

Monday, 21 August 2023

1

2 (10.00 am)

3 LADY SMITH: Good morning and welcome to a day in which
4 we're going to read in a number of statements, as
5 I explained on Friday.

6 I think the target, Ms Bennie, is to complete five
7 statement read ins, but we'll see how the time goes, we
8 might be able to do one or two others as well. Is that
9 right?

10 I'll turn to Ms Bennie in a moment and invite her to
11 start the statement read ins. My plan this morning is
12 I'll have two breaks, a slightly longer break at around
13 11.00, 10/15 minutes and a very short break at 12.00, to
14 give Ms Bennie a rest and the stenographers a rest from
15 what is a little more arduous than just doing
16 an exchange between witness and counsel.

17 Also could I remind everybody just how important
18 these statements are to us. That's why we read in
19 statements such as these. They're valuable evidence and
20 they are being read in because of the value they add to
21 the evidence in this particular case study and to my
22 learning about people's experiences when they were
23 pupils at Edinburgh Academy.

24 Ms Bennie, when you're ready, I'm ready to hear you.
25 Thank you.

1 MS BENNIE: Thank you, my Lady.

2 'Andrew' (read)

3 MS BENNIE: My Lady, the first read in bears the reference
4 WIT-1-000001159. My Lady, this witness wishes to remain
5 anonymous and he's adopted the pseudonym of 'Andrew':

6 "My name is 'Andrew' and my year of birth is 1960.
7 I was born in Edinburgh. As well as my parents, I have
8 sisters and I am the youngest. My parents moved up to
9 Scotland in the 1950s, dad got a job in Edinburgh and
10 that's what took us up there.

11 My father worked away quite a bit and did fairly
12 long hours. My mum went back to work part-time when
13 I was about eight years old. When mum went back to work
14 my sisters looked after me quite a bit when mum wasn't
15 at home.

16 I don't have a lot memories before school, but I was
17 looked after, fed and there was nothing that I was left
18 wanting for. I do remember we had a lot of connection
19 with my grandparents, who were down in England, and we
20 had frequent holidays there and they would visit us.

21 Edinburgh Academy was my first and only school. My
22 father had a strong sense that he wanted a boy to carry
23 on the family name and be successful. He wanted me to
24 go to a good school and to get good grades. In his
25 family he was one of two and his sister was denied

1 a college education so he could gain qualifications. In
2 those days, especially on my father's side, the boy was
3 given preferential treatment around education. That was
4 the case in my family too. My sisters all went to
5 a corporation school, while I was sent to
6 Edinburgh Academy. The reasons my mother gave for me
7 not going to the corporation school was that she saw the
8 abolition of selection happening while my sisters were
9 there and that perhaps the pupils who would be going to
10 that school would not be good company for me. I think
11 they were quite snobby. I can't fault that they wanted
12 me to get the best education and best qualifications.
13 They didn't understand though what went on later and
14 what went wrong.

15 My sisters resented that I went to a private school.
16 It's only recently since the revelations have come out
17 that they have all realised that it was a hellish
18 experience for me. They now understand what I was
19 trying to tell them all along and they just didn't
20 believe me then.

21 In terms of the selection process, I went to the
22 Edinburgh Academy kindergarten in Denham Green from
23 196█ As far as I can recall there wasn't any process
24 for that.

25 For prep school I seem to recall my parents took me

1 to George Heriot's for a test of some kind. I wasn't
2 able to get in there as I had some issues with counting
3 sticks and they identified I wasn't very good at that,
4 so I didn't get into Heriot's. My parents therefore
5 continued on with the Academy idea, making sure that
6 I went into prep and then on to the upper school."

7 My Lady, moving on to paragraph 13:

8 "I don't think I was aware of the boarding houses
9 situated close by. Probably because it didn't affect
10 me. By upper school I knew that there were boarders but
11 not before that. I don't think I was ever in the
12 boarding houses at all. I think there were about 500
13 pupils in the senior school. Again, the majority were
14 day pupils. I seem to recall boarders made up about
15 20 per cent of the school.

16 School routine."

17 My Lady, moving on to paragraph 18:

18 "At lunchtime, I had my lunch at school. It was
19 a two-course meal, a main course and a sweet. We all
20 sat in the dining hall at refectory tables. This
21 happened in junior and upper school. In the upper
22 school the master of the class would get the big tray of
23 food and serve it to the boys and it would be passed
24 down the table. The food was quite good. All of the
25 meals were supervised by a master, either at the table

1 or around about. I'm sure it was a fixed menu and there
2 was no punishment if you did not eat your food.

3 After lunch there was time for play. At prep we
4 played around the buildings but at the upper school
5 I tended to hide indoors and not be in the playground as
6 I was bullied. Prep was far more enjoyable as upper
7 school was full of fear for me.

8 In the senior school each lesson was about an hour
9 and then we would break for lunch. The afternoon was
10 much the same. It was all timetabled and routine.

11 Junior school."

12 Paragraph 23, my Lady:

13 "There were about 20 to 22 children in my class, it
14 was all boys. I mostly stayed with those boys
15 throughout my schooling in the junior school. My memory
16 is that I was always quite chatty at junior school and
17 had a number of friends at the school.

18 You had a main teacher in junior school, but you
19 also went to teachers and other classrooms for specific
20 subjects. Sometimes your class teacher was your teacher
21 for those certain subjects.

22 I was very minded to certain things at school,
23 visual or artistic things. I hated history and maths
24 was a problem. Initially I was all right at maths but
25 it dropped when I was taught by Mr Wares. My class

1 position was 6, then went to 22. After I went to upper
2 school I still didn't like maths and it was a big
3 struggle for me.

4 Some of the teachers were far more critical of my
5 problems at school than others. Some of the phrases in
6 my school reports suggest that I was clearly having
7 problems concentrating, that I was talkative and
8 I wouldn't listen to instruction. Reflecting back on
9 it, and I don't have a formal diagnosis, I probably had
10 ADHD then and that made it quite difficult for the
11 school to educate me as they didn't have an awareness
12 then of how to manage children who required to be taught
13 differently. It probably also made me stand out,
14 because I would be very talkative and disruptive.
15 I know I would ask questions if I got the slightest
16 problem. I got described as a fusspot.

17 At prep school we started to do rugby and cricket.
18 I was a little bit young compared to my peers. I was
19 three months younger than the average. I was small and
20 slight to the extent I struggled to engage with sport
21 like rugby. I'd be stuck on the right wing or fullback
22 and nowhere near the scrum. They said in my school
23 report I enjoyed cricket, but later on when I got
24 hayfever I think cricket became the bane of my life.
25 I would never describe myself as sporty at all. I never

1 enjoyed those damp carbolic-smelling changing rooms with
2 the pink soap.

3 I used to get migraine headaches. My illnesses
4 started in the sixth year of prep school. I was off for
5 about two weeks in total that year according to school
6 reports.

7 Upper school.

8 I moved to the upper school at 11, around 197█.
9 I went into Mr IFP █'s class. I remember in the
10 summer holidays not looking forward to going back ...

11 I found the boldness of the environment and the
12 learning difficult. I was a small child even at the
13 upper school. I was also not maturing at the same age
14 as the other boys and that made me a target by the other
15 boys and teachers. I started getting bullied there and
16 it became a much harsher environment. The building
17 itself and the grounds were all very institutional.

18 I was in the lowest set of classes when I went to
19 the upper school. My feeling was we were regarded as
20 dregs and they didn't know what do with us or how to
21 support us and they left us to squander. My parents
22 were still happy to pay for the education. My feeling
23 is I think that some teachers had contempt for pupils
24 and that the parents had more money than sense.

25 My parents did go to the parents' evening but

1 I don't remember going with them. It was noted in my
2 reports I didn't go out to play at school very much
3 either. I was much happier inside.

4 I was diagnosed with asthma in my 30s but I used to
5 take coughs and colds quite badly. One teacher in the
6 upper school did pick up on my absences, it was
7 1974/1975 and I think it was Mr Marks. At crisis
8 periods I found a way out through sickness. I'm sure
9 most of my sickness in upper school was malingering. My
10 sickness went on until I was 15. A lot of that latterly
11 was because of not wanting to be at school.

12 In the upper school I experienced toxic masculinity
13 for the first time and realised I didn't like sport
14 because it tended to be aggressive and intimidating. If
15 you were slight, a bit camp, because I realised I was
16 gay by then, I got bullied for all of that. It was just
17 awful. I needed to stay away from the sporty types as
18 it wasn't good for my mental health.

19 We did O-Levels and Highers at the school and there
20 was an opportunity for some to do a seventh year, where
21 the boys could study A-Levels or Oxbridge entrance
22 exams. I restricted my Highers to five because I was
23 struggling academically. The comments on my school
24 reports were "needs to try harder at home". There was
25 never any extra support provided at the school. If

1 I missed lessons because of sickness it was very
2 difficult for me to catch up. My parents were concerned
3 when I got to exam time that I wasn't working hard
4 enough and they did put quite a lot of pressure on me.
5 An awful lot of what we learnt at school we just had to
6 remember. We were fed stuff and had to regurgitate it
7 at exams.

8 By then my parents knew I was being bullied, but
9 I have no evidence that my parents spoke to the school
10 about bullying, because it continued. I know my parents
11 met with the teachers because my dad was concerned about
12 exams and plus he'd paid out all this money for my
13 education and he must have wanted the best out of it.
14 I don't know if he got the answers he was looking for.

15 I left with very poor educational attainment and
16 I know that that was a result of how unhappy I was at
17 school. I do think if I had been offered educational
18 support I would have done better.

19 It was the lack of feeling safe and the fact that
20 the school didn't deal with the bullying. It was also
21 the fact that my trust in adults was at rock bottom.
22 Educational attainment needs psychological safety and if
23 I didn't feel safe in class how could I concentrate on
24 learning? You don't, you're thinking about survival.

25 The only teacher I connected with was Rob Cowie. He

1 would give me extra projects to do and was the only one
2 really who supported my education."

3 My Lady, I now move to paragraph 51 on page 10.

4 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

5 MS BENNIE: "Christmas and birthdays.

6 "The roll book, which was accessible to all pupils,
7 had everybody's birthday in it. To my mind, that wasn't
8 necessary. I have bad memories of birthdays as it
9 wasn't dumps you got, it was how far they could throw
10 you. Unfortunately your birthday was one you couldn't
11 hide from. I don't think every boy was treated that
12 way. I was singled out.

13 Visits and inspections.

14 The Queen came to the school on a visit and this had
15 been the subject of an emotional flashback for me and
16 used to trouble me right up until I was in my 50s.
17 I was at the end of a lab bench in chemistry. We were
18 all dressed in our kilts because it was a special event.
19 She walked in with the rector and two of the ephors were
20 following. She stopped and asked me a question and
21 I got tongue tied. I could not for the life of me get
22 anything out of my mouth. I stuttered and I stuttered.
23 It was just awful and maybe eventually I said something
24 and she moved away.

25 One of the ephors came up to me after the visit and

1 said, 'You stupid boy'. That single event traumatised
2 me, one of the many things that traumatised me and it
3 was me being stupid. I had the one chance to impress
4 Her Majesty the Queen and I completely blew it. It was
5 ultimately tainted by that horrible aggressive ephor
6 that criticised me as well.

7 I don't recall any inspections of the school.

8 Discipline.

9 Discipline was managed on the spot. You would be
10 brought up to the front of the class and there would be
11 a ruler or clacken used to punish you. Generally, any
12 implement used would be across the hand and in front of
13 the whole class for maximum humiliation.

14 A clacken was a large piece of wood, like a wooden
15 spoon with a rounded end which was used to hit a ball in
16 a game. For a small hand it was a big piece of wood to
17 come down on it. There was also the tawse which was
18 used. It was the ruler that was most common. All of
19 the teachers used some form of corporal punishment and
20 some more than others. There was some that used it as
21 a ritual humiliation. Mr Dawson in history did that and
22 he turned it into a theatrical event.

23 I think their use of the items was the way to
24 discipline at the time. However, for some the
25 opportunity to use it was abusive. I thought the school

1 was very disciplinarian. I felt some of it was used
2 inappropriately and there was a low threshold. My
3 impression was for relatively minor transgressions you
4 were made an example of. This was mostly in the upper
5 school.

6 I do not recall discipline in quite the same way at
7 prep school. That said, I think it was shouting in
8 prep. My real problem is men shouting. I am so
9 triggered by that. I know by the time I got to the
10 upper school I was already in fear, fight or flight mode
11 when I heard shouting, so it makes me think something
12 happened in prep.

13 I never had any permanent physical damage from any
14 of the punishments meted out.

15 There was also lines and detention as a form of
16 discipline.

17 Abuse at Edinburgh Academy.

18 We did a play once, puritans and ultramorons.
19 Mr Britton, the headmaster at prep school, wrote it. It
20 was about space. I think it was called The Last Shore.
21 I found this in the Chronicle. We got divided tribally.
22 It was very interesting. My memory is I got lumped in
23 with the ultimorons. In the Chronicle it is written up
24 as the cast description as ultimorons, I wonder if they
25 changed the spelling to not upset the parents. When we

1 were in the play we were ultimorons and when Mr Britton
2 bumped into me at the lobby at prep school and asked me
3 what part I was playing and I said I was an ultimoron,
4 he replied back, 'How appropriate'. My impression was
5 he thought I was stupid.

6 The head of [REDACTED] at the upper school, Mr [IBW] used
7 to call me 'fish face', it was very personal. If they
8 found something, the teachers would poke fun at you.
9 It's not the done thing nowadays, but then it was.
10 There were a few unsavoury things said. If you had
11 problems with self-esteem or self-image then those
12 remarks can be damaging and they were.

13 In 1970/1971 I had a maths teacher. He was blond
14 and a rather dashing smart teacher. He was young and
15 different from the other teachers. He was from South
16 Africa. I remember him as Mr Weir, but I've since
17 learned his name was Iain Wares. I only became aware of
18 that recently due to radio broadcasts. It makes sense
19 to me getting it wrong as Weir is very similar to Wares.
20 What I believe happened with him was you would be called
21 up to his desk and he would want to see what you had put
22 in your jotter after him previously giving you some kind
23 of exercise. My memory is being asked to stand behind
24 the desk next to him. He would then reach out with his
25 hand on the inside of your leg and pull you into him.

1 He would then start to put his hand further up inside
2 your shorts and up to your underpants. His finger would
3 go up a bit higher and under the elastic of your
4 underpants. I remember the first time it happened and
5 it's the only time I remember. I looked out to the sea
6 of faces in the classroom and some of were looking down
7 but others were laughing and giggling. I would have
8 been blushing because I know I was embarrassed. The
9 sense I had was that they knew what was happening to me
10 behind the desk.

11 I felt so uncomfortable because no man had ever done
12 that to me and at ten years of age you don't know that
13 adult men might find that sexually interesting or
14 exciting. I was naive.

15 Because the height of the desk prevented him from
16 being seen, I wonder if he used the desk as a shield so
17 the other boys didn't see. I only have that one memory
18 of it happening and it's so vivid. I do think it
19 happened to me more than once. Maybe after that I maybe
20 expected it and therefore it didn't affect me as much.

21 His behaviour became normalised in the upper school
22 and Mr Wares was known as having wandering hands. In
23 the 1970s we didn't think about it. I do think my trust
24 of adult men suffered at that point. I know my maths
25 suffered and I started being sick off school then. That

1 year I had lots of sickness.

