

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

IBQ

Support person present: No

1. My name is IBQ My surname at birth was IBQ and that was the name I was known by at school. My date of birth is 1957. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going to Edinburgh Academy

2. My mother was from the commonwealth and my father, came from England although he had Scottish descendants. They decided to settle in Scotland after their marriage. My father was a military officer and on leaving service they came to Scotland. They moved initially to a rented property in Ayrshire but this burned down shortly after we arrived. My parents lost all of their possessions. They then moved us to Edinburgh when I was aged about eighteen months.
3. We were initially in a basement flat in where my sister was born. I have a brother who is a year and a half older than me and my sister is a year and a half younger than me. After that, we moved to a house in Edinburgh where they stayed for many years.
4. Both of my siblings went to Edinburgh Academy at different periods. My older brother then went off to boarding school. The aspiration had been that I would as well. I was seriously dyslexic and academically struggling. My brother, in his first two years there, experienced significant bullying by his housemaster. So my parents for this combination of reasons decided to keep me at the Edinburgh Academy when he was

at boarding school. My sister was [REDACTED] to join the Edinburgh Academy in her final two years, in preparation for A 'Levels

5. I was initially at a nursery school called Buckingham House in Edinburgh before starting at Edinburgh Academy.

### **Edinburgh Academy**

6. I don't have much insight into why the Edinburgh Academy was chosen. I suspect my parents believed it to be an academically good school and its educational programme opened up access to English universities, whilst some of the other schools didn't. This was probably also based on recommendation amongst their social set.
7. I was at the Edinburgh Academy from its entry level at Denham Green until I left at eighteen. I started at the school in 196[REDACTED] as a day pupil and eventually left in 197[REDACTED]. The three parts to the school were the very junior one, Denham Green, the middle one, Arboretum, and then Henderson Row for the upper school.
8. I'm not sure if there was an entrance exam. I think it was enough that my parents were reasonably well off and my father had a pension and a job at that stage. I think they just paid for access.
9. I don't remember being in Denham Green for very long and it was possibly three or four years. Then you went to the middle school, Arboretum, which I think was about three or four forms. I think you went to the upper school at the age of twelve or thirteen. Perhaps it was five years at Arboretum which would have meant up to about the age of eight, so perhaps it was about five or six up to eight was about right I think.
10. I have some memories of the Denham Green school and I have some clearer memories of the Arboretum school. I have memories of the upper school but they're very much fragmented. I was a day pupil throughout my time in the school. My understanding was that boarding started in the upper school, so that was for

Henderson Row. Once you entered Henderson Row they took boarders, but they only took a small percentage, probably less than 25% of a year were boarders.

11. My recollection was they had three quite large boarding houses and one smaller one at that time. They were up near the Arboretum school. I've forgotten the name of the road, but it was at the opposite side from the school. Three were substantial buildings next to the playing fields and one was a fairly large but typical looking house. The group of pupils who were there were frequently those pupils who were from the Highlands or whose parents worked abroad. Most of those boarders were there consistently for most of the period of the upper school.
12. There was very little interaction between day pupils and those who were boarding. I think it's one thing that should be highlighted because in a way, reflecting back on that, there was very little social engagement. However, I did strike up, in my later years, a great friendship with two boarders. Both came from Ayrshire and we became quite close and they would come round to our house quite a lot. I lived reasonably close to the school. My parents would offer them quite a lot of hospitality and we'd spend time at my house. This happened in my later period at the school when I was probably aged sixteen plus and carried on until I left the school. So, it was in our sixth form period.
13. Denham Green was a large house with lots of bits of extension on it and in quite extensive grounds behind a gate from the road. The rooms of the old house were the classrooms but there was a fairly big hall and there was a stair in it. From the hall you exited out to the north and to the main playground, and the wooded bit was to the south and that was all lawned. The bit to the north had a hard surface.
14. Arboretum itself was a good classic fifties school design. You went in from Arboretum Road, and if you approached going north you turned right through some gates in a low brick wall with pedestrian paths. There was a wooded area on the south side in which there were some playing fields beyond. There was a fairly large car park at the frontage to the school. On the north of the car park facing south there was a range of two storey classrooms, on the east side of which there were three or four on the ground floor and

three or four on the first floor. All looking to the south. All were well lit with fairly large thin metal framed windows.

