors as well and got them up to speed on stuff so I have kind of told everyone what happened. I have an appointment with a psychiatric expert for Digby Brown.
168. Once I knew there was momentum behind this in the form of the police and civil claims I got in touch with a few people, maybe three, through LinkedIn and told them about the police enquiry into the abuse at the school so they could make a decision if they felt they wanted to talk about it. I just said if they were interested there were three things they could do, speak to the police, SCAI and gave them the details of the various firms who were dealing with civil claims.

Records

169. Digby Brown have contacted Edinburgh Academy and requested some records from them. Obviously it will have alerted them that I am planning some kind of action against

them. I believe that Police Scotland have possibly requested my records just based on what was said when I met them.

170. I have not requested any records directly. I did not realise there was such a thing to be perfectly honest other than they may have kept reports of file. Would they even keep these? My parents requested a copy of the missing report that I set on fire the time it went missing and the school said they didn't have a copy. I did tell my parents about that eventually, maybe twenty years after.

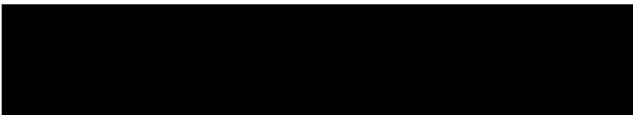
Lessons to be Learned

171. I think a lot of the housemasters and teachers in the boarding houses were not suited to looking after groups of kids. I wouldn't do it. It is hard enough looking after two children let alone a group. If you are going to do that job you need to be suited to it. I think it takes a certain kind of person to be able to do that job. Unless you love nurturing kids and teenagers then you shouldn't be doing that kind of work. I just got the impression that the housemasters did it because they had to and took out their anger and resentment on the kids.
172. It is difficult for me to think about other forms of care because I wasn't in them. From the point of view of my experiences in boarding school it is really important to put on record what the environment was really like at the time. I just can't imagine it happening again anyway but maybe a positive outcome from this could be that things will be better in care environments that still exist. If there is any good that can come of what was going on and what was meant to be a place of privilege then it could be the lessons that come from my experience protect children who are in necessary forms of care. Boarding school is not a necessary form of care it is a discretionary form of care.

Other information

173. I hope that being involved with SCAI will provide those of us who were victims of abuse a sense of an ending more than anything. The way I worded it was a sense that the universe is fair. My cousin who is slightly older than me was at the school and had a good time as a day boy. He said to me that life in the short term can be really unfair but at the age that he has got to he realised that it kind of balances out. Whether that is true or not if I can believe that I will have a bit of peace of mind. That is the personal thing out of this knowing that it actually sets itself right.

174. 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..... 8th March 2023