2 I am unsure what came first, was it the sickness
3 absence that affected my marks or was it what happened
4 in the class with Wares that influenced my illness?
5 I don't know. It's difficult to say.

6 I did see other boys being summoned up to the desk
7 on a regular basis and I suspect what he did to me was
8 happening to them and I may well have been one of the
9 boys giggling. That laughing was not a fun thing but
10 an emotion of being uncomfortable.

11 I had a PE teacher called Mr IBU. He shouted
12 at me once and I urinated myself. There was a mat on
13 Henderson Row gym which had bar bells on it. One day
14 I was having a laugh and joke and I walked over to the
15 mat with the intention of picking one of them up when
16 IBU, maybe thinking I was going to injure myself,
17 shouted so loudly at me that I got such a shock that
18 I wet myself. This was in front of all of the boys. My
19 memory is then that he came over to me and hit me with
20 his hand on my bottom. This was obviously to discipline
21 me but realised I had wet myself and then sent all of
22 the boys back down to the changing rooms whilst he dealt
23 with me. I don't know if I was made to clean up. I do
24 know that I had to get changed. The whole experience
25 was so humiliating. I think it was in the first year of

1 upper school, so it happened around 197█ I would have
2 been 11 years old.

3 A couple of years later it was sports day at the
4 Arboretum playing fields. I had lost my gym kit.
5 I thought I had left it at the changing rooms at
6 Arboretum but couldn't find it. It was 10 minutes
7 before the relay race and I was running for Kinross
8 division, I had to go and speak to Mr IBU█ on the
9 field. He was standing there with his megaphone. There
10 was a big stand overlooking the track with hundreds of
11 parents in it. I walked over to him and told him
12 I didn't have my kit and he absolutely blew up. In his
13 anger he took his megaphone and thrust it into my
14 stomach. Whether he meant to hurt me I don't know, but
15 he winded me and I collapsed on to the ground. He was
16 shouting at me to get up but I couldn't. I was on the
17 ground for 10 to 15 seconds and he walked away. I got
18 up and walked off the fields in tears.

19 I phoned my mother to come and collect me. She came
20 and I told her what had happened. She was so alarmed at
21 what had happened and told me she was going to speak to
22 him. I told her I didn't want that as it would only
23 make it worse. It wasn't so much I was worried about
24 teachers' revenge, it was more about the other boys
25 seeing my mother doing that and then making fun of me

1 and bullying me because of her complaining. By that
2 time, every adult in my life couldn't protect me and
3 I was in survival mode. I had to be self-sufficient.
4 I didn't want further humiliation and embarrassment by
5 my mother. I don't know if she ever spoke to the school
6 about it, it was one of the most awful incidents,
7 especially in front of all these people, boys and
8 parents, who all saw me on the ground.

9 Mr Dawson was my history teacher. He was a loud and
10 aggressive man. He had a very low threshold for
11 discipline. He would throw chalk or the duster about
12 very close to the boy's heads. His desk in the
13 classroom was on a raised dais a couple of steps up, if
14 you were to be disciplined he would be sat at his desk
15 and he would tell you to come up and he would put you
16 over his knee. There was a lot of theatre about his
17 discipline, fussing around and words spoken. He would
18 be about to hit you and then there would be touching,
19 like a bit of rummage over your clothes. His hand would
20 touch your buttocks or leg. I have a vague memory of
21 him pulling my shorts down a bit, but I'm not sure if
22 that was possible. I do remember having to bend over
23 his knee and getting slapped on the bottom. Because
24 I remember the shorts it must have happened in the first
25 or second year of upper school. My impression is you

1 were there a lot longer than was necessary for the
2 punishment. There was also a bit of humiliation and
3 laughter. There was definitely an intimacy which was
4 not commensurate with the punishment being meted out.

5 Peer abuse.

6 Bullying started for me in the upper school. My
7 sense is that it came from the boarders. I was
8 homophobically bullied. I couldn't fight back and
9 therefore appeared to be an easy target.

10 Some of the ephors who were in the last couple of
11 years of the school were bullies, but so were a few of
12 the other boys. The ephors were nominated by the school
13 and generally excelled in sport or education. I do
14 think there was some external influence as well as to
15 who became an ephor. What I mean by that is parents.
16 Having reflected on it recently, I realise the boarders
17 may have had a much tougher time at school, being
18 exposed to abusive teachers for longer. I wonder in
19 some ways if they had to toughen up and they saw the day
20 pupils as a soft target. I was a soft target. I was
21 small for my age, a bit effeminate. I was everything
22 they weren't.

23 They would call me by my nickname, and that morphed
24 into a gay slur that then went into homophobic bullying.
25 I experienced physical and emotional bullying for the

1 next six years. Those were the worst years of my life.

2 There was so many of them, maybe seven or eight in
3 my year that abused me. I do not want to name them. It
4 would be indiscriminate casual violence. I would get
5 hit from behind, punched or jostled or shouted at and
6 called names.

7 I am sure the teachers knew what was going on. My
8 class teachers would see the behaviour of the boys.
9 They would have been aware of the shouting and the
10 homophobic abuse. It would have been overheard by them
11 in the classroom or playground and then I would have
12 thought that they would have seen my behaviour change.
13 Teachers were perceptive.

14 My French teacher, whose name I can't recall, makes
15 a comment on a report in the 1970s "hides away as best
16 he can but when lured out of his concealment he can
17 produce some praiseworthy work". That was the year of
18 considerable absences. He then goes on to comment
19 "missed an exam, quiet and retiring, hampered by
20 absences". It changed my personality completely. I was
21 this bubbly, chatty child in prep school but by the time
22 I got to 1970s in the upper school I was hiding. The
23 teacher identified I didn't want to be there, didn't
24 want to exist.

25 I remember it was my birthday and I was manhandled

1 in the lobby by a group of boys and thrown the full
2 length across the floor into a wall. I picked up myself
3 up and Mr Harris, a teacher, walked in and turned
4 a complete blind eye to it. The whole class stood
5 around and watched. I wasn't injured but was bruised.

6 There was one boy in my class who I was close with.
7 I think they thought I was having a relationship with
8 him. It became something of another humiliating episode
9 as it was about betrayal. Confidences shared with other
10 boys were turned against me. I couldn't talk to my
11 parents about the bullying because it was about
12 homophobia and me discovering my sexuality. There was
13 no support around that at that time. It wasn't even
14 legal in Scotland then. It was a very difficult time
15 because I felt shame. I didn't want to be who I was.
16 I wanted to be different and I couldn't be.

17 I used to come home and make [REDACTED] and put [REDACTED]
18 [REDACTED] over my head and would imagine what it would be
19 like to snuff my life out. I probably didn't plan it,
20 but I was experimenting and ideating about suicide.
21 I never told anyone about it.

22 There are too many instances of bullying to mention.
23 It was constant. Each time it was like a blade that had
24 been sunk into me.

25 Reporting of abuse whilst at Edinburgh Academy.

1 I did tell my parents early on I was being bullied
2 but they just told me to fight back. One of my sisters
3 knew most. I think at one point she petitioned that
4 I be moved school and she was the one who asked why
5 I couldn't go to their school. My parents wouldn't have
6 any of it and told me I had to complete my Academy
7 education. I'm sure I probably would have told them the
8 reason I wanted to move was on the academic side rather
9 than the bullying side. I tried to sell it to them it
10 was about the teaching. It was very difficult for me to
11 talk to them about the nature of the bullying. I felt
12 like I was locked in and in prison. The survival mode
13 just had to continue for a few more years.

14 I don't ever remember talking to any teacher about
15 bullying.

16 I did tell my mum about the incident with

17 **IBU**.

18 Life after Edinburgh Academy.

19 I left school at 17. I completed six years at upper
20 school. I went to Napier College to do an HND. My
21 grades from the school were not good enough for
22 university.

23 For the next seven years I had low-paid jobs and was
24 still living at home.

25 I discovered I had two years of funding left so

1 I applied to university and got into the second year of
2 a bachelor of science degree. This was around the
3 mid-1980s. That turned my life around because I was
4 then able to do a profession. Academically I was more
5 mature then and had seven years of work experience
6 behind me. It's when I went to college and was around
7 people who didn't have an agenda that didn't seem to
8 want to bully me, I could see a way to live. I left
9 university with a first class honours degree. I got
10 work in the NHS and then did a part-time masters degree,
11 graduating with distinction. I then moved to England
12 taking up a specialist role there. I felt I had to look
13 after people that were less fortunate and that's been
14 something that I have always found helpful. I have
15 worked in the NHS all my career.

16 I have had no contact with the school except from
17 an email I received from them requesting the thoughts of
18 ex-pupils on going co-educational. I replied saying
19 I was astounded that they weren't co-educational yet.
20 I commented further to them that I thought an all-boys
21 school was an absolute worst start for anyone's
22 education. I did not go into any more detail. I think
23 if I had been educated among girls I would have got on
24 much better emotionally and educationally, as I would
25 have felt a lot safer.

1 I have met up with a previous teacher from the
2 school, Rob Cowie. I told him I had a dreadful
3 schooling and that I was bullied. Since then, I believe
4 he has heard about Wares and the accusations. He was
5 one of the only teachers I had a connection with.

6 There are two school friends who got in touch when
7 we turned 60 and it's incredible, because they deny
8 these reports and seem to deny it happened. That may be
9 because they were not exposed to it or because they are
10 not allowing themselves to realise that actually these
11 things happened. It's very odd. I've no doubt Mr Wares
12 put his hands up their shorts. It's astonishing how
13 many boys now would choose to live with it. I believe
14 everyone who came out of that school had one issue or
15 another.

16 I am part of a WhatsApp group that I was invited to
17 join when all of this came to the surface. I had to
18 mute it due to the number of messages and I found it
19 quite triggering due to the language that was being used
20 on it, as there was a lot of angry people on it. I am
21 still part of the group.

22 I contacted the police about abuse and
23 I subsequently discussed it with them."

24 My lady, in paragraph 98 'Andrew' states that he has
25 not provided a statement to the police. I can advise

1 that 'Andrew' has confirmed that since he signed his
2 statement he has now contacted the police and provided
3 a statement to the police.

4 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

5 MS BENNIE: "Impact.

6 The impact of the school on me was immediate and
7 happened while I was still there. I had no self-esteem.
8 I had suicidal ideation which started at the school.
9 Maybe I didn't know it as depression, but I believe
10 I was in a very serious way during school years and was
11 practically catatonic, not wanting to do anything but
12 wanting to be at home in my bed and feeling safe there.
13 A lot of the time I was off school and I was in my bed,
14 even though I was probably well enough to be out and
15 about. My trauma, a distrust in teachers and sexual
16 abuse may have been part of that. The physical bullying
17 and the verbal bullying definitely played a large part.
18 I think the largest part that affected me was the
19 bullying from peers.

20 My opinion is my childhood development was stunted
21 and I lacked maturity from my time at the school.
22 School didn't support me around my sexuality, nor did
23 they nurture me and I feel that there are bits of me
24 that haven't developed. I put it down to the school for
25 not protecting me from the abuses that I suffered.

1 I now know that CPTSD is a thing and my emotional
2 dysregulation triggers responses to being shouted at,
3 bullied, harassed and abused, all of that comes from my
4 time at the school.

5 I do think educationally I suffered a great deal and
6 so did my grades. That was because of a lack of trust
7 in the teaching staff and a lack of safety amongst other
8 boys.

9 After the events of the last 12 years at school
10 I banished any happy memories of my childhood. It's
11 been such a struggle to reconnect with that young child
12 as I felt terrible shame and thought it was all my fault
13 the way I was treated. It's like it was two different
14 worlds. There were good things that happened but
15 I can't let myself believe that. It just felt like
16 pain.

17 My feelings of shame stemmed from my feelings I felt
18 at school because of my sexuality and the abuse I got.
19 When a boy is homophobically abused over seven years, as
20 that person you are going to feel ashamed. You become
21 internally homophobic. You hate yourself. I do have
22 emotional flashbacks nearly every day and I know what
23 they are. It may be something that has been said or
24 I hear on the radio or a thought comes into my mind.
25 I might be standing in the kitchen, I will go quiet and

1 my partner will ask if I'm okay. I know how to deal
2 with it now. To breathe and learn how to control the
3 moment. I get quite emotional thinking about the things
4 that happened and so I have to remind myself I'm safe,
5 I'm not at risk now.

6 I suffer panic attacks when pressure is
7 overwhelming. This happens due to my inability to
8 regulate my emotions. It's triggering due to my
9 emotional dysregulation.

10 An impact of the Queen's visit where I got tongue
11 tied is that I always like to be prepared. That's why
12 I am doing all of these notes from my school reports.
13 I don't like to be caught on the hop.

14 I have had lots of counselling over the years,
15 before this most recent one. Mainly for depression and
16 anxiety. I have had periods on anti-depressants from my
17 GP. It's been the fear that has dominated me throughout
18 all of my life. Living in fear, hiding and surviving.
19 The school for me represented the old boys' network and
20 I do not support that. The system of privilege and the
21 fact that my father wanted me to be associated to the
22 school so I could have connections and that I would use
23 the school as a springboard to success. Because of my
24 low self-esteem and my lack of belief in myself when
25 I left school I was determined to do everything for

1 myself. So much so I rejected an offer of a job on
2 leaving which my father had organised. I didn't want
3 anything to do with the school or anyone from it.
4 I blocked off all contact and was determined to make my
5 own life.

6 Lessons to be learned.

7 When I think back, it was 12 years of my life and
8 I think why did that happen and there's nothing that can
9 be done about it. I know the people that are at the
10 school now have nothing to do with what happened then,
11 but if we don't make a stand and stop this kind of thing
12 happening then other children are going to go through
13 what I went through. Living a life of depression,
14 anxiety and suicidal ideation, which I had all of my
15 life and I still get. That's not right and I get very
16 angry about it.

17 The harm that the school caused is persistent, it
18 never leaves. They need to know that the behaviour of
19 teachers and pupils is about everyone's welfare and
20 education.

21 Hopes for the Inquiry.

22 I was prompted to speak out after hearing
23 Nicky Campbell's podcast. I think I became aware of the
24 podcast through the BBC News. It mentioned him and
25 I always knew he was at my school, though I didn't know

1 him. He described having witnessed these things and
2 mentioned 'Edgar' and that's how I realised my memories
3 were real and relevant. I knew I had to deal with it
4 and face up to it.

5 Justice is a very strong thing for me. It pains me
6 to see networks and connections to avoid being
7 accountable and responsible and that's one of the
8 reasons I have come forward to the Inquiry, because
9 there's a man living that needs to be held to account
10 and face justice. We can only improve society if we
11 bring people to account for their misdemeanours. I hope
12 justice is achieved against any teacher living who has
13 carried out abuse to any child in care.

14 I don't think any apology from the school would help
15 me at all. I think it may hurt more. One gets the
16 sense to maintain their reputational position they're
17 not willing to admit to actual individual cases and that
18 they have failed us. What would help me was knowing
19 that the school had external supervision, that they
20 weren't allowed to have teachers who abuse boys in the
21 way that happened in the past. I think you have to have
22 an independent authority that sits apart from school
23 boards and can review reports coming in from parents or
24 boys and investigate allegations and make sanctions.