15. You would go in up stairs and these would continue back from a half flight up to the first floor where you would go along the front classroom block, but if you went up the stairs and turned left from the half-landing you'd go into the large hall. The hall was generous and had a stage-type configuration at its north end. The stage was where they put on the school plays, even for the upper school. The main circulation routes there ran along either side of the central space in lower ceilinged areas that on one side only was glazed. That would take you up to another classroom block on the right hand side. You'd go up there, to the top and you'd turn right and go down a corridor and there was another classroom block with about three to six classrooms. Off that, there was a single classroom where I was a pupil for some time and that's where I think a Mr ICA was my teacher, in that room.
16. If you went back to the main hall and the two side corridors, they went right up the school and there was a corridor at the end which went across the top and behind the stage facility. The stage was where we did our gymnastics when it wasn't being used for theatre. There was a little bit of changing space for the gymnastics. The catering and the kitchens were all on the left side while across the top there was this corridor and off that were things like music rooms and small seminar rooms. There was another classroom at the far left and that faced out onto a playground at the top [north west]. That was where a Mr Brownlee had his classes.
17. We used to have our bottles of milk next to the catering bit, so they'd leave a crate out there and at break we'd go and get our milk from there and run round the back and off to the playground.
18. The middle school had a different headmaster. I think that was Mr Brittain. In the senior school there was a Mr IDR who did woodwork. We had a Mr French, a Mr Scotland and a Mr Ireland. It was most peculiar to have these names.

19. The senior school is a dour neo-classical building on Henderson Row. Quite low and grey. The middle block has a giant portico and two classroom wings to either side. The compound was lined by teaching blocks either side of that, stretching right down the rectangular site going all the way towards the Water of Leith. The masters' accommodation, the staff rooms and the admin. was to the right of the entrance in a distinctive little building. Beyond that were bicycle sheds and then a small library that was quite elegant. Beyond that was science blocks going down to lavatories with squash courts. Then a gym in a world war memorial building where on the first floor we used to sit our exams while on the ground floor there were woodworking shops and art studios where I spent a lot of time eventually.
20. The main building was a T-shaped block with the front extending back and the side bits all filled in. The dining block was the other side of the T-shape. At the back of the school stairs went down towards the Water of Leith, and there was a back entrance to the school which connected with the bridge that went over Rocheid Path.
21. The T-shaped block of the Henderson Row building had a two storeys dining room behind the block on the left hand side. It was a large dining room with classrooms above and that's where the eating was on that side.
22. My recollection in the upper school is that there were heads of department. You had senior history, biology and English heads. Most of them had forms, but not all of them. There were some like biology and art who weren't form teachers, but most had multiple roles as a form teacher and then as a specialist subject teacher. The senior management of the school was the headmaster who I can't recall actually teaching. There was a bursar who you never saw much of. There was a school office where you would go to get jotters. I think there was a librarian as well in the library. If there was a board of governors, they weren't apparent to us at all. They made a great play of all the alumni and some would pop in. We would have presentation once or twice a year in the assembly hall from some alumni.
23. I can't remember how many forms there were for each year. I remember I was D-streamed, so I think there were four. I was D-streamed because of being profoundly

dyslexic. You had four class masters for each year and they managed your base classroom and you'd predominately move from that classroom to another to attend different subject areas. That's where you left your kit and there were lockers associated with each class. Your form was your year stream and then I think it was structured so you could vary across the subjects, because each year had its subject teaching at the same time. I moved into different streams for different subjects at different stages. I think that's how it worked.

24. While I was there it was an all-boys school. On my departure girls started at the school and it enabled my sister to go the Academy for her last two years. I've no idea how many boys there were at the school when I was there. Our classes were probably about twenty boys and four classes per year so something like that. The school was well subscribed.
25. My parents paid the fees for me to be there. My parents always said we're paying fees for your education, so deserve it. They were stretching themselves to pay for our education and because of that it was something that we were deserving of.

### **Routine at Edinburgh Academy**

#### *First day*

26. I don't have many memories of starting at Denham Green, although I can remember what the place was like. There was a hall space I can remember at the northern side of the school. It had very pleasant and generous playground area with quite a lot of trees. That's about all I remember. It's located towards Newhaven, if Arboretum is north-west of Henderson Row, Denham Green was north-east of Arboretum on the other side of Ferry Road.

### *Mealtimes / Food*

27. I ate lunch at the school. That was in the school dining hall. We did give food nicknames that were all rude. It was all pretty inedible. They'd lock the door and it would be shut until a certain time and it was next to the tuck shop that we used in the breaks. We'd have to wait and when the door was opened, we'd all go in to sit down. There was a higher bench where staff would sit at the top. I think there must have been two sittings for meals.
28. The food was awful, you'd have to queue up and go past the counter to pick it up and you'd run to your table and eat. I think later on you were allowed to take in sandwiches, but it wasn't encouraged.

### *Clothing / uniform*

29. We had to wear caps, short trousers with long socks until we were about sixteen and one of the things boys got disciplined for was if their socks were down. It was only at about sixteen or seventeen we were allowed to wear long trousers. That was in all sorts of weather. There was a summer blazer I think, and a winter blazer.

### *School*

30. There was a morning period separated by a school break and I think we got twenty minutes or half an hour to run about and get into classrooms. The day was punctuated by a lunch break when we'd go to the dining hall. I think we used to finish at 3:30 pm when there would be activities. They would be compulsory extracurricular activities such as sports, so you'd go off to the sports fields on two days a week and there were opportunities for other things. On Fridays, they had a societies afternoon or evening when you would do whatever your interest was. There were things like a debating society and a mahjong group and woodwork you could do as extras.
31. The school organised quite a lot of extracurricular activities, sometimes in the weekends for the upper school. I did that a lot. There was often opportunity to go away

climbing and walking. They had an outward bounds centre in the Cairngorms called Glen Doll House. That was promoted by the headmaster and a couple of senior staff. It was a good facility.

32. The school had quite a military ethos. Each week at Henderson Row we would have to do military training as part of the Combined Cadet Force, when we would all get dressed in service uniforms. Many of the staff had either done national service or were demobilised, and they were the officers and there were a lot of armaments in the school.
33. I suffered seriously from dyslexia and the school didn't address that. My parents eventually addressed it by sending me for special educational learning privately. That unlocked my ability to overcome it. I didn't learn to effectively read and write until I was about twelve. As a result, a lot of my focus was developed towards visual learning. I don't think the school was very supportive about that and my parents had to buy special items. I was put in the bottom stream. That was mainly in the middle school and I was coming out of that by the upper school and getting on top of it. I gravitated towards more spatial subjects such as geography, sciences and art. Subjects like English and French I was very poor at, as they had a major written component.
34. I think the standard of education was good otherwise, as a lot of the teachers taught with enormous enthusiasm. There were some good teachers and some good educational leadership by some of the teachers. I suspect, as in every institution, that it varies and there were some who weren't so good. Some knew their topic but didn't seem to know how to teach successfully. I don't think any of them had been taught anger management and that came from their own personalities. I think that could have been very useful with some of them. There was an enormous amount of pressure for the delivery of results and reputation of the school. That was apparent in their teaching methods. We had some brilliant teachers, and some who had no empathy and no ability to communicate.
35. I was initially going to go to university on Highers. I got five or six Highers. It took me about three years to get through my A' Level stage because my linguistic problems



with French and English dragged on. I got a university place in my Highers year, but in the end, I didn't want to study the subjects I'd selected and wanted to get away from Scotland, partly because of my experiences. I stayed on to do A' levels and got three or four and then went to university in England.

### *Religion*

36. Religion was meant to be a big underpinning of the school. There was an assembly every morning and a prayer, I think. There was a prayer at lunch, I think. I think there was a school chaplain.
37. My parents were big on church going, not that we children were. It was the cause of a bit of Sunday friction in the family.

### *Leisure time*

38. In the playground at Arboretum we used to have to play clacken and ball. That was with a wooden spoon that seemed big at the time, but it probably wasn't as big as I think it was. It was like a large cooking spoon that's flat and you'd end up being hit by whoever you were playing with. It was absolutely lethal. It was a game that was characteristic of the school at that stage. It had been brought to the school, I believe, by Magnus Magnusson and was an Icelandic game. He was an alma mater of the school. He brought it to the school as a cultural thing. I think you had your own clacken and ball, but I can't remember where you got them from.
39. Hitting was an inevitable part of the game. We all had to wear short trousers so you'd be going around with this big wooden stick and a ball and you'd be whacking with it so you'd get hit. You had to be really careful. There wasn't much health and safety advice about it, we were just told to be careful. This was for the under-twelves.

### *Visits / Inspections*

40. I don't recall anyone from outside coming in to inspect the school.

### *Healthcare*

41. I can't remember if there was a matron at the school.

### *Running away*

42. There was one story. I was then in a classroom which was a newer classroom just in front of the dining room block. This classroom was entered from the courtyard, you went in via a lobby and there were two classrooms either side. On the other side of my classroom was a quite disruptive older class. One of the boys ran away and stole a police motorbike and was chased around the central belt of Scotland before he was caught. Whether that was urban legend about this person who suddenly vanished or if it was true I don't know, but knowing what the person was like I could imagine it to be true. I think he was a boarder. I don't know his name because he was older than me. He was never seen again.
43. I think people did get expelled. There wasn't much smoking in the toilets, but there was a couple of occasions where people were thrown out for that.