25 The reports could be submitted in an anonymous way

1 and there would need to be an assurance of
2 confidentiality. That board would then have the power
3 to bring the school to task and have an influence over
4 if whether the teacher is allowed to practise elsewhere.
5 The impression I got was that the school enabled
6 Iain Wares to move to another school, knowing full well
7 what parents had said had happened to their children.

8 These teachers need to be ejected before they can do
9 any further harm. It is similar with health
10 professionals, we have to be validated each year by
11 a professional body. Patients can send in reports to my
12 professional regulatory body and an investigation would
13 take place. We are subject to external investigation,
14 not our employer. Why not teachers? There needs to be
15 an independent review body of their performance.
16 I think there may be something in England along those
17 lines now.

18 It's a safeguarding issue as well. There are
19 trained professionals who could go in and speak to
20 children if abuse is suspected. It's a skillset that's
21 needed and they could be used. These people know how to
22 find out if a child has been abused or not. If a child
23 feels safe with an adult they will talk. The worst
24 thing is fear that the child may have if they speak out
25 and what the school might do to them. Providing a safe

1 place for children to speak out is really important.

2 I have no objection to my witness statement being
3 published as part of the evident to the Inquiry.

4 I believe the facts stated in this statement are true."

5 My Lady, the statement is signed and it's dated
6 19 December 2022.

7 My Lady, 'Andrew' also subsequently provided
8 an addendum to his statement, and the addendum appears
9 at reference WIT-3-000005471.

10 'Andrew' states:

11 "Two further important insights have come to my mind
12 that I did not mention in my original interview.

13 I would be grateful if the team could review this and
14 include it, as I believe it is relevant to the teacher
15 Iain Wares and also to the challenges I faced with
16 regard toileting on school days and on school trips.

17 During the year I was taught maths by Iain Wares,
18 I believe now that I witnessed his temper and violent
19 behaviour towards some of us in the class. He certainly
20 shouted and I found it frightening. When I left prep
21 school I was already hypervigilant, not because other
22 boys were bullying me at that time, that started in
23 upper school, but because I was traumatised by that year
24 in his class. The combination of being intimately
25 explored by his left hand and fingers at the desk and

1 then mood changes with shouting and excessive discipline
2 in the class was the cause of my trauma before upper
3 school.

4 At this (September 1970 to July 1971) I started
5 being ill, as evidenced in my school reports, some of it
6 real and some malingering, which persisted into upper
7 school. I recall at this time I had a sense of not
8 wanting other people to see me when I showered and
9 changed after sports. And, more worryingly, I began
10 soiling my underpants on a daily basis as I could not
11 wipe after defecation. My mother never mentioned
12 anything about this and laundered my clothes. On school
13 trips I recall one occasion we had been to Bamburgh
14 Castle and on our return in a minibus I felt unable to
15 ask the teacher to stop at a toilet as I was scared and
16 didn't want the other boys to think I was special. The
17 minibus stopped at least once at a verge to allow boys
18 to urinate, but I could not do that as I was bashful.
19 During the long journey back to Edinburgh I put my
20 jacket over my lap so the other boys wouldn't see that
21 I was urinating sat in my seat, as I couldn't hold it in
22 any longer. It was humiliating and I am certain at
23 least one of the boys knew what had happened. I still,
24 as an adult, cannot use a urinal next to other people."

25 My Lady, that concludes the first read in.

1 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

2 Whenever you are ready, take us to the next
3 statement you are going to read, please.

4 'Charlie' (read)

5 MS BENNIE: My Lady, the next statement bears the reference
6 WIT-1-000005558.

7 My Lady, this witness wishes to remain anonymous and
8 has adopted the pseudonym of 'Charlie'.

9 "My name is 'Charlie', my year of birth is 1962.
10 I was born in Edinburgh and stayed in the Ravelson area
11 with my father, my mother and at the time of the first
12 sexual abuse I had two elder sisters.

13 Before I went to Edinburgh Academy life was good.
14 I was happy. We lived in Edinburgh and I had no issues.
15 It was just normal growing up, but I don't remember much
16 before the age of five.

17 I don't think I had to do an entrance exam of any
18 sort to get in and for the secondary school I think if
19 you had done okay at prep school you got in
20 automatically. I was five when I went to
21 Edinburgh Academy. I went to the Academy as a day
22 pupil. The primary school was a bit further away from
23 home than the secondary school.

24 The primary school, boarding houses and Newfield
25 playing fields, which were used by both primary and

1 secondary pupils, were down near Inverleith Park."

2 My Lady, I now move to paragraph 17 on page 3:

3 "The names that I remember most are the class master
4 Iain Wares, who taught us English and maths, and this is
5 because he was the one who abused me at primary school.
6 Hamish Dawson was a teacher at secondary school who also
7 abused me."

8 My Lady, I now move to paragraph 21 on page 4:

9 "Schooling.

10 I struggle to get my head around the fact that
11 I have very few good memories of primary school and have
12 very few memories at all of primary and early secondary
13 school. I know from my school records and reports that
14 my mum had kept and given me a few years ago that in the
15 early years we had just one teacher for all subjects
16 before we started moving around teachers and classrooms
17 in year 5. This was the year I was abused by
18 Iain Wares."

19 My Lady, I move to paragraph 26, page 5:

20 "If you weren't so good at sports then you felt like
21 you were different, which came from the way the sports
22 teachers tried to coach us. It certainly felt like at
23 times there was more recognition for sport than academic
24 achievement. The First XV rugby team were lauded and it
25 was always encouraged that everybody should be more like

1 them. You were kind of in awe of them and as they were
2 set up on this pedestal as the finest example of what
3 the school could produce, which by inference meant
4 everyone not so good at sports was somehow inferior."

5 My Lady, I now move to paragraph 35 on page 7:

6 "School trips.

7 In April 1975, when I was 12, I went on a five-day
8 school trip. We were on the charter boat called the
9 Auld Reekie on the west coast, it was an old-style
10 puffer boat like the one from the TV series Para Handy.
11 There were about 10 boys and three masters on the trip.
12 There was a skipper on the boat, but Hamish Dawson was
13 the lead master on the trip and in charge of the school
14 party. We slept in bunks but I'm not sure if the
15 masters were separate from us or not. Dawson took every
16 opportunity to touch you on the trip. Saying that,
17 horrible and uncomfortable as that was, I have some
18 positive memories of the trip as it was a new experience
19 and it was generally good fun.

20 I don't know if the other masters were aware of what
21 Dawson was doing to us on the trip. This was the year
22 after I had been abused by Dawson, when he taught me
23 history in my first year in Henderson Row.

24 External inspections.

25 I was never aware of any external inspections taking

1 place, appraising masters or the school.

2 Discipline.

3 Other than corporal punishment we got lines as
4 a form of discipline in both primary and secondary.
5 I don't think I ever got them in primary, but I did in
6 secondary. And if it was for something deemed really
7 bad, then you had to do the lines in red, which meant
8 your parents had to sign them in order to make them
9 aware you had been given them. You would get them for
10 minor things like talking in class. You were expected
11 to do the lines overnight and hand them in the next
12 morning. Discipline went lines, red lines and then
13 detention in that order. Again, I never got detention
14 in primary but I did in secondary quite a lot.

15 Corporal punishment was used by some masters for
16 seemingly random misdemeanours or sometimes for no
17 reason at all. I may have got lines from Wares but
18 I cannot remember. All I can remember is the sexual
19 abuse and corporal punishment he subjected me to.
20 I don't remember Dawson giving out corporal punishment.
21 There is something in my head that makes me wonder if he
22 did, because I have this sick feeling every time I see
23 his face, it is similar to what is in my head with Wares
24 but less so with Dawson.

25 I don't know if this is because of what happened

1 with Dawson happened after what happened with Wares and
2 Dawson's reputation at the school was such that it may
3 have happened. I couldn't say for definite that he beat
4 me. I haven't opened that box and I think he probably
5 did, but I can't say for sure.

6 The other punishment you would get would be that you
7 were called to see the rector. The rector was
8 [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Mr Ellis. The
9 rector suspended me when I was about 15 when I got
10 caught smoking. I don't know if they ever kept a record
11 of what punishments were handed out. I do know that
12 I can't remember seeing anything in my records about me
13 getting suspended for smoking though. It's bizarre,
14 because I remember having to go home and shaking like
15 a leaf because I had to tell my parents why I had been
16 suspended.

17 Prefects.

18 The prefects were referred to as ephors. If you
19 were really good at rugby or cricket chances were high
20 that you would become an ephor, or so it seemed.
21 Everybody kind of looked up to them but equally treated
22 them with a bit of disdain as if they were working for
23 "the other side". Some of the ephors were our pals, but
24 they had an unenviable task of trying to calm things
25 down if the master came in. I've got a feeling they

1 could give you lines but nothing more than that and
2 I don't think I ever got lines from any of them.

3 Abuse at Edinburgh Academy.

4 The abuse that I experienced and that I remember
5 most vividly happened at primary school and in the
6 changing rooms at the playing fields. It carried on in
7 secondary, but I have blanked out an awful lot. I have
8 few memories and I don't have that many good memories of
9 secondary school at all. This box, as I call it, that
10 I eventually opened mentally almost happened by chance.
11 I had to make a decision about whether I went into this
12 box or not, because there was a particular key that kind
13 of opened it and now I don't know how many more mental
14 boxes from that period I want to open.

15 My most vivid memory from this box relates to
16 primary school. I've got a very vivid memory of the
17 classroom where the abuse happened. The rest of the
18 school is very vague. My memory of the classroom was
19 that the glass area looked down to the driveway and
20 Iain Wares would sit up at his desk with the windows to
21 his right-hand side and we would be looking up at him.
22 I say 'looking up at him', and this might be wrong, but
23 I seem to remember his desk being on a raised platform
24 or step. Perhaps this is a subconscious image due to
25 the fact that we knew what was likely to happen when we

1 were called up to his desk.

2 He would ask you up to his desk to go over your
3 work. He had this horrible smile and he would just pull
4 you in tight beside him. It was done in a really
5 sickening kind of way, with him saying something like,
6 'Come in, I need to show you this'. We all wore shorts
7 then and he would pull you in beside him and put his
8 hand on your thigh. He put his hand up higher and
9 inside your shorts and his hands would play around the
10 front and the back. I remember looking out to the class
11 and all I could see was a classroom of heads looking
12 down at their desks. We all knew what was going on, but
13 we didn't look up and catch his eye because we knew that
14 we would then get beaten or some other punishment.

15 He was talking about your work whilst he was
16 fondling you. He would have your workbook open in front
17 of him but I just blanked him and had no idea what he
18 was saying because of what he was doing to me. I was
19 just wishing that this was all over, that I could go
20 back to my desk, get my head down and move on.

21 He was trying to be genial, and like your pal, but
22 then he would sometimes switch from that into a rage.
23 I don't know what these triggers were that put him in
24 such a rage. I think you were up there for perhaps five
25 minutes or so, but it felt a hell of a lot longer and he

1 would just then say, off you go back to your desk.

2 When I gave a statement to the police they asked me
3 what he was doing with his other hand, but I have no
4 idea as I was just staring at the desk and hoping it
5 would be over. My parents and family never knew what
6 was happening. Many of my pals at school would have
7 known what was going on, as it was happening to them as
8 well. There was a significant amount of the class,
9 maybe a quarter of the class of over 20, that regularly
10 got called up to go over our work. I don't know how he
11 picked who was coming up to his desk or if it was based
12 on certain types of personality or other
13 characteristics. It would be conjecture for me to guess
14 on that. You didn't see him fondling the others because
15 you were scared to look up and we didn't discuss it, but
16 you just knew it was happening. We never spoke about
17 what he was doing to us, other than maybe to call him
18 weird. I was very close, almost like brothers, with
19 a boy I went right through school with. We started and
20 finished on the same day and we were in Wares's classes
21 together. Even although he was one of the boys that got
22 asked up to his desk, we never talked about it.

23 You would never ask anybody else whether he was
24 putting his hands up their shorts. You just knew it was
25 happening and you kept your head down. Why we never

1 spoke about this I don't know, but I was nine years old,
2 corporal punishment was rife and you just thought, at
3 that age, this was just perhaps a weird extension of
4 corporal punishment. You simply don't understand it at
5 that age and I couldn't even say the words sexual abuse
6 relating to my own experience until two months after
7 I decided to open up this box.

8 The sexual abuse happened regularly enough that
9 I couldn't give you a number of times, but he was my
10 English and maths teacher as well as my class master
11 when I was nine.

12 I don't remember there being any other pretext other
13 than going up to discuss your work. So it always felt
14 as if it was during or at the end of the class. He
15 taught us English and maths in the same classroom and
16 I think that was exclusively his room for that year.

17 He was quite an angry man, so we did get corporal
18 punishment from him. I think the corporal punishment at
19 primary school was pretty widespread by most of the
20 teachers. It was commonplace in those times, but for
21 me, it was Wares that was the worst.

22 I have no idea what kinds of behaviour would merit
23 this kind of punishment, but we all suspected some was
24 caused by us happening to look up and see what was
25 happening to another pupil, although I simply cannot

1 remember in any detail. We were all just very, very
2 scared.

3 It was maybe if we questioned something if he was in
4 one of his moods that day. At times it was just because
5 he was in an angry mood. You would be called up to his
6 desk and punished there. I remember being hit with the
7 tawse, which was a leather strap with two or three
8 flanges on the end of it. He would hit you on the
9 inside of your wrist or on the back of your thigh.
10 I distinctly remember it seemed to be on the wrist he
11 was aiming at, because he would hold your hand out and
12 come down across your wrist instead of standing straight
13 in front of you and aiming for your palm.

14 He would also hit you with the clacken, a wooden
15 bat, or a ruler on the back of your bare thigh below
16 your shorts, as opposed to on your bottom and it was
17 bloody sore. I don't actually remember them, but I must
18 have had physical marks from the corporal punishment as
19 it was so sore, particularly on the insides of your
20 wrist. I don't remember my parents asking how I got
21 them, but whether I went in and changed quickly so they
22 wouldn't see them, I simply don't remember.

23 This abuse went on for the whole year I was in his
24 class and only stopped when I moved up a year and no
25 longer had him as a teacher.

1 I can't remember the headmaster or any of the other
2 teachers ever popping into his classroom to see how
3 things were.

4 Wares used to hang around at sports, but I don't
5 remember him ever teaching me rugby. I think he was
6 involved in it though, as I remember him hanging about
7 the big communal showers in the changing rooms at
8 Newfield.

9 I remember hearing the sound of the studs on the
10 brick floor going into the really austere building and
11 I wouldn't like to ever go in there again. It was
12 austere in that it was a cold, harsh building with brick
13 walls. When you went in, you went into a big communal
14 changing room with the communal showers right next to
15 it. From memory when I was in the showers it was with
16 boys our own age, as the other years did games at
17 different times or on different days. There were no
18 cubicles. It was just shower heads and to this day
19 I get embarrassed and can't go into a communal shower,
20 as back then Wares would just hang around.

21 At secondary school there was a sports master,
22 **IBU**, who did similar. I'm not sure if he had
23 been there in the showers when I was in primary, but he
24 was definitely there in secondary.