### *Discipline*

44. Discipline by teachers varied from being quite modest such as a slap on the hand with a ruler that I remember once. I can't remember who that was. There were quite a lot of people who couldn't control their anger when they lost control. I do remember some bursts of anger from some of the teachers that were used to discipline the class. The teacher appeared quite uncontrollable, but that didn't manifest itself necessarily in hitting of people. It brought people to order. I remember a teacher who threatened to crush children's fingers under the desk when he was slamming it. He was threatening rather than doing it.
45. Corporal punishment was of course allowed at that time and there was always the threat of violence if you misbehaved. The administrative system worked on the basis

that the teachers themselves did not primarily administer punishment except in the classrooms, and the punishment in other situations was dealt with by the ephors.

46. An ephor was a prefect. There was a head ephor, senior ephors and junior ephors. They were used to administer most of the discipline in environments like the dining room and in breaktime periods. In the break they would go round and 'police' behaviour in the playgrounds during those periods. Generally, they were required to police the school in support of the staff. They had a mechanism whereby, if you were to be caught doing something and were to be punished they would have a 'beat book'. Your name would be registered in the beat book. They could whip you or clacken you. That was in the ephors room. The ephors room was on the ground floor of the administrative block next to the stationery office. I believe that beat book still exists somewhere, or is likely to, in the school records.
47. The ephors were in their senior years. I later became an ephor but I never participated in any of the beatings and I didn't like that idea at all. By that stage I'd disengaged from that sort of thing. I never stayed in the ephors room long enough, apart from registering that I was there, and I'd left. I do remember the culture of the beat book which I thought when I became an ephor was shocking and disreputable on being shown it and being told this is what they did.
48. I never became head prefect and I think it was the responsibility of the head or one of the seniors to implement this punishment. I never experienced it being implemented on me when I was younger. Nor did I witness it, as I vacated myself from the room when it happened. When people were taken in for punishment I didn't stay around. As a result of my experiences at the school I became a pacifist. I didn't go round as an ephor administering discipline, I took it as an opportunity to go round the classes and talk to people. It meant I ended up being friendly with people who were two or three years below me.
49. The beat book was a requirement for the prefects, I don't think there was any register other than that. For staff themselves to administer punishment there was no requirement for recording that I was aware of, there was no requirement for due

justification, it was entirely at their discretion and the idea of 'in parentis locus absentia' was granted to them without any standards or regulation applied to it as far as I'm aware. That seemed to be how they behaved and they all behaved very differently. There were some extremely good teachers with enormous integrity and commitment who taught with enthusiasm that communicated the subject. There were some lesser so and there were some absolute sadists and some really rotten apples.

50. Regarding my parents understanding of physical punishments, looking back I suspect my father had been in the military and he had been sent off to training college at the age of about six. He went right through that. I don't know what his experience was like, but there was an expectation that discipline was administered and no boundaries were set as to what discipline really meant. It wasn't an environment where challenging discipline was easy. We had quite strange arrangements at home whereby we'd have to, for example, brush our hair and wash your hands before every meal.
51. We had a lot of friction in our family about going to church because I wasn't religious. I built a treehouse and used to climb up to that to escape going to church on Sunday morning. My father couldn't get up there and he'd be furious. But discipline was something you were expected to obey. He did change in later life to be far more empathetic, but the Edwardian training that he went through, also impacted on a lot of the school staff and wasn't too dissimilar. I think that comes from a highly militarised society probably.
52. The headmaster [REDACTED] had been a commando in the second world war. He had led the first commando battalion to link with the Russians on the River Elbe and was decorated for doing so. He later went into teaching after the war when he was demobilised. My father, who was also decorated during the war, and [REDACTED] had quite a lot of respect for each other.
53. I suspect I was a bit of a wild card to become an ephor because I didn't by this stage do any team sport and I didn't participate in any of the normal activities of the school. I did do a lot of outdoor climbing which [REDACTED] would lead and I got on with him

quite well, although he clearly had fundamental weaknesses. I suspect that's why I became an ephor.

### **Abuse at Edinburgh Academy**

#### *Mr Brownlee*

54. When I was in the middle school, they used the clacken as a punishment, so you'd be beaten with the clacken by staff, and by a teacher called Mr Brownlee in particular. He is the only one I remember hitting us with a clacken. His way of doing it was dreadful. You'd be out on the playground where the clacken and balls were, but if you'd been in his class and he wished to punish you, you would go to his class in the breaktime. The windows of the classrooms were two-thirds height glass walls and beneath them was a shelf with facilities beneath. There was a couple of columns holding up the roof. The masters desk was up at the top of the room and all the class desks lined up in front of it, with the windows to one side.
55. Mr Brownlee would get you up on the window shelf in front of the rest of the school playing clackens outside and beat you with a clacken. That was the first time I experienced being totally humiliated while being punished at the school. It wasn't that the punishment was in the classroom after the lesson when the door was shut, you were put up on the window shelf and displayed to the rest of the school while being clackened. He would take the clacken and hit you and that was deeply sadistic. This was in the middle school so you were quite small and he'd be hitting you on your backside. That must have been the last or second last year of the arboretum school. I didn't experience similar humiliation in the middle school otherwise.
56. The middle school was focused on its big central hall with the stage that was also used for gymnastics. It came up to a top corridor which ran along the top and he had this isolated classroom on the top left hand side overlooking a tarmacked playground. To get to the playground you walked past the windows of the classroom. I think Mr Brownlee taught some language subject but I can't accurately remember what he

taught. I do remember not enjoying his lessons one bit, but I do remember the classroom got lovely sunlight.

57. I was in his class when I was probably about eleven or twelve. I can't remember what I'd done to cause him to do this to me, but whatever I'd done it wasn't sufficient to warrant the punishment. I remember he did it to one other boy when we were in the class, so he put someone on the windowsill. I think he just liked the idea of exhibitionism, I don't know what it was. With me he did it when the class were out which was doubly humiliating.

*Mr Dawson*

58. My initial major encounter with Mr Dawson was through his rugby coaching. We used to do rugby in the autumn and spring terms at the school. We would all troop out of the Henderson Row via the back door that I described earlier in the statement onto Rocheid Path and up past Inverleith Park and the Royal Botanical Gardens to the school playing grounds. Very close to where the boarding houses were. We would all go to the changing rooms and there were two changing rooms. Then there was a sort of club house which was a little timber pavilion with a portico looking out over the playing fields in the north-east corner. This area connected to the street that had the boarding houses on it. We'd all have to go up there and change into our rugby kit and go out onto the rugby fields in all sorts of weather.
59. We'd all be let out of school at 3:30 pm and we'd all have to get up to the playing fields in about twenty minutes to change to play around 4:00 pm. Those shower rooms were dangerous. Mr Dawson was my rugby coach and in charge of one of the rugby teams that I was with. There was a whole school year of boys that would go in and the shower rooms which were full of us all trying to change our kit. After the games were over, we would all shower and he would come around. Two staff were delegated to do these sessions together. The shower rooms were two rectangular blocks locked together into an L-shape. There was an entrance to the long end of it and divided out with two changing areas either side. Connected and at the back end there was a vestibule with basins taking you into a showering area.

60. He would circulate around these while we were showering with his acolyte, who I cannot place very well. They would flick us with wet towels that they would pick up then go into the shower vestibule so we were in front of their towels and flick us with these towels quite viciously. They could hurt a lot and it was completely uncalled for. They would circulate round and out into the front lobby and round and round. They'd be praying on the cohort of boys in the shower room. Mr Dawson was the most violent with this flicking. This would happen almost all the time and was characteristic of his rugby sessions. I later gave up rugby as soon as I could.
61. The way that he dealt with us on the field and what happened with me, I thought it was just me at the time and I didn't realise for a long time that it had happened to others. It was totally pre-meditated in reflection. He congratulated me a couple of times about how well I did and said how he was always expecting me to do so well. After these couple of congratulations, he then said to me in a following game 'ah you didn't do as well as last time' or something like that. I would be running up and down the rugby pitch and he would run up alongside and say these things to me because he was the coach. That turned into a basis and a benchmark for subsequent punishment and that transpired into telling me I hadn't done so well, 'you'd better do as well next time or you'll be punished'.
62. On one particular occasion he said to me 'you haven't done well enough, I'm going to have to punish you now'. I was asked to stay on after showering to be punished. The punishment involved him on his own, I think it was him on his own just there. He came and got me from the showers after everyone else had apparently gone by which time I was feeling pretty discombobulated. He took me from the showers and into the pavilion which looked out over the playing fields. The pavilion was a timber building with a pediment in the middle and it had a veranda at the front and windows looking out only on one side towards the playing fields.
63. It was spring or autumn time. He had a key and he took me in and there was quite dusky light and dark inside. He moved me over to the back wall of the pavilion and he sits down and told me to take off my uniform. I'd had to leave all of my rugby kit in the

shower room and he said, 'now take your trousers off' and so I had to take my trousers off and he sat next to a wooden bench or on a wooden bench. I think he actually sat on a chair next to a wooden bench, I remember my eyes focused on a bench, and looking out of the window so presumably he could see if anyone was approaching but by that stage everybody had left. The only people likely to be around were the groundsmen. I'm not sure what the lock up arrangements were. It was pretty dark inside. He put me over his knees and the first thing I remember was him starting to feel my buttocks and then he moved to feel my groin. I don't really know how long this went on for. I just remember I ended up blubbing and crying and being totally humiliated. Then I was taken out and I think I went to get my kit bag and I remember then having to walk home. I remember it was quite muddy underfoot.