25 When I was 11 in 1973/1974 I moved up to the Geits,

1 which is the first year in secondary school. A master
2 called Hamish Dawson, a history teacher, carried on
3 doing what happened to me with Wares. It was not as
4 badly nor as often as Wares and my memories are vaguer
5 of him and what he did. Perhaps four or five times in
6 the first year Dawson did what Wares had done in asking
7 you up to his desk to go over work. He would actually
8 get you sitting on his knee and his hands would explore.
9 I don't remember it as much as I do with Wares and
10 I couldn't tell you if his hands went up underneath your
11 shorts or touched your skin. He was just creepy and
12 made loads of excuses to touch you quite a lot. I don't
13 remember what he would be saying as he did this.

14 He did this with the other boys in the classes but
15 my memory is that he was less prolific than Wares in
16 respect of the number of boys he did it to.

17 The chartered boat trip was fun, but on it Dawson
18 was always touching you or making an excuse to touch
19 you. He wasn't angry like Wares but he made out it was
20 a bit of fun. There wasn't much privacy on the boat and
21 you were quite hemmed in, so it was kind of like every
22 chance he got, when he was passing or squeezing past you
23 in the corridor, you would feel a hand on you, but it
24 was almost like a fleeting touch.

25 The other abusive behaviour in secondary school was

1 a master throwing the chalk dusters from the boards at
2 pupils. They were heavy bits of wood and although
3 I never got hit it would undoubtedly cause some damage
4 if it hit you in the head. The teachers I remember
5 doing this were a guy named IDT, who was a [REDACTED]
6 teacher, Mr IDT and a guy, Brownlee, who was renowned
7 for it. I don't know what Brownlee taught and I don't
8 believe I ever had him.

9 Reporting of abuse.

10 I couldn't have had a conversation with my parents.
11 There was no way I could have said to them what had
12 happened. I wouldn't be here today if they were still
13 alive. I couldn't open that box whilst they were still
14 alive, as they would have been so very upset if they'd
15 known what had happened. I didn't have any sort of
16 guidance teacher that I could go and speak to if I had
17 an issue. I don't think I would have felt comfortable
18 speaking to anybody at the school about what I had been
19 subjected to, as I didn't really understand what was
20 happening at the time myself, other than it was a really
21 horrible feeling.

22 I left school at the end of sixth year. Life after
23 being at Edinburgh Academy.

24 When I left school, I joined the Army because
25 I enjoyed the CCF. I went through basic training,

1 qualified and passed out as a soldier. I then went to
2 Westbury to sit the regulars commission board exam,
3 because I was going to do a short-service commission to
4 become an officer. They told me I was too immature, but
5 said I could stay on as a regular soldier or go away and
6 come back to them in a year. I was quite immature
7 I think at 18, most likely because of my experience at
8 school. Surely you should leave school with
9 self-confidence and full of ambition, instead I left
10 with self-doubt and a lack of trust in the older
11 generation.

12 After a while I decided I better get some
13 qualifications. I applied to and got into Bristol
14 Polytechnic, where I got an HND in International
15 Business and French.

16 I have struggled to have long-term relationships.
17 I have had a few relationships where I couldn't make
18 a commitment. I suppose I had trust issues but then
19 I met my wife in the mid-1990s and she stuck with me.
20 We got married in 2000 and we have two children. We are
21 still together and a very happy family.

22 In late July 2022 I got an email from my sister.
23 She sent me a link to a BBC report that was discussing
24 Nicky Campbell talking about the Academy and referring
25 back to a podcast that he had listened to by

1 Alex Renton. My sister had just sent me the excerpt
2 just for interest.

3 I started listening to a podcast that Nicky had done
4 under a new series called 'Different'. The episode was
5 called 'Edgar'. I hadn't spoken to Nicky since we had
6 been at school. I could only listen to half of the
7 episode, as that was the key to the mental box that
8 I had been talking about and it was upsetting me.
9 I knew something was opening up and I didn't know
10 whether I wanted to go any further or not. I decided
11 I wanted to open the box and emailed BBC 5 Live that day
12 asking for Nicky to contact me and then I actually
13 tweeted him directly and asked him to get in touch.
14 Nicky kindly agreed he would call later.

15 I had two names, Iain Wares and Hamish Dawson,
16 written on a bit of paper. Nicky phoned me that
17 afternoon. I said to him that I had two names written
18 down and I needed to know who 'Edgar' was, as in the
19 podcast it was confirmed that 'Edgar' was still alive.
20 He said the name 'Iain Wares' and I did exactly what
21 I'm doing now, crying and swearing and I could hear
22 Nicky then got very emotional as well on hearing my
23 reaction. It was a very incredibly powerful moment for
24 both of us.

25 Until that moment everything had been locked away

1 and I will never forget that moment. It was almost as
2 if someone had plugged the phone line into the main
3 socket such was the energy of the moment and I could
4 hear Nicky was having moments. I was crying a lot and
5 that was the box finally opened. I didn't know how
6 powerful that locked-away memory was until that moment,
7 and it was almost like somebody punching me in the guts
8 when Nicky confirmed the name that I had written down as
9 my abuser.

10 That validation I got from Nicky telling me his name
11 and opening that box has helped me enormously and that's
12 why I'm here today. I listened to the rest of Nicky's
13 podcast and then about a week later, when I felt strong
14 enough to do so, I listened to Alex Renton's 'In Dark
15 Corners' podcast. I spoke to my wife about it the same
16 evening I spoke to Nicky and that was the first I had
17 spoken to her about what had happened, literally nobody
18 knew.

19 I then spoke to my sisters about a week later.
20 I said to my wife that I had to tell the kids and I did
21 so, but I didn't go into graphic details. Once
22 I finally got round to saying the words sexual abuse it
23 helped. I had just buried it so deep it was like that
24 I didn't want to admit that it had happened. I felt
25 ashamed for some reason. The family and my sisters have

1 been great.

2 Impact.

3 I didn't realise how scared I was of Iain Wares at
4 the time. I was very scared but it is still hard to
5 think back to how you felt as a nine-year-old.

6 Two or three months ago I saw a clip of him walking
7 back towards the camera during his appearance in the
8 courtroom in South Africa. I physically started shaking
9 and I honestly felt like a nine-year-old again.
10 I realised then how much of an impact he had made.

11 What Iain Wares did to me did affect how
12 I interacted with masters thereafter but I don't know
13 the full extent of that as I have buried it for so
14 long."

15 My Lady, I move on to paragraph 109, page 19:

16 "A lot of kids rebel going through teenage years but
17 I left school and did everything I could to avoid going
18 into further education. Again, I just assumed it would
19 be more of the same. I certainly didn't achieve the
20 exam grades I should have and I don't know how much of
21 that is down to the distrust I had in teachers. It's
22 hard to say, but I really didn't enjoy many aspects of
23 school.

24 LADY SMITH: Ms Bennie, you probably have just a few minutes
25 to go with this statement, would that be correct?

1 MS BENNIE: Yes, my Lady. Only a few minutes, not --

2 LADY SMITH: I see that. I think I will break now in any
3 event and just before we have the break, there were two
4 paragraphs, at paragraph 26 -- actually three of them,
5 26, 28 and 29, well, particularly 27/28, where this
6 witness did identify something that worked, that the
7 school did in some small respects at 27. He talks about
8 being encouraged when he was playing rugby and that made
9 him work really hard to carry on doing what he had been
10 told he was doing well. He'd been congratulated for
11 always tackling as hard as he could and he said he then
12 took great pride in hitting people hard in the tackle
13 and he was the person that everybody had to get past.
14 Amazing what a bit of positive encouragement can do. We
15 all needed more of this.

16 Then he gives some more examples of getting positive
17 encouragement in 28.

18 What you see in the statement is him identifying
19 those little green shoots, but then the abuse becoming
20 overwhelming and a boy who could have developed
21 self-confidence and flourished, as he explains in his
22 statement, having real difficulty in developing
23 self-confidence and flourishing because of the abuse he
24 describes.

25 I'll just pause there. I'll return after the break,

1 just after 11.15. It may be nearer 11.20 I suppose by
2 the time we get organised. We'll finish this statement
3 and then go on to the next one after that.

4 Thank you.

5 (11.06 am)

6 (A short break)

7 (11.19 am)

8 LADY SMITH: Ms Bennie, if we can return to the statement
9 that you were reading before and pick up where
10 I interrupted you.

11 MS BENNIE: Thank you, my Lady.

12 My Lady, we resume reading at paragraph 110:

13 "I think my lack of good exam results had an effect
14 on the choices I made for a career. I did end up in the
15 drinks industry and I do love it, but the fact is what
16 happened to me at school and how it affected me,
17 impacted my exam results and therefore my career
18 choices. I don't think I would be doing that now if
19 I had got better grades and gone on to university.
20 I only went to Bristol Polytechnic as I was struggling
21 to get a job and needed a paper qualification. It
22 turned out to be great fun in Bristol. I think I did
23 most of my growing up there.

24 I found it difficult to trust people, but now I love
25 having a long-term relationship and I can't understand

1 why I didn't commit to one earlier. I was 38 when I got
2 married. I just felt more than a bit lost when I left
3 school.

4 I have never been comfortable with the likes of
5 board meetings where there is an established hierarchy.
6 Confrontation is too strong a word, but I don't like
7 speaking up in environments like that, even although
8 latterly I was heading up a sales team for the UK and
9 I was on the executive board for the company. I tended
10 to be quite quiet at these meetings and I would come in
11 at the end of any discussions with my point of view.
12 Whether that is down to the school and not being
13 encouraged to speak up, I don't know. I now love sales
14 and getting to know people by building that
15 relationship, but I have never been comfortable with
16 people in a position of power.

17 Since opening this box I've been trying to question
18 how much the sexual and physical abuse impacted me and
19 I think it's more than I've actually attributed, but
20 I can't say what percentage is down to the school.

21 Having opened up that box, it actually explains
22 an awful lot about what came later in school and what
23 came later in life to some extent. It doesn't explain
24 everything, but it sets out a few things right in my
25 mind as to why certain things maybe happened and why

1 I didn't do very well at secondary school."

2 Moving on to paragraph 120:

3 "It is strange because you park it. You suppress it
4 and everything is fine. But it all changed when I got
5 the email with the news story. Nicky has spoken about
6 this and asked if I was glad that I found this out and
7 I'm very glad indeed. I'm glad the box is open now and
8 I can process it at my own pace. I can also finally
9 talk about it with family, which really does help.

10 I had been to see a couple of counsellors before
11 I opened up the box. There was a couple of things I was
12 struggling to get my head round, it was nothing major
13 but my wife said, why don't you go and speak to someone,
14 as I really don't open up that much at home. I never
15 really got on well with either counsellor. I think if
16 you can find somebody you can relate to then that would
17 make it easier.

18 I have since met with the senior team at the school
19 and this was actually very helpful. They confirmed that
20 we had been wronged and whilst they wished the abuse had
21 never happened they had to acknowledge that it had and
22 never forget that fact. They also apologised for the
23 abuse committed by Wares and Dawson and that meant
24 a lot. There is more for them to do, but I felt that
25 they had the best intentions to help us as former abused

1 pupils.

2 Reporting of abuse.

3 About a week after speaking to Nicky Campbell

4 I reported what had happened to the police. I contacted
5 them and said that I wanted to make a statement.

6 I wanted to speak to them before I got too deep into it,
7 because I knew that there were potentially papers that
8 I could access and I wanted to speak to them with my
9 memories alone.

10 I knew that I had blanked out so much that I didn't
11 want to be filling in those blanks with something that
12 I read. If it goes to trial, I can then stand up with
13 my hand on my heart that my statement is totally my own
14 memories.

15 I got an email update on 27 March 2023 from a victim
16 information advice officer at COPFS Scottish child abuse
17 review team. It is basically saying that an extradition
18 case that was due on March 2023 had been postponed
19 because of a legal issue regarding Wares being admitted
20 to bail after he initially was found extraditable in
21 2020. It states that the case is likely to be heard in
22 October 2023. It is quite frankly incomprehensible and
23 very upsetting to note how little feedback or support we
24 are getting from COPFS. They really don't seem to have
25 the appetite to have Iain Wares extradited quickly,

1 which is difficult to comprehend given the weight of
2 accusations against him. This also leads us to wonder
3 if we are being ignored yet again, where is the justice?

4 Records.

5 The school reports and records that I have talked
6 about before confirmed that Mr Wares was my class master
7 and teacher and even just seeing his signature when
8 I saw the records again started me off crying. In his
9 comments on his last report about me he said "'Charlie'
10 should not allow himself to come 18th in geography".

11 That wasn't a way to encourage me --

12 LADY SMITH: That, of course, Ms Bennie, is in stark
13 contrast to what the witness was saying at paragraphs 27
14 and 28.

15 MS BENNIE: Yes, my Lady:

16 "It then said, 'But apart from this he has worked
17 hard to finish fourth before three newcomers'. He did
18 say in the report though that I was a very pleasant and
19 likeable boy, so for my parents to read that they would
20 obviously think 'Charlie's' doing fine. However, when
21 you put the filter on this that he was sexually and
22 physically abusing us at the time, it takes on a whole
23 new sick meaning."

24 My Lady, I now move to paragraph 143 on page 25:

25 "Lessons to be learned.

1 It wasn't any choice of ours, but we were very
2 privileged to be at fee-paying school which was supposed
3 to give us an amazing education and I don't take that
4 lightly, but the school had a responsibility to look
5 after us and they failed in that respect.

6 When you are nine years old you can't go and talk to
7 your parents about that sort of thing. We simply didn't
8 understand what was happening nor did we have the
9 language to discuss it.

10 LADY SMITH: That was paragraphs 143 and 144, yes?

11 MS BENNIE: Yes, my Lady.

12 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

13 MS BENNIE: "It would have been good if there had been
14 a safe place to go and talk to somebody who wasn't
15 judgmental about what was happening and would help you,
16 but there wasn't that. It was very much an expectation
17 that you matched up to the grade or you kind of fell by
18 the wayside. There wasn't really a two-way discussion,
19 you were being told what to do.

20 There was a lack of guidance and nobody that you
21 could go to talk to. I am sure that that would have
22 made a difference. There were some good teachers there,
23 but that wasn't an avenue to talk to somebody without
24 being judged and without it being recorded.

25 There were no discussions or talks in confidence.

1 Also, who could we trust? We were so young when abused,
2 how can you talk to an adult when they do that to you?

3 I have positive memories of the good teachers who
4 encouraged me later in my schooling and if they were
5 still alive I would quite happily go and have a chat
6 with them, as they were really nice people.

7 Hopes for the Inquiry.

8 I would like to see reporting of abuse by any school
9 or establishment become mandatory. It should be
10 referred to some investigative authority and they should
11 be held absolutely accountable for their practices.

12 There must have been some collusion back in those
13 days. We can say that it doesn't go on now, but we need
14 to be totally sure this isn't the case at all
15 establishments where children are in the care of adults.

16 I know from personal experience with the Scouts that
17 there are better background checks these days, but there
18 definitely needs to be more scrutiny as kids simply
19 can't be expected to protect themselves.

20 Also, the more it's talked about and is out in the
21 open, the more people will feel empowered to find
22 someone to talk to, because it is dangerous to keep such
23 experiences buried. I think I am doing okay, but
24 I buried it so deep for so long. There are some people
25 who I know have not been able to cope with what happened

1 to them, with disastrous consequences.