64. From the north east of where the pavilion was it seemed a very long way to get home. I was crying all the way and I was extremely distraught. The usual routine when I got home was that I would go to my room and do my homework before supper so I went in without having to face my parents and went straight upstairs. I tried to get myself together. I remember that very vividly. I think it happened twice, but I think on the second time I was so damaged that I can't recall it with the same clarity. Whether it was fear or whether it was 'black out' I don't know. I gave up rugby as soon as I had the opportunity and did cross country running instead. I gave up most team sports and I've never enjoyed them ever since.
65. What I can't recall clearly is with the rugby, is that Mr Dawson had this acolyte who would go round the changing rooms with him and also flick people. He had slightly thinning hair on the top and he was more wiry. I can't actually place him anywhere else. I had no notion of what normality was or what was good and what was bad, and I thought I was being duly punished for underperforming. That was what I was made to feel and how it was communicated and I thought that was part of it. That incident inured me to a lot of what subsequently happened, I think.
66. I remember another experience I had, was one that I found completely abusive and happened to me and I remember happened to others. It was Mr Dawson who told you if you didn't do what was required, or you were seen to be disruptive, or you got



something seriously wrong and you weren't concentrating. He had a classroom on top of the dining room at the end of the corridor.

67. As punishment, he would ask you to bend over double beneath either his desk or a tall stool chair with your head against the blackboard wall at the front of the classroom. He would go to the back of the classroom, down the centre of the aisle and make this loud roaring noise as he charged towards you with an implement and threatening to hit you. He would do this at a charge as your head was against the wall or just off the wall, underneath a chair and he was going to hit you.
68. He would stomp towards you, feet pounding on the ground and you would hear this rapidly advancing person who was going to hit you. He did this about three times before hitting you. He hit me with an implement, I can't remember what he used when he did his charging. On each occasion as he rushed towards you, you tensed up, your head went up and hit the chair. On the third time when he did it and hit you, one strike on the backside your head would smash into the wall and up into the chair. You were meant to keep your hands held behind you and stay firm.
69. I remember it happening on at least one other occasion to somebody else in my class. It probably happened when I was about fifteen, I think. That was a special subject area that I was there for because we had to go to that class between the lessons. I'm not sure what subject it was. It was extremely abusive. That was extremely malign and violent and well beyond any justification, it was just sadistic and deeply humiliating and frighteningly painful.
70. I don't remember much about what Mr Dawson looked like. He wasn't a large man, I don't think he was particularly tall. I think he had a full head of hair at that time and what I do remember is that he was very intimidating. I can't even think what subject area he taught. He was never my form teacher I don't think. He was my rugby coach. That was where I interfaced with him the most. He wasn't active, probably deliberately on my part, in any of the specific areas that I followed through on at the school.

71. He had two daughters I think who were called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and who were probably about a year apart. I think they went to St. Georges. I used to go to parties with them. I felt afterwards, it was one reason that I didn't make any public statement about it because I knew them. They lived in the boarding house with him and his wife and it was the smaller of the boarding houses. The one that was a single house. He was in charge of that one when I was there and I did know some of the people that stayed in it, but they weren't the ones that came round to our house.
72. I can't remember what subject he taught, how long he'd been there, I don't know. I think he was a senior teacher at the time, whether he was head of his subject area I can't remember. He was a housemaster, I think they moved to take over one of the larger boarding houses later about the time that I left.
73. That was the third real incident that I remember at the school, so it wasn't the first. There were two prior to that and by that stage I'd become a bit inured to what I was being hit with, whether it was a clacken or whether it was a stick or a cane or a book. It wasn't the implement that he hit me with so much, it was the repeated charging at you three times. Each occasion was absolutely terrifying. When he did hit me, I think it was one strike across the backside, but I can't be precise. It was in front of the whole of the class. I remember it happening to me once and on at least one other occasion to somebody else.
74. The incident when he ran up behind me in class, I remember because it was psychologically hurtful in a different way. I just feel so sorry for those boys who were boarders, because at least I could return home which was loving and I had friends and family outside of the school. When I started to unravel it for myself at the age of about twenty-four or twenty-five, I didn't come forward because I thought I don't want to inflict agony on his daughters, I thought it was only me, I had no idea that it was happening on an industrial scale. I only found out when I was about thirty-five or so. I hadn't come forward because I knew his daughters. I thought his behaviour was an abhorrence.