2 Thankfully it is being talked about more, so
3 hopefully people will find an avenue to talk about it
4 themselves or report it. We need to encourage this and
5 give any child suffering abuse as many avenues as
6 possible to be able to start thinking about it.

7 I would like any teacher still alive and accused of
8 abuse at Edinburgh Academy, in my case Iain Wares, to be
9 held accountable and face trial. They took a large part
10 of our childhood away from us and they have never been
11 held accountable for that. They abused us when we were
12 at our most vulnerable and when we should have been
13 developing self-confidence and life skills and their
14 abuse left many of us with lifelong mental scars. They
15 quite literally changed, for the worse, the course of
16 our lives.

17 I have no objection to my witness statement being
18 published as part of the evidence to this Inquiry.

19 I believe the facts stated in this statement are true."

20 My Lady, the statement is signed and it is dated
21 3 July 2023.

22 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

23 Jenny Pearson (read)

24 MS BENNIE: My Lady, the next statement bears the reference

25 WIT-1-000005552:

1 "My Lady, this is the witness statement of

2 Jenny Pearson:

3 "My name is Jenny Mary Pearson. I find it really
4 hard to say it, but my name until I went to school was
5 Jennifer Dawson. I was christened Jennifer, but I'm not
6 Jennifer. I have vivid memories of the intonation used
7 when my mother shouted 'Jennifer'. I had my name
8 legally changed to 'Jenny' on my passport because
9 I couldn't stand it any more. My year of birth is 1958.

10 Background.

11 My father's name was Hamish Davidson Dawson, and he
12 was born in Glasgow in 1927. My mother's name was
13 Sheena Helen Crawford Dawson, maiden name Bruce, she was
14 born in 1929. They were married on 8 August 1953.

15 I have an elder sister, she was born in 1955.

16 I have provided the Inquiry with a copy of my
17 father's CV. My understanding is that his first proper
18 job in a sense was at the Edinburgh Academy. I think
19 that's confirmed by his CV. He was appointed in 1953
20 and remained there until his retirement in 1983.

21 My mother was a PE teacher, I don't know what she
22 did before moving to Edinburgh, but she was brought up
23 in Cheltenham. My mother met my father at Glenmore
24 Lodge, an outdoor activities centre. She was at college
25 at that time and my father was an instructor there.

1 I know that she taught at St Denis's School in
2 Edinburgh, which became St Denis and Cranley and has now
3 closed. She later worked in a clothes shop, but I don't
4 think she taught again after my sister was born.
5 I think St Denis was the only school she taught in.

6 My mother never taught at Edinburgh Academy, she
7 became the housemaster's wife when we moved into
8 a boarding house, which was an unpaid position. She was
9 quite hands on when we lived in Dundas House. She
10 worked in the clothes shop by the time we were living in
11 Mackenzie House, which was for the last five years of my
12 father's tenure as housemaster. She continued to work
13 there when my parents moved to [REDACTED]. They
14 moved there around 1979/1980, whilst my father was still
15 teaching at the Academy. He was no longer a housemaster
16 and I don't know why that ended. He didn't get the
17 senior housemaster position, which I know was a bone of
18 contention. Beyond that, I have no idea why he stopped
19 being a housemaster, but my parents went straight from
20 Mackenzie House to [REDACTED].

21 Before my father was appointed as a housemaster we
22 lived in Morningside, which is where I was born. We
23 moved to Dundas House in 1965, when I was seven. My
24 sister and I were schooled at St George's School for
25 Girls in Edinburgh. I went to St Hilary's Nursery for

1 a year and then St George's from 1963 until 1976.
2 I left home in 1976, when my parents lived in Mackenzie
3 House. I went to Dunfermline College of Physical
4 Education

5 I had no knowledge that my father faced any
6 allegations of abuse from his time at Edinburgh Academy
7 until the broadcast of BBC journalist Nicky Campbell's
8 podcast 'Different', on 27 July 2022. Since that time,
9 I have had contact with Nicky Campbell and a number of
10 other former pupils who were taught by my father.

11 I have received written narratives from some of those
12 former pupils, a number of which detail abuse they
13 experienced at the hands of my father. I appeared as
14 a guest on the 'Different' podcast on 22 February 2023,
15 in an episode entitled 'Despite'.

16 Living in Dundas House.

17 We definitely moved to Dundas House during the
18 summer holidays. My father must have been appointed at
19 the end of an academic year. I remember helping the
20 matron prepare for the start of the term in September.
21 It must have been the end of primary 3 for me. We
22 remained there for seven years before moving to
23 Mackenzie House in 1974. When we lived at the Academy,
24 it was an all-boys school. By the time my father left,
25 I am pretty sure there were girls in the sixth form.

1 I don't know the dates of the school going co-ed.

2 I can remember Dundas House vividly. There was
3 a garden that went all the way around the house. I only
4 ever went to the side and the back. I never went to the
5 other side because it felt too scary, as I thought the
6 boys might be in it. The front wasn't really a garden
7 that you could play in, because it was up steps. It was
8 a big, huge house. I always used the back door, which
9 was also the side door. I didn't like going in through
10 the front door. Off to left of the back door were what
11 were called the back premises. It had a stone floor and
12 it was where my sister did her homework. There was
13 a cupboard off that. To the right of the back/side door
14 was our living room. It had a small kitchen off it.
15 From the living room there was the back stairs. At the
16 top of the back stairs was a loo and then a bedroom that
17 my sister and I shared. That bedroom overlooked the
18 side of the house. We were told that they had been
19 servants' quarters.

20 If you went out of our living room, which I tried
21 not to do, there was a big hall that led up to the front
22 door. If you came in the front door, my father's study
23 was off to the left. It overlooked the front garden.
24 There was then a bootroom or cloakroom, which was solely
25 for the boys. The message was that we didn't go there.

1 Next to that was the pantry. It was where the boys'
2 tuck tins were kept and where they had their evening
3 snack each night. There was a hatch adjoining that room
4 and our living room. You could always hear the boys
5 when they were in the pantry. You could be watching
6 telly in our living room and it was like being next to
7 a playground or classroom. An intercom system was put
8 in from the living room up to the drawing room so that
9 my mother did not have to go through the house to call
10 us down.

11 On the right-hand side as you came in the front door
12 there was what was called the boys' common room. It was
13 where they did their homework after school. There was
14 also a piano in there. They had activities and games in
15 there, so sometimes the tables were cleared away.
16 Opposite our living room door was an L-shaped corridor,
17 at the end of which was something called the prep room.
18 I think the head boy and maybe one other boy would do
19 their prep there, out of the way of the masses in the
20 common room.

21 Underneath the stairs, which was the last door on
22 the ground floor, there was a cupboard. It had
23 an outside window. It was where I spent a great deal of
24 time through choice. We would literally hide in there.
25 I needed to hide from my mother, but I also wanted to

1 hide from the boys. I could hear the boys going up and
2 down the stairs and in and out of the prep room, but
3 I often used to hope, pray and believe that nobody knew
4 I was in there. It was like a hidey hole which was
5 safer for me.

6 There was a wide staircase with big, wooden
7 banisters. Upstairs, the front door might have a spare
8 room that was never used ..."

9 LADY SMITH: I think that was the "first door", wasn't it?

10 MS BENNIE: Sorry:

11 "... upstairs the first door might have a spare room
12 that was never used, I can't quite remember what that
13 was. Then there was the matron's room. Unlike in
14 Mackenzie House, I don't think that the matron lived in
15 at Dundas House. I'm 90 per cent sure that she came and
16 went. The next room was my parents' bedroom, the layout
17 of the house meant that their bedroom had an adjoining
18 wall with my bedroom, even though we were up the back
19 stairs and in the servants' quarters. It took my sister
20 and me a while to twig that if we were talking or
21 shouting or whatever they could hear us. That is when
22 my mother would come in.

23 There was big landing on the first floor. Round
24 from my parents' room was a large linen cupboard. All
25 the boys had towels with name tapes on them. I can

1 remember helping the matron with the towels the first
2 summer that we were there. I chose my favourite one.
3 Round from the linen cupboard was the bathroom and next
4 to that was our loo. The boys' loo was next to our loo,
5 then there was the drawing room. It had a piano in it
6 and looked on to the front of the house. I sometimes
7 did my homework in that room. Next to the drawing room
8 was an eight dorm. Up the stairs there was a four dorm,
9 a two dorm and another two dorm. The head boy of the
10 house always got a two dorm. I presume he would be with
11 his best pal or someone he had chosen.

12 I was often out in the garden, I liked it because it
13 felt huge and big. We moved from a terraced house to
14 what felt like a castle. Initially it was a bit of
15 a novelty to have all those rooms.

16 My mother had quite a hands-on role at Dundas House.
17 There was a flu epidemic in our first year and I can
18 remember her going up and down the stairs with hot water
19 bottles for the boys. She was playing
20 Florence Nightingale. She would also make us play the
21 piano in the boys' common room. Sometimes, there was
22 a piece that the three of us would play with my sister
23 and I on either side of our mother. She was involved
24 with Scottish country dancing there.

25 I don't know if the Academy required her to do any

1 task like that or whether it was just up to the
2 individual. You certainly got the sense that the
3 housemasters and their wives were expected to act as
4 a unit. I got the sense that all of the housemasters'
5 wives were involved rather than separate. But by the
6 time we moved to Mackenzie House my mother had
7 definitely pulled away.

8 My father was known as Dowie Dawson at the school.
9 His routine was always with the boys. I would see him
10 going in and out of his study and in and out of the
11 common room where they did their prep. I saw him going
12 in and out of the room that was next to my cupboard
13 under the stairs. I always assumed that he was
14 supervising prep. His routine was whatever the boys
15 were doing, he was doing it too. He was attached to
16 them.

17 Boys at Dundas House.

18 There were 15 boys in Dundas House. I think that
19 the age range was about 13 to 15. I think it was the
20 house where boys came when they were going up to the
21 upper school as it was called. I think there was quite
22 a spread of ages. I think that my father would
23 sometimes hold boys back because he didn't want them to
24 go up to the senior houses. I don't know why he did
25 that, but he did it at Mackenzie House as well.

1 After that first summer helping in the linen
2 cupboard and picking up the phone in my father's study,
3 I very quickly pulled right away. I tried to stay away
4 from the boys because of what they felt like to me.
5 En masse they felt predatory. I didn't understand them.
6 I was at an all-girls' school and I didn't have any
7 brothers. I knew how they responded and behaved to me.
8 I can say now as an adult that I knew it wasn't healthy
9 and I knew it was something that scared me. I didn't
10 get it. I didn't get why they would wait outside the
11 loo when I was in it. When they did that, they would
12 snigger. They would be in a huddle, as if they knew
13 something that I didn't know. I felt like they had
14 a secret and they were menacing. I remember hoping that
15 they wouldn't come any closer. I don't know whether
16 they did that to my sister as well.

17 I would have my bath upstairs and come out again.
18 I didn't know whether there would be boys there.
19 Sometimes, I would pee in the bath because it avoided
20 having to go to the loo. I absolutely hated the boys.
21 I always felt that they had the upper hand. I was
22 outnumbered. They were a different sex and I didn't
23 know what was so funny.

24 It was all made a million times worse by my mother."

25 My Lady, I move on to paragraph 26, page 8:

1 "After the first year in Dundas, I didn't know what
2 the boys looked like. The first year I was there,
3 I could I have picked out all of the boys and named
4 them. When I was in primary 4 at St George's my parents
5 gave me a doll for my birthday, the doll was Paul, who
6 was Cindy's boyfriend.

7 LADY SMITH: I think Cindy was also a popular doll at that
8 time.

9 MS BENNIE: Yes, my Lady:

10 "I didn't want Paul and I really didn't want that
11 Paul. He was in an Edinburgh Academy uniform which my
12 mother had had made. I can remember recoiling, I didn't
13 understand the present. I can remember being teased
14 about it at school. I wasn't teased very often at
15 school and I had good pals. I wanted to destroy that
16 doll. It was one of the most horrible presents I ever
17 received. Within one year, the novelty of living at
18 Dundas House had worn off.

19 Living in Mackenzie House boarding house.

20 Mackenzie was the junior boarding house, the wee
21 boys' house, there were 45 boys in Mackenzie House, they
22 started at the age of eight and went up to 12/13.
23 I think they had to have celebrated their eighth
24 birthday to start at Mackenzie House. I can remember
25 thinking how tiny some of them were. By the time we

1 moved there I was around 15, so I was bigger than some
2 of the boys. I lived there until I was 18, so from 1974
3 until 1976. My parents remained until around 1979 or
4 1980. Some of the boys were a long way from home. The
5 school was getting more global. It wasn't just boys who
6 were farmers' children from Aberdeenshire. There were
7 more kids from England and abroad. I don't remember
8 there being boys from overseas in Dundas House.

9 The matron's room would have been in the other side
10 of the house. I don't know whether she was residential.
11 There were fire doors between our home and the boys'
12 side. I can't tell you a thing about the boys' side of
13 Mackenzie House. I literally never went there. I could
14 hear the noise of the boys, but I don't know what the
15 routine was. I can't remember my mother ever going
16 through the fire doors either. She had become quite
17 separate by that time and didn't have any role with the
18 boys. I don't think she was involved with anybody
19 except herself. She was still very scary, but she was
20 not a well woman. I don't know whether she was
21 suicidal, but she used to threaten suicide on a daily
22 basis. When I came home from school, I could tell that
23 she'd been crying. It was a combination of floods of
24 hysterical tears and screaming and yelling. My father
25 must have known that she was unwell on some level, but

1 nothing was done.

2 The school doctor knew about my mother's poor mental
3 health. The practice was in Goldenacre and it was the
4 same practice that looked after the boys. She was
5 prescribed valium. He must have known that there were
6 mental health issues from very early on in all this
7 mess. The GP and his colleagues also looked after the
8 boys if there was something more major than the matron
9 could treat. Beyond the school doctor, I don't know
10 whether there were any discussions at staff meetings or
11 whether anybody else in the school was aware of my
12 mother's difficulties or whether there was any offer of
13 support.

14 Our living area was entirely separate from the boys.
15 I used the back door. There was a big kitchen with
16 a wee room off it, where we ate. There was a huge big
17 stunning drawing room with a bay window looking out into
18 the back garden. The back garden backed on to the
19 playing fields. When you were in the garden you could
20 hear the boys at games. There was a big living room.
21 Up the stairs was my father's study, which was the first
22 door next to the fire door. There was then my parents'
23 bedroom, the loo, bathroom and my bedroom. I remember
24 once going into the bathroom and my father was lying in
25 the bath. He had not locked the door. It was the first

1 and last time I had ever seen him in the nude. He
2 smiled. I closed the door, shocked. I loved my room in
3 Mackenzie House. It had a window facing on to the
4 street and a window facing on to the back. It was
5 lovely. I never went into the back garden as I knew the
6 boys would be able to see me from their side of the
7 house. Upstairs was entirely my sister's. She was at
8 university by the time we were in Mackenzie House. She
9 had the whole top floor. One boy sent a narrative to
10 the journalist, Nicky Campbell, which was emailed to me
11 on 30 July 2022. He recalled that my sister gave him
12 piano lessons in Mackenzie House, he would go to her
13 flat for piano lessons when he was quite young. His
14 piano teacher had retired and my father had arranged the
15 lessons.