## **Reporting of abuse at Edinburgh Academy**

75. I didn't make any report of abuse while I was at the school. I didn't talk to anyone about it for a number of years. I thought it had only ever happened to me.

## **Life after being at Edinburgh Academy**

76. When I left the school, I left Edinburgh and disconnected almost entirely from all the people I'd met there. I kept very few relations with my age group there when I moved south. I hooked up with some people later on, probably about twenty years ago. I've not had any contact with the school since I left. They used to send me an Academical magazine on a regular basis, but as I moved address a number of times, I've managed to miss getting it.
77. I left the school with the intention of studying engineering at university, after having received careers advice which was a combination that might suit my scientific and mathematics background. When I got to university, I decided that what I did want was to study architecture and spent three years at university studying that before taking a year out in practice in London. I stayed there to study for my Masters and managed to get my first jobs while still a student. I started a practice immediately after that and went on to get involved in the development of social housing and community care housing in London. I had quite a successful career doing that which extended to developer housing and private housing and art galleries up to 2008.
78. For a number of years after that I concentrated on pursuing my other interests in construction through research programmes and other UK and EU engagements. I also moved into academia. From that I moved into the work I'm currently doing enabling affordable housing within London.

## **Impact**

79. It's very difficult to say how my experiences at Edinburgh Academy impacted me as I don't have a control experiment to place myself against. I think the likely impact was I became extremely introverted in certain directions and certain attributes. Socially I lost a lot of confidence, I think. I found interacting with people at a depth far more difficult, I think. I had a sense of violation which I think transformed into something that may have been quite constructive in the end. It made me quite anti-authoritarian, and perhaps that was a positive impact. I never subsequently enjoyed team sports. It made me very lacking in confidence. It impacted my sexuality quite a lot. It made me develop a defence mechanism which meant that when confronted with anything I'd always look in an opposite direction to avoid it and I'd work my way round things to avoid confrontation.
80. The expectation of performance which was about the punishment that Mr Dawson gave me developed an enormous amount of anxiety in me, some of which I still have. It gave me a performance related anxiety which was not mentally healthy to certain forms of learning and certain forms of working with people. The main place it took me to was a period where there are large parts of my memory that are blanked. There are certain periods after those incidents that I can only recall by looking at photographs. It gave me a big blank and it gave me a big blank on the incident until I started to unravel it in my twenties. That was from hearing about similar incidences from other people and opening up to talking about my own.
81. I did find it quite useful in my twenties to open up with good friends who I could talk to over long periods of the night. That enabled me to unravel things. Having good friends to talk to about it was the way that I addressed it at that time. I've been quite open about it since.

## **Reporting of Abuse**

82. Since I left Edinburgh Academy, I've only ever reported abuse to the Inquiry.

## **Records**

83. I've never approached the school to ask for any of my school records. I didn't know that I could.

## **Lessons to be Learned**

84. One of the most important aspects is cultural change which, mainly, has moved in the right direction towards making such issues better known. As a child the problem is that in the situation that I was in, what is right and what is wrong in those spheres was not culturally discussed. The boundaries were not defined adequately and at the wider cultural sphere one had no recourse to know that was wrong. I accepted what was delivered. That's the first important thing, to ensure that those issues are widely discussed and the boundaries of what is right and wrong on everything are socially determined by what is acceptable behaviour.
85. At the macro level of the school the ultimate responsibility lies with the headmaster. In this situation the headmaster and the board of governors were also culturally unable to know how to address the situation that they were then confronted with. They didn't have the measure of a cultural determinate with which to benchmark behaviour against. I'm sure that many of them were very decent people who did their best to resolve a situation which was beyond their ken.
86. I think, going forward, a better description and definition of what is acceptable in terms of standards of behaviour is key, but as part of that, actually banning corporal punishment has been absolutely key. That doesn't stop things like verbal abuse or psychological abuse and more needs to be done on better definitions of what those both really mean and what that behaviour is.