16 My sister and I handled living at Edinburgh Academy
17 very differently. I don't think she ever recoiled from
18 the boys the way that I did. My sister was the pretty
19 one. All of the boys wanted her. She had lots of
20 boyfriends who were Academy boys. That was always a big
21 talking point. My mother always wanted both of us to
22 marry Academy boys. I remember taking great pleasure in
23 telling her that I was marrying an Academy boy, and then
24 telling her that it was Greenock Academy. I suppose
25 that it was one of my few moments of glee."

1 My Lady, I now move on to paragraph 39 on page 12:

2 "I never saw my father when we lived in Mackenzie
3 House. By the time I came home he had gone for games
4 and I never saw him. He was that absent. I used to
5 sometimes wonder if he slept through in the boarding
6 house. In one of the letters he wrote to me after I had
7 left, he wrote that he was going to bed "or should I say
8 tiptoeing". I think that my father was terrified of
9 waking up my mother. I think he sometimes slept on a
10 chair in his study and maybe he slept in the boys' part
11 of the house.

12 By the time my parents moved to [REDACTED] I had left
13 home. If any boys visited that house, I wouldn't have
14 been aware of it. I don't think my mother would have
15 allowed that to happen. My father may have socialised
16 with some of his colleagues in that house, as he was
17 still teaching at the Academy. The boys would not have
18 been welcomed by my mother

19 The relationship with my parents whilst living in
20 Dundas and Mackenzie house.

21 There were rules for me and my sister. Basically we
22 weren't allowed to do anything wrong either at home or
23 at school. 99 per cent of the rules came from my
24 mother. She shouted at us all the time, so it was the
25 norm. When our father shouted at us, we knew that we

1 were in really deep trouble. It was very rare.
2 I remember playing one of my father's precious records
3 and I scratched it. He went absolutely ballistic. It
4 stands out because it was so rare, although he did shout
5 at my mother more frequently.

6 My mother would use physical punishments on me and
7 my sister, she once hit my sister so hard that one of
8 her contact lenses fell out. Physical punishment from
9 my mother was lethal. Somewhere between the ages of
10 seven and 14 I can remember running across the living
11 room and knowing that I was faster than her and she
12 wouldn't get me. I don't think we even knew what the
13 rules were, but we had to do as we were told or else.
14 Punishments from my mother were verbal and physical, but
15 she was also an emotional blackmailer par excellence.
16 She would threaten to jump off the Forth Road Bridge all
17 the time. I do believe that the boys must have heard my
18 mother. They must have heard my father as well. My
19 parents had most of their fights in the living room.
20 They would scream and yell. My father seemed to be in
21 control, but my mother was out of control. My father
22 never hit me and I never saw any physical fights between
23 my parents.

24 There was a lot of flirting on my mother's part, but
25 I never saw my father as oversexualised. I don't think

1 there was any physical abuse between my parents, but
2 I think my mother was verbally vicious towards my
3 father. She would literally be spitting. She would
4 also badmouth my father all the time, mostly to me but
5 also to my sister. My sister had her own self-contained
6 flat in Mackenzie House, so I would often be left to
7 pick up the pieces. My mother would say awful things
8 about the kind of person that my father was. She was
9 utterly vicious. She seemed to loathe him and yet would
10 flirt with him.

11 When I was 13, I went to stay with my grandmother in
12 Cheltenham. It was my first holiday on my own. My
13 grandmother said that she wished my mother had never
14 been born. I'll never forget that. We were
15 immaculately turned out children, we were perfectly
16 ironed, laundered children and scared shitless. I think
17 that being in the boarding houses at Edinburgh Academy
18 completely wrecked my mother. I don't know whether she
19 had always been deranged or maybe even schizophrenic but
20 it unpicked her. She couldn't and didn't cope with
21 living in the boarding house environment.

22 When I lived in Dundas and Mackenzie I liked my
23 father. He was good value and he was usually good fun.
24 He was silly, so you could have fun with him. When
25 I think of it now, I literally sought him out because he

1 was so absent. I used to be overjoyed when he did
2 things with me that he didn't do with anyone else. For
3 example, he took me on the Waverley paddle steamer.
4 When he took me on something like that it was as if
5 I was finally the chosen one. It was very special
6 because it was a special thing to him that he was
7 sharing with me. I thought I'd died and gone to heaven
8 that day. I can count on one hand the number of times
9 that he did something like that. He would occasionally
10 give me books. He had written 'HD Dawson' in them. He
11 would pass them on to me and that meant the world. He
12 came to my final sports day on his own, which also meant
13 the world because I was House Captain and led the girls
14 in my house out from the main school building.

15 When we went to Cheltenham on holiday there was
16 an outdoor swimming pool, I can remember praying that my
17 father would come and swim, which he did. Once or twice
18 he came with me to the Commonwealth pool. He was very
19 short sighted. He had to take off his glasses, so
20 I would go and fetch him at the gents changing room
21 exit. It was so wonderful when he did things like that
22 with me. But I can count those occasions on one hand.

23 My father wasn't bad to me, but he wasn't there. He
24 never had time for me. When I played lacrosse for
25 Scottish schoolgirls and captained them he came to watch

1 and my mother went to work in a clothes shop. I wanted
2 him to be proud of me. I started playing the flute and
3 was in the wind group and the orchestra at school.
4 I thought he was more interested in music than lacrosse
5 so that would make him proud of me. He wasn't really
6 interested or didn't have the time to be interested. I
7 have learned that my father would tickle
8 Edinburgh Academy boys. He didn't touch my sister and
9 me, either fondly or otherwise. My father was deeply
10 undemonstrative. That is why I used to yearn for him to
11 come swimming with me, because I would get tactile stuff
12 in the water.

13 Routine at Edinburgh Academy.

14 My impression of the boys was that they were
15 arrogant. I thought that they were all up themselves.
16 I just got the sense, particularly from the mass exodus
17 that I used to avoid, that they thought they were God's
18 gift to creation. If I had a thematic sense of the
19 masters, it was that it felt more academic than my
20 school felt to me. St George's was the top academic
21 girls' school in the country at the time, but the
22 Academy felt like a classical education. That was
23 almost epitomised by the pillars or columns on
24 Henderson Row.

25 I felt that it was strict, because I knew the boys

1 were beaten. I knew that the boys were beaten and that
2 was alien to me. There was something scary about what
3 happened at the Academy that I knew wasn't part of my
4 school. I'm not saying that school was all rosy for me,
5 because it wasn't, but it was diametrically different
6 from the Academy.

7 I can also remember being given the message that the
8 boys at the Academy were ahead of the girls at
9 St George's.

10 Staff.

11 The matron at Dundas House was called Mrs Marshall,
12 later on there was a Ms Kellas who came from Aboyne, or
13 somewhere up north, I think she was with us in Dundas
14 and Mackenzie. The matron was always a female, but the
15 house tutors were all male. All of the staff were male,
16 apart from the matrons and the secretaries.

17 Housemasters.

18 Housemasters were masters who did all in the
19 boarding houses, my father didn't like the housemaster
20 in Jeffrey House, Jack Bevan, he had an absolute thing
21 about him. When things came to light in July 2022,
22 Nicky Campbell was very quick to get back to the
23 daughter of that housemaster and tell her that her
24 father was wonderful and that the boys loved him. I now
25 wonder if that was why my father hated him, because he

1 saw the boys being fond of Jack Bevan.

2 My father also had a thing about ICG [REDACTED], who
3 was the housemaster in Mackenzie House when we lived in
4 Dundas. Since July 2022 I have found out that there are
5 allegations of physical abuse against ICG [REDACTED] but
6 I wasn't aware of anything at the time.

7 As an adult I went on to teach at St George's, my
8 colleagues had husbands who taught at Edinburgh Academy
9 and sons who attended the Academy. I called it the
10 figure of eight. Girls were sent to St Georges because
11 there was a brother-sister relationship and there were
12 reduced fees for Academy masters.

13 The only housemaster I haven't heard about in all
14 this mess is Paddy MacIlwaine, he was the housemaster of
15 Scott House. Since July 2022, his name hasn't come out
16 as being good, bad or indifferent.

17 I think there was a huge rivalry among the
18 housemasters. We never visited any of the other houses.
19 When we were in Dundas we never visited the other three
20 houses. I don't know who took over Dundas when we moved
21 to Mackenzie. We never went back there and I've never
22 been inside Scott or Jeffrey House.

23 The big stramash that I can remember was when my
24 father was jumped over for the role of senior
25 housemaster. It's one of the few times that I can

1 remember my father shouting. In among the four
2 housemasters there must have been a senior housemaster.
3 I was still living in the Mackenzie House at the time.
4 It was not a happy period. I do remember a lot of
5 grief. I think I can remember who got the post. He was
6 another person that my father would say horrible things
7 about.

8 House tutors.

9 When the house tutors came into the boarding house,
10 they didn't say overnight I don't think. I don't know
11 what their duties were, but they came in and then went
12 away. I presume after lights out. They were also
13 masters at the school. I remember that my father was
14 off duty on a Thursday. There would always be a house
15 tutor on a Thursday, which meant my father was meant to
16 be off duty and with us. It never happened in Dundas or
17 Mackenzie. I don't know what my father was doing, but
18 he wasn't with the Dawson family. Occasionally, he
19 would fleetingly appear and then he would go back out
20 again. In Dundas, he would come in off the hall and be
21 in the living room for a few minutes. In Mackenzie, he
22 would come in through the fire doors and then go back
23 through the fire doors.

24 I interacted with some of the house tutors. I know
25 nothing about how they were appointed. I don't know

1 whether my father was allowed to say who he wanted to
2 act as tutors in his house or whether they were
3 appointed by the rector. I don't know what the criteria
4 was. I know that some of them were friends of my father
5 or became friends of my father. One of them was a prep
6 school master whereas most, if not all of the others,
7 were upper school masters. Some of them were single and
8 some of them weren't.

9 If I saw the tutors, it was fleeting. They would
10 often come from games. The houses were all on
11 Kinnear Road, which backed on to the Academy playing
12 fields. The boys and the masters would just cascade in
13 from those fields. That would often include the house
14 tutor. It was a requirement at that time that masters
15 had to coach something. They didn't just teach in
16 an academic classroom. They had to coach something.
17 The daily routine was school, then games, including the
18 housemaster and house tutor. My memory is that a lot of
19 the tutors would just come into the house with their
20 muddy boots, straight from the fields, and the boys
21 would come in with muddy boots too.

22 Masters.

23 Particularly at Mackenzie House, my father used to
24 bitch and swear about the masters more than I remember
25 him doing in Dundas. I don't know whether he got more

1 cantankerous with age but he had grievances. My father
2 certainly didn't keep from us the people that he didn't
3 like. I can name them, but I don't know why he didn't
4 like them.

5 There were academic staff and heads of department.
6 My dad didn't get to be the head of his department,
7 history. I don't know whether there were certain things
8 you didn't get to do if you were a housemaster. I have
9 no idea how that worked out or whether they made up the
10 rules as they went along.

11 I know from my meeting with Howard Haslett, in
12 March 2023, and from letters that my father sent me,
13 that he was very close to some of the other history
14 masters in the school. He was also friends with some of
15 the music masters. There was a group of teachers who
16 must have been very powerful, because they used to
17 ensure that they were all free on a Monday morning at
18 the same time. There was also a group of them who were
19 very close, including the chaplain, Howard Haslett,
20 another was **IDR**. I don't know what he taught.

21 I remember that my parents had parties in Dundas and
22 Mackenzie House. Academy masters and their wives would
23 be there, some of whom I was very fond of. I can
24 remember that we would visit a master's house as
25 a family. We would sometimes go for a weekend visit.

1 I liked some of those guys. I have a bookcase that one
2 of them made for my father. It's one of the few things
3 that my father ever gave me and it's still in my sitting
4 room. They were nice people. I would see the
5 camaraderie between my father and his colleagues and my
6 mother seemed to be happy. The people that we
7 socialised with were all married. Although there were
8 masters who were bachelors, I don't remember going to
9 their houses. I would look forward to going to the
10 homes of some of the masters. We would have a nice
11 meal. There was nothing else in my father's life or my
12 mother's life. Any friends they had were Academy
13 people.

14 Staffing structure.

15 There was a hierarchy of the teaching staff at the
16 Academy. There was the rector, the deputy and then
17 someone called the senior master. I think the role of
18 senior master was all caught up in my father's early
19 retirement, because for whatever reason he wasn't appointed
20 to that post. Although I didn't attend Academy, I did
21 have a sense of senior masters, whether that be through
22 hierarchy or age. I liked some of the masters. We
23 socialised with them. The ones that I can remember
24 I thought of as nice old men. They were fun, they were
25 clever and I used to see the camaraderie among them.

1 I think they had fun and regarded and respected each
2 other. I know that my father was fond of a lot of those
3 older masters. I don't know whether they were like role
4 models for him. They were slightly grandfatherly. My
5 paternal grandfather died when he was very young and my
6 father was nine or ten. My father's step-dad had also
7 died and my maternal grandfather was in Cheltenham.
8 These masters were probably only in their 50s and 60s,
9 but they felt like grandfatherly people. I liked some
10 of them more than others but I never had any sense of
11 them not being nice guys.

12 Prefects.

13 There were weird names for things at
14 Edinburgh Academy. Prefects were called ephors. There
15 was a head ephor and ephors. I don't know how it
16 worked. I do know that the head ephor in that era was
17 inevitably sporty. Since July 2022 I haven't heard of
18 any of the head ephors being abused. I think there was
19 a real untouchability about them. They seemed to
20 journey through school unscathed.

21 There was a head boy in each boarding house. From
22 the narratives I have read since July 2022 I know that
23 my father appointed the head boy within the house. He
24 would also remove the position and did so on at least
25 one occasion.

1 Mornings and bed times. I don't know where the boys
2 had their baths or showers. I don't remember them doing
3 any chores. They did their prep in the common room and
4 what I thought must be their fun stuff after prep. They
5 then went into their dorms. Light out was always a big
6 deal. When the boys were gone and it felt safer. It
7 was a big deal if they were caught doing something after
8 lights out. Once lights were out, I was not aware of
9 any supervision of the boys.

10 I have no idea what the dormitories looked like in
11 Mackenzie House. I was just never in that part of the
12 house.

13 Once a month we had to go for Sunday lunch with all
14 the boys in the prep school. It was once a month
15 because there were four houses. We would go from
16 Dundas, then ICG-SPO would go, the Bevans would go,
17 the MacIlwaines would go, then it was back to the
18 Dawsons again. It was one of the worst things ever.
19 You knew it was once a month and you knew when the
20 Sunday was coming. I can't remember that happening when
21 we were in Mackenzie House. I don't know whether my
22 mother put her foot down or whether they broke the
23 tradition. I would feel sick when we went for lunch at
24 the prep school. I had to be on my best behaviour. We
25 were Dowie Dawson's daughters and we had to be

1 exemplary.

2 Our groceries were paid for when we lived in the
3 boarding houses. There was a grocer at Goldenacre who
4 would deliver our groceries. I assume that was the same
5 in the other boarding house. Our family food was paid
6 for by the Academy, which meant that we got some treats
7 sometimes. The Academy also paid for our landline if it
8 was an Edinburgh number being called. My mother used to
9 scream at us if I called my friend in South Queensferry,
10 I remember screaming at her that it was an 031 number
11 and knowing that the Academy were paying for it if it
12 was an 031 number.

13 My father didn't eat with us most of the time. My
14 mother had a very unhealthy relationship with food and
15 her body, so she sat with me and my sister very rarely.
16 She would just have an oatcake or something. I really
17 don't remember my father having supper with us at
18 Dundas, he certainly didn't when we lived at Mackenzie
19 House. I think he must have eaten his meals with the
20 boys.

21 Schooling.

22 I do remember going into my father's classroom. As
23 you looked at the school building on Henderson Row the
24 rector's office was on the right-hand side as you went
25 into the quad. My father's classroom was on the

1 right-hand side of a stunning oval hall. I don't know
2 how classrooms were allocated, but his was always that
3 classroom. When I was very young, possibly before we
4 lived in Dundas, my father would sometimes take me to
5 his classroom during the school holidays. He would be
6 setting it up for next term. It was a classical
7 old-fashioned classroom. There was a platform at the
8 front on which his very tall desk stood. There were
9 rows of desks. St George's had platforms and desks, but
10 it didn't have the same austere feel.

11 The Academy felt much more rigid than anything I had
12 ever seen.

13 I used to quite enjoy those trips with my father.
14 They were rare. It was fascinating to me to see another
15 school. I'd only ever been to one school because I was
16 at St George's all the way through. I remember that my
17 father kept a jar of jelly beans in his classroom. It
18 was just something that was always known to me as
19 something that my father did. I think he would talk
20 about someone getting a jelly bean for an essay or
21 an exam. I thought that they were a reward.

22 As well as his role as a history master and
23 housemaster my father also coached games. I was never
24 present at any of the games or rugby matches. When
25 I saw my father interact with the Edinburgh Academy

1 pupils it looked wonderful. It looked like what
2 I wanted. It looked like they were eating out of his
3 hand and they were having fun. I knew that he was
4 a creative teacher. Occasionally, he would get mad at
5 a history teacher at the school when I told him what we
6 were doing. I can remember wishing that he taught me
7 history. He would sometimes give me a history book.
8 When I did a project on the First World War he was
9 interested in it. When I saw him with the boys, I was
10 jealous.

11 My father said the odd thing that made me think he
12 had favourite boys. I can remember him talking about
13 a particular boy. That wore off when I stopped knowing
14 the individual names. After the first year of being in
15 Dundas, I didn't know the boys. Even if he was talking
16 about individual boys I couldn't identify them, because
17 I can't know who he was talking about. My loathing of
18 the boys had already begun. The way he talked about the
19 boys I always got the sense that he enjoyed them.

20 Trips and holidays."

21 Paragraph 86:

22 "During the holidays the boys all went home or to
23 guardians. Not all of the boys had family members in
24 Edinburgh or Scotland. They had what were called 'out
25 weekends' every term. I don't know how many of those

1 weekends there were each term, but all of the boys would
2 leave the house. It was heaven.

3 The boarding house was closed over the school
4 holidays so I don't remember any boys remaining at the
5 school. My father certainly organised trips during the
6 summer holidays. I think it was often day boys who were
7 picked for these trips because the boarders couldn't
8 wait to get home or wherever they were going. My father
9 founded the Puffers, which was the Edinburgh Academy
10 Steam Navigational Club. He was often away with the
11 boys in the summer holidays. A lot of them were day
12 boys. One of those boys told me recently that it wasn't
13 good when you were selected for a Puffer trip. I know
14 from several of the letters that my father sent me after
15 I left home that he was planning summer holidays years
16 in advance. They would involve sailing ships, canal
17 trips and puffers.

18 We didn't have to go on any of the trips with
19 Academy boys, but my father went on trips all the time.
20 He took boys to Blair House. I think Blair House was in
21 the Cairngorms, it belonged to the school and it was
22 an outdoor activities place. I think groups of boys
23 went there every weekend. Maybe it was rotational but
24 I don't know. My father was very keen on the outdoor
25 stuff. He met my mother when he was working at Glenmore

1 Lodge, he loved skiing and the mountains.

2 My father used to arrange trips to the Dominion
3 Theatre. He was on friendly terms with the owner.
4 Those trips would have been at the weekend rather than
5 on a weeknight. He would go to the Scottish National
6 Orchestra concerts on Friday nights, which I learned
7 from a narrative sent to me by a former pupil last year.
8 There was a fair in Inverleith Park, my father would
9 take the boys to things like that, I have learned about
10 that from a letter my father sent to me, which I read
11 earlier this year."

12 My Lady, I move on to paragraph 95, on page 27.

13 "Discipline.

14 There were rules that the boys had to follow.
15 Lights out really sticks in my mind as an absolute rule,
16 but there must have been other rules. I know that rules
17 were broken because my father used to walk around with
18 a slipper. I think there was a list of rules stuck up
19 in the common room. I never once read the rules at my
20 own school, so I think it was that kind of notice.
21 There was a book in Dundas House but I think it was more
22 for signing in and out rather than a punishment record.
23 I don't know whether any record was kept of punishments.
24 If there was a record I suspect it would have been in my
25 father's study, but I never saw anything like that."

1 LADY SMITH: Ms Bennie, before you go on next section,
2 I think we'll just take a five-minute break and give the
3 stenographers a breather and sit again at 12.15 pm.

4 (12.10 pm)

5 (A short break)

6 (12.17 pm)

7 LADY SMITH: Ms Bennie, when you're ready.

8 MS BENNIE: Thank you, my Lady.

9 Resuming reading at paragraph 96:

10 "Abuse at Edinburgh Academy.

11 I wasn't aware of my bullying among the boys or how
12 that might have been dealt with. I never saw any
13 physical interaction between my father and the boys.
14 I saw the slipper, so I knew about that. Even then,
15 I can remember thinking that it was weird because he
16 never punished me or my sister in that way.

17 As a wee girl in Dundas, I can remember thinking
18 that must be what you get to do when you're
19 a housemaster, you get to hit people. I don't know
20 whether there was still a slipper in Mackenzie House.

21 When we lived in Dundas House, my father would often
22 come into the family living room with the slipper in his
23 hand. I can picture it. I know that it lived in his
24 study. I never knew what the boys had done for my
25 father to be ready to use the slipper. My father didn't

1 tend to shout. If my father was giving a boy a row
2 I think he would be quite quietly spoken. Sometimes
3 I got the sense that I wasn't allowed to go into the
4 study. It was very much his private room and we
5 respected that. I don't know whether he took boys into
6 his study to discipline them.

7 Since July 2022 I've become aware of allegations of
8 physical, sexual and psychological abuse by my father
9 which ranged over a lengthy period of time. I wasn't
10 aware of any such allegations at the time. I had no
11 reason to suspect that my father had abused boys. In
12 fact, it was quite the opposite. When I was teaching at
13 St George's School for Girls I had colleagues who had
14 sons that were taught by my father. They sought me out
15 to say how much their sons loved him or they had fun
16 doing various things. Some of those women talked to me
17 as a very young member of staff and that was a link in
18 for me. Either their husbands were working with my
19 father and enjoyed him or their sons had been taught by
20 him.

21 I wasn't aware of any allegations of abuse against
22 any other members of staff. The nearest thing would
23 have been my father badmouthing other members of staff.
24 I got the sense that he despised some of his colleagues,
25 but that may have been because he was jealous of them.

1 He never said anything about another member of staff
2 walloping or beating a child. That was not language
3 I heard. There was absolutely nothing that I was aware
4 of other than the slipper.

5 I have been referred to the Edinburgh Academy
6 Chronicle in 1984. Within the Chronicle, Rector Ellis
7 wrote a valedictory for my father. He writes about his
8 menagerie of curious instruments of correction. I read
9 those words last summer and I realised that I knew what
10 he was talking about. I do know that they were in his
11 desk in his classroom. I can remember the clacken,
12 which was like a big spoon. Academy pupils play a game
13 with it, which I think involves batting a ball around
14 the yard. My father's clacken had a number of nails in
15 it. The nail heads were protruding from it. I can
16 remember my father showing it off to me when he took me
17 to his classroom as a wee girl. He lifted the desk to
18 show me. It wasn't under lock and key. I know that
19 there were more than one in his desk, but the clacken is
20 the one that I remember because it looked particularly
21 lethal to me at the time.

22 It was the school holidays so I've no idea whether
23 those things were visible during term time, but they
24 were in his desk when he showed them to me. The jar of
25 jelly beans was there as well. I'd always known about

1 the jelly beans, but I hadn't known about the other
2 things. I can't remember whether my father said
3 anything to me about these things. My memory is that he
4 took me to look at these things and it was jokey. The
5 message was that when he disciplined boys, it was fun.
6 I didn't think that he used the clacken. I just thought
7 it was Dowie Dawson, because he was known to be
8 eccentric. I hadn't thought about seeing the clacken
9 until one of the boys sent me Ellis's valedictory last
10 summer."

11 My Lady, I now move to paragraph 105 on page 30:

12 "Reporting of abuse.

13 If a boy had a concern, in theory he could speak to
14 the matron or the chaplain. I have had conversations
15 with the chaplain, Howard Haslett, since the allegations
16 of abuse were made public. He was never entrusted with
17 any allegations of abuse and he's devastated by that.
18 I'm not aware of any disciplinary action being taken
19 against my father at the Academy. I knew there were
20 sometimes moments with the rector. During my father's
21 time at the Academy there were three different rectors
22 that I was aware of. I knew that my father sometimes
23 had disagreements with the rectors, but no more than
24 I would have had with a colleague when I taught at
25 St George's. It all sounded perfectly normal and within

1 the teaching context. In one of the letters my father
2 wrote to me after I left, he talked about the rector
3 shouting at him and IDR . He made a point of
4 saying that it wasn't anything that they'd done, they
5 were just in shouting distance. I thought my father was
6 Mr Exemplary.

7 Ellis knew about the instruments of correction. He
8 didn't just find that out before he wrote the
9 valedictory, I don't believe that. There was collusion
10 in keeping things under wraps at all costs for one
11 thing: reputation. The name of the school or whatever
12 it was that they had pumped themselves up into was to be
13 preserved at all costs. I have seen the film Spotlight,
14 which is about the exposure of sexual abuse in the
15 American Catholic church, it may be on a different scale
16 but the themes are exactly the same as what was going on
17 at the Academy, Fettes and then South Africa, thanks to
18 people staying silent. They didn't just stay silent.
19 They wrote references in which they waxed lyrical. It
20 was lies."

21 My Lady, I now move on to paragraph 115, page 33:

22 "My father's retirement from Edinburgh Academy.

23 I've been referred to the Edinburgh Academy
24 Chronicle in 1984 and the valedictory written for my
25 father upon his retirement. Rector Ellis refers to the

1 fact that life wasn't always easy for my father.

2 I don't know what he meant by that phrase.

3 My father wrote to me when he retired from Edinburgh
4 Academy. I was teaching at St George's by that time,
5 the letter was dated 10 September 1983. That letter was
6 my understanding of his early retirement at the time.
7 He left Edinburgh Academy in December 1983 in the middle
8 of the academic year. You don't do that after 30 years.
9 It never made sense to me. I wasn't naive enough to
10 think that that was the whole story. I was
11 a professional teacher by that point. I knew that he
12 was married to the Academy. I knew that he was either
13 lying or he wasn't telling me the whole truth. The
14 letter states:

15 "Dear Jenny, as you know, I'm not one of the world's
16 great correspondents but our bloody phone is on the
17 blink again and any kind of rational conversation is
18 impossible. Before the news reaches you via the
19 St George's/Academy grapevine I wanted to tell you
20 myself that I have decided I have had enough and I am
21 leaving the Academy at the end of this term. I am
22 eligible for early retirement and I am taking it.
23 However, I don't fancy sitting about for the rest of my
24 life so I'm looking around for something new, something
25 different to do. Various irons are in the fire and we

1 shall be leaving Edinburgh as well in order to follow
2 them up. I want to catch today's post so the details
3 can wait until we see you. Love to you both."

4 The letter doesn't really tell you anything. He
5 never did tell me any further details about his
6 retirement and I didn't go looking for them. I wasn't
7 sorry to hear that they were leaving Edinburgh, but
8 I had no idea where they were going or what they were
9 doing. My father was a great reminiscer, but there was
10 never any later discussion of how things had fallen
11 apart after 30 years at the school.

12 When Nicky Campbell interviewed me for the
13 'Different' podcast, broadcast on 22 February 2023, he
14 mentioned that my father had been forced to retire
15 because of an incident --

16 LADY SMITH: "May have been forced to retire".

17 MS BENNIE: Sorry:

18 "... may have been forced to retire because of
19 an incident involving pornography. Both of my best
20 friends at school had two brothers, all of whom had been
21 taught by my father. One of the first things I did last
22 summer was write to those friends. I needed to know
23 whether my father had abused their brothers. One of my
24 friends now lives in Australia. She contacted me by
25 email. She named a boy who found pornographic material

1 in my father's briefcase, the boy had given it to
2 a group of boys, including the brother of another girl
3 in our year. They had been discovered. The brother
4 told his sister that they were punished with a beating
5 from the rector, but the parents were never told about
6 it. He only disclosed this incident, with names, after
7 the allegations of abuse emerged.

8 The rector knew that the pornography had been found
9 in my father's briefcase. It was all hushed up and that
10 wasn't when my father left. The pornography was found
11 at Easter 1977, so I don't think my father's retirement
12 was connected to this discovery. I think it was
13 something to do with senior management. I have a box of
14 letters from my parents' house in Cheltenham, in which
15 there are letters from colleagues of my father's. They
16 imply things about senior management decisions. The
17 flavour is that something that should have been given to
18 him was not given to him and that was why he had
19 retired. That comes through in all of the letters. It
20 may be that he wasn't given a post in senior management
21 because of the pornography, but the pornography was not
22 the direct reason for his retirement. I have also seen
23 a letter from Ellis begging my father to withdraw his
24 resignation.

25 There are letters from colleagues, parents and

1 former pupils in the box I have from my parents' house.
2 A lot of the letters ask my father to send their regards
3 to Sheena or to thank Sheena. I don't know who the
4 people were, but the letters were all sent after people
5 heard of his departure from the Academy. They use
6 language like being devastated or dismayed to hear that
7 he was leaving. At the final assembly of the December
8 term, I understand that rector asked people to applaud
9 and they wouldn't stop. My father was not present."

10 My Lady, moving on to paragraph 122:

11 "My parents' relationship was weird and I think it
12 got weirder as the years went on. My father died in
13 2009. I have been shown the obituary that appeared in
14 the Edinburgh Academy Chronicle after my father's death,
15 it was much longer than the one that appeared in the
16 local paper. It was written by George Harris, who was
17 a good guy and a history colleague of my father's. He
18 also went on some of the Puffer trips. I have been
19 shown some of the paragraphs contributed by my mother
20 which were published after George Harris' obituary.

21 My mother was capable of turning it on and writing
22 this stuff, if she was a woman of principle she would
23 have said that she wasn't going write anything. She
24 hated the Edinburgh Academy and a part of her hated my
25 father. It was the biggest act and she was good at

1 playing it. She was deeply skilled. I never saw my
2 father as acting. He was naturally funny and he really
3 did have a gift of the gab. He had great stories,
4 historical and current."