87. I referred earlier to what I think is possibly anger management and there needs to be some inoculation potentially through the tiers of governance and down to the individual teachers about what standards are minimum. Going forward, I think there were no counselling figures in schools in my time and there are now sometimes. Having the reassurance of a place or people who might pick up changed behaviour and for those whose behaviour has changed, a place of sanctuary that they feel they could go to might be something that is valid. How that is configured so that it genuinely delivers I don't know, but there is some measure of potential there.
88. I think it's very difficult when you have boarding schools, and for those who were boarding and couldn't return to a secure environment in the way that I did which was enormously helpful. The psychological destruction must be enormous and I think that there should be no way that a single person can have such authority in a place where people are staying. Any authority must have a moderating system in it if people are boarding. I think the tradition of those boarding schools where there was a single housemaster is entirely wrong in that situation and they should not be living full-time on the premises in that way.
89. I think that when it came to the second incident that I described, the fact that there could be one teacher in that environment, alone, with me, was inappropriate and wrong. I think that most times if teachers are locking up a place there should be two at the minimum and if there's a congregation of a large number of people there should be the opportunity for behaviour to be moderated by one other adult.
90. In terms of counselling services at Edinburgh Academy, the school did employ people who came in from outside. I had one extremely decent very interesting pottery teacher and I think he was quite outwith the system. He was probably gay. He would have been a good person if I'd wanted to speak to somebody, but he didn't make himself available on that remit. There were people who came into the school and they could have been available if I'd availed myself, if I'd thought they could have provided a safe space for that kind of conversation. There were a couple of others in different sorts of peripheral areas. Providing pastoral care is a very good idea, but it's about how comfortable one feels with the space.

91. I had enough trouble telling my parents which I did eventually, but well into my late twenties and that should have been a safe space. For boarders I think if you're damaged and humiliated, really seriously by somebody, I think you'll be driven down a psychological hole to the extent that pastoral care can seem extremely distant and I don't know how you bridge that. What you need is something to get you out of the hole but if you're driven really down I don't think the availability of someone at the top is going to be enough. I don't know how that's addressed, and I think it's really profound for somebody who is boarding.
92. I think boarding schools should be banned for the reasons I've just explained. I think if anything does go wrong it is extremely difficult for children to have a route out. I think it's extremely difficult for them if they get down a deep psychological hole to see any help from the top of the hole enabling them, because of the environment they're in away from any love and attention. Boarding schools can be extremely disruptive in that sense and as a result they can inculcate people with very distorted perceptions of normality.
93. The risks of boarding schools outweigh the benefits. There are benefits clearly for people in Scotland who lived some distance away in the Highlands and Islands. It's clearly the case there are a dearth of schools in some areas and that as a result some parents feel happy with sending their children away, but that's a general critique of rural education. So there is justification perhaps for having something, but I don't know what shape or form it exists in.
94. I think there may be some benefit in having school councils amongst the cohort of students so there is a forum in which students can feel comfortable particularly when they get to later ages of the school. They can level criticism against the school as a collective body as well as individually. That is something that has not been particularly well adopted in the UK but takes place elsewhere. That helps to make people at the school become responsible and democratic citizens and good at expressing their critiques.

## Hopes for the Inquiry

95. I firmly believe that children should all enjoy their time at school and the school should deliver an enjoyable experience for all children in learning, learning to learn and understanding what learning is. That should be a model for later life and social cohesion and how we work as a society together. I think that where it doesn't do that and where it destroys the capacity to enjoy that experience and the enjoyment of the learning or even the mentoring of ethical standards amongst people, I think it is destructive. I hope the inquiry will enhance Scotland's educational value and experience going forward from that perspective. I think that is the basis of good education.
96. I also hope that the Inquiry would deliver a model which highlights the huge risk to people like my parents who expected and worked for our private education which I think was a fallacy. I think there's a perception that you just pay for an education in addition to your taxes as 'a buy into' middle class society is erroneous. My own children went to state school and got extremely good education, far better than I did, I think, in many respects. This level of criticism of what people are actually buying needs to be raised.
97. I also hope the Inquiry will shine a light through looking at the Scottish system, which might also inform the English system. I sincerely believe that these experiences will not have been isolated to Scotland and I think equivalent reform needs to be looked at in England. I think Scotland is leading on many aspects and is a more progressive society than England in so many respects.
98. I think the Edinburgh Academy needs to provide a sympathetic platform as a result of this. Accept the past failures of its system and be transparent about it. They must learn lessons and ensure that nothing like this ever happens again. I think a public apology from those institutions that the Inquiry uncovers should be made. That the schools involved should provide on-going support for those that have been heavily damaged and I think they should create some form of pooled compensation system which can



support those people whose lives have been seriously disrupted by it. I think that going down to school level that's something individually that should be looked at. I also think that at the individual level for those abused, I do think the police should prosecute those abusers who are still alive.

**Other information**

99. 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... IBQ .....

Dated... 15/12/2022 .....