5 My Lady, I move on to paragraph 128 on page 38:

6 "I have been reading some of the letters that my
7 father wrote to me. Every single letter my father wrote
8 to me was about the Academy. He was a clever man and
9 reasonably perceptive."

10 My Lady, I now move on to paragraph 136 on page 40:

11 "My life-long loathing of Edinburgh Academy has not
12 been helped by the current regime. I will never forgive
13 them for not warning me about the allegations against my
14 father before Nicky Campbell's podcast was broadcast on
15 27 July 2022. They were given a lot of notice by
16 Nicky Campbell's producer, but they didn't give me any
17 advanced notice. I raised that with the rector but his
18 response was despicable. The podcast was broadcast
19 during the summer holidays. When I phoned the school,
20 I kept getting an answering machine. I didn't want to
21 speak to an answering machine. Eventually I managed to
22 get the rector's PA at the start of the term. I said
23 that I wanted to speak to the rector. I explained who
24 I was and asked his personal assistant to let him know
25 whose daughter I was. I acknowledged that it was the

1 start of term and that I knew he'd be busy, but asked if
2 he could contact me as soon as possible.

3 The rector called me and he had not been told who
4 I was. For the first ten minutes, he was scrolling
5 through his emails as I talked to him. He did admit
6 that and that he had been blindsided by his PA failing
7 to tell him who I was. He said that he did not want the
8 conversation to be combative. He also said, and this is
9 virtually verbatim, that I needed to realise that when
10 this all blew, he was sitting on the boundary of
11 a cricket pitch on his mobile phone. I told him that
12 I was sitting in my study, at my computer, in my home.
13 In other words, he wanted me to realise that he was on
14 his summer holidays when all this blew.

15 I didn't hear from him again for some time.
16 Eventually I called the school again and I was told
17 I wasn't getting a written apology because they didn't
18 know what I would do with it. I'm never going to talk
19 to the man again."

20 My Lady, I now move to paragraph 144, page 43:

21 "Impact

22 I completely lost my childhood. I was just robbed.
23 I've had a life-long loathing of Edinburgh Academy.
24 I had a mistrust of men and Accies. If I was told that
25 someone had been at Edinburgh Academy I would be very

1 wary. I wouldn't want to go and talk to them or have
2 anything to do with them. I knew they would talk about
3 my father. Socially I pulled way from that world as far
4 as was possible whilst still living in the city. It's
5 changed in the last few months, since I've been in
6 contact with former pupils of Edinburgh Academy. I can
7 now call some of those men friends, which I think is
8 mind-blowing.

9 Hopes for the Inquiry

10 What I hope for cannot happen. I wish my father was
11 still alive. I would like to sit with Lady Smith and
12 everybody else and see my father in the dock. What I do
13 hope is that schools and other institutions do not pay
14 lip service. I'm sick of hearing about child protection
15 policies. As someone who has worked with children since
16 1976, you need to believe what kids tell you. I want
17 there to be red flags raised about not just bruises but
18 changes in behaviour, such as a catastrophic drop in
19 their results or weight loss.

20 Children do things for a reason. I used to hurt
21 myself so that I would get attention from female members
22 of staff at school, when I went to the PE department for
23 things that I had done to myself at the weekend it was
24 so someone would look after me. I want children to be
25 believed. I want every school to have someone who

1 children can speak to.

2 It's very a very complex situation [paragraph 151].
3 The bottom line is that it's all about keeping the
4 children safe. It would be so wonderful if in every
5 single school there was someone who was really safe to
6 go to. Not someone who will trip along to senior
7 management. It needs to be someone who knows the lines
8 of when you raise a red flag about child protection and
9 when you stay quiet. Wait and see. When you raise the
10 red flag you can make things worse at home. It needs to
11 be a skilled practitioner because you don't immediately
12 report what may be child abuse. Sometimes you know that
13 you can make it worse. It's an invisible line that you
14 sometimes have to walk. There can be a tension between
15 that line and mandatory reporting. There is no easy
16 answer. You can bide your time and you can hope that
17 something will then allow you, with the young person's
18 permission, to do something. You could try to take the
19 young person with you. You tell them that you need to
20 tell someone about the abuse and ask them who they want
21 to tell. You recruit them in the endeavour. If you
22 just go running along the corridor and pump it up the
23 line, it's not always a safe route. It may result in
24 further harm to the young person. The girls who came to
25 me trusted me. They didn't have anyone to tell.

1 I often helped them to tell someone at home or tell
2 someone else at the school. Together with a woman who
3 was the child protection officer, we would find a way to
4 help them. It was about the safety of the young person
5 and not the reputation of the school or whatever else.

6 In emails and face to face, former pupils have told
7 me how they have been treated by Edinburgh Academy.
8 I'm appalled at the current lack of compassion. I don't
9 think they understand historic abuse. It's similar to
10 comments reported to have been made by Iain Wares, who
11 said he knows what he did but it was 40 to 50 years ago.
12 That screams of someone who has no idea that you can
13 live with abuse and millions of us do, but it never goes
14 away. What I hear from friends who have children at the
15 Academy is that the message is, but this was a long time
16 ago. These are men younger than me. They're trying to
17 be healthy partners, healthy husbands, healthy fathers,
18 healthy pals. I just don't think senior management at
19 the Academy get it.

20 I know that some of the boys who were abused at the
21 Academy want to talk to current pupils. I think that
22 would be brilliant. If you had someone talking to them
23 about abuse, the pupils would eat out of the men's
24 hands.

25 I have no objection to my witness statement being

1 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.

2 I believe the facts stated in this statement are true."

3 My Lady, the statement is signed and dated 26 April
4 2023.

5 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much, Ms Bennie.

6 Next statement.

7 'Mike' (read)

8 MS BENNIE: The next statement bears the reference
9 WIT-1-000005560.

10 My Lady, this witness wishes to remain anonymous and
11 he's adopted the pseudonym of 'Mike':

12 "My name is Mike. My year of birth is 1975.

13 I was born in Edinburgh and lived with my mum and
14 dad and elder sister."

15 My Lady, I wonder if I could perhaps have five
16 minutes it just occurs to me that I think I had
17 mentioned to the witness support officer that it might
18 be later for this reading, so I just want to check that
19 the witness --

20 LADY SMITH: I'm getting a thumbs up and a wave from the
21 back. Is it all right if we proceed with this read-in
22 at this point.

23 MS BENNIE: Thank you, my Lady:

24 "It was my mum and dad's decision to send me to
25 Edinburgh Academy. I went to the local school in

1 [REDACTED] until the end of primary 3. It was just
2 a local state school, boys and girls and I was really
3 happy there."

4 My Lady, I move to paragraph 7:

5 I started at Edinburgh Academy at the beginning of
6 primary 4. That would have been around the end of
7 August, beginning of September 198[REDACTED]. I left the Academy
8 at the end of 199[REDACTED], aged 17. I was a day pupil and
9 never boarded. My sister also was only ever a day
10 pupil.

11 I remember I had to sit an entrance exam and I think
12 I felt I was worthy of going because I had passed the
13 exam.

14 When you were in primary 4 [paragraph 12] you were
15 taught in your own class. You moved to the music hall
16 or to the gym hall but all our core classes were taught
17 by Mrs Baxter. All the primary 3 and 4 teachers were
18 female and all the primary 5 and 6 teachers were male.
19 That was just how they did it. It couldn't have been
20 a coincidence. It was like there was a nurturing side
21 and then they were moving on you to adulthood. That
22 would have been the mentality of the school. That may
23 have worked for some people but not for others.

24 I really enjoyed primary 4, I had had a female
25 teacher at my old primary. I was doing well. She was

1 caring, comforting and wanted us to do well. I do
2 remember her saying we wouldn't get away with things
3 when there was a male teacher in primary 5. That next
4 year when certain things happened we couldn't step out
5 of line. I felt there was a lot of preparation as we
6 were moving towards a male teaching environment and they
7 were going to be taking no nonsense. Mrs Baxter was
8 a really comforting teacher and I don't ever remember
9 her losing her temper. She didn't need to. No one was
10 stepping out of line. We were all quite happy and
11 enjoying ourselves. I think she was saying these things
12 out kindness. She wasn't trying to threaten us. She
13 was just preparing us.

14 I was aware of corporal punishment when I was in
15 primary 4. You would hear chatter around the playground
16 of what was going on in other years. I heard about this
17 clacken, which was a foot-long paddle, about two inches
18 thick with a flat head on it. This was used for
19 a traditional end-of-year sports match called 'Hailes
20 match', which was played between two leaving seventh
21 year pupils, regular pupils and the ephors.

22 That was played between two ends of a building.
23 I'm sure it's been banned now, but it was played once
24 a year back then. We heard the teachers had a clacken
25 and if you stepped out of line you would get hit with it

1 either on your hand or on your bum, wherever. You just
2 heard that people got hit with stuff. Hit with rulers.
3 I saw the clacken being used. I saw people being hit
4 with rulers. Not in primary 4. I just heard about it
5 then. But I witnessed it in primary 5 and 6.

6 Mr Sneddon was my teacher in primary 5. He was
7 older with a white beard and grey hair. He was strict
8 with very little personality. Very matter of fact. He
9 was a science teacher, quite methodical and had
10 a temper. From my memory, I don't think he ever raised
11 a hand or did anything to anyone, but he had a temper,
12 which was a real step change from primary 4 to 5.
13 I would say his temper was reasonable and what I would
14 expect if someone was messing around. It never felt out
15 of control and I never felt scared. He had a way about
16 him but I would never get nervous or feel sick in his
17 company. I still felt he wanted me to do well and I was
18 still doing well in primary 5.

19 I remember being exposed to a few other teachers in
20 primary 5. There was a primary 5 teachers called
21 Mr [REDACTED] I remember we heard stories about him losing
22 his temper and use the clacken but I don't remember
23 witnessing that from him. But he wasn't a teacher you
24 would try the patience of. I think Mr [REDACTED] taught me
25 French and I have a memory of being in his class but

1 it's not the same memory I have of being in
2 Mr Brownlee's class.

3 Mr Brownlee taught me geography and English. He was
4 just a monster and was the reason I ended up going to
5 the police. In primary 5 I think there were some
6 subjects we were going to different teachers for.
7 I think Mr Sneddon taught us maths, English, science and
8 maybe something else. We would go somewhere else for
9 geography and somewhere else for French and somewhere
10 else for Latin. I definitely remember we weren't just
11 in one class and that there was a transition and we were
12 moving around.

13 "I think through the day boarders and day pupils
14 were all treated the same. The boarders who I knew
15 never spoke of anything outside of what happened during
16 the day. I think Mr Brownlee had finished being
17 housemaster by the time I knew him. From memory the
18 boarder housemasters there at the time were probably
19 more reasonable teachers. I think they had probably
20 dealt with the likes of Mr Brownlee and other people
21 they had had issues with. I didn't have to sit any
22 exams to get into the senior school. It just naturally
23 happened. There was no transition. You didn't get to
24 go around the senior school before you went there.

25 Senior school.

1 We went from primary 6 straight into first year.
2 There was then seven senior years and that certainly
3 didn't work for me. I was a [REDACTED] baby, so I was
4 really young for my year anyway. I would have been ten
5 going on 11 years old and there were 18/19 year olds in
6 the senior school. I don't really understand the
7 benefit that could ever bring anyone.

8 At senior school I just wanted to disappear. I was
9 terrified. You went from what felt like a protected but
10 scary environment into an almost prison rule. It really
11 did feel like at any point you could be subjected to
12 anything. It just wasn't a nice friendly place at all.
13 It was horrible. You couldn't ask to go to the toilet.
14 You had to go down the hill. Down the hill was where
15 the toilet block was, down at the bottom. The older
16 boys would be smoking in there. You would walk in and
17 get kicked about. You would hopefully get the toilet
18 done and get out of there as fast as you could. It was
19 like a baton passed between years. Those boys would
20 have had it done to them, so it was their turn to do it
21 to others. Daily I would be fighting to get away from
22 something. There would be people administering dead
23 arms or dead legs constantly, you were being physically
24 tested the whole time. It's just how it was.

25 In first year at senior school you were called

1 a Geit and were a target, there was no doubt. You were
2 the youngest in the senior school and you had to get
3 through that year. The next year it would be the new
4 Geits' turn and not you. Even in the school hall the
5 Geits would sit around the top behind a single-rail
6 banister. You were definitely on show for everyone.

7 There was corporal punishment that I saw in senior
8 school, which was the same as it had been in the prep
9 school, the junior school. There was also the odd ruler
10 being chucked or board duster being thrown, hitting
11 people with them and some stuff by the PE teacher that
12 was definitely not on.

13 Senior pupils were called ephors instead of prefects
14 and they were as much a law to themselves as the
15 teachers were. I think you became an ephor based on
16 achievement and I think the head ephor was voted on by
17 the staff and the pupils. They could hand out
18 punishments and make you do certain things.

19 I received a lot of unreasonable punishments. I'd
20 say I was punished by the ephors once or twice a term,
21 nothing more than that. There was a fear of
22 responsibility given to those people, that was the
23 culture at the time.

24 That type of punishment stopped when Mr INU SNR
25 SNR came. I would have been in my fourth year at the

1 time. I think the ephors were still allowed to dish out
2 lines, but I think it would be fairly warranted because
3 I'm pretty sure it all started to be monitored.

4 If you were involved in serious bullying-type
5 behaviour after Mr INU came you would be expelled on
6 the spot or suspended. Even looking at a Geit twice
7 would get you in trouble. There was zero tolerance on
8 bullying. Bully anyone younger or the same age as you
9 and you were going to get expelled. There were
10 troublemakers in our year who were doing things they
11 shouldn't have been doing, things like fighting,
12 headbutting. It was quite a violent school.

13 When Mr INU stood up at assembly and said that he
14 was SNR and told us how he operated,
15 there was no one under any illusions. Things were
16 changing big time. I think he was talking about respect
17 for each other. He had come from down south and said
18 this is how he was going to SNR, "you will
19 respect us and we will respect you." It just seemed as
20 a kid, I was sitting there thinking, 'Finally, thank
21 God'.

22 He wasn't just interested in the elite kids. He
23 would listen to you. He would engage with you.
24 Mr Ellis SNR never so much looked at you, he
25 just walked past everyone with his head down away into

1 his office. I can't even remember how Mr Ellis's voice
2 sounded in assembly, he was just so forgettable.

3 Mr INU had a very positive impact on the school in
4 comparison to Mr Ellis, who to my mind was a bit of
5 a wet blanket. The bully boys could just bypass him.
6 He really wouldn't want to confront that side of things,
7 that's how it felt. The school ran him rather than the
8 other way around. If Mr Ellis told pupils to get off
9 the grass, nobody moved. You absolutely moved if
10 Mr INU told you.

11 Mr INU had everyone's respect straightaway and
12 I think the teachers and the prefects followed his lead
13 for the next three years. I don't remember SNR
14 SNR, it may have been Mr Meadows but I'm not sure.
15 There were some female teachers at the senior school,
16 but not many. There was a lovely English teacher who
17 was Mrs Marsh, who I remember clearly.

18 I had gone from being okay, bright enough, I would
19 say, in primary 6, to straight bottom within a year. No
20 one asked me why that was and at that point I felt
21 100 per cent written off by the school. I think there
22 was a transition going on between the old school and the
23 new school and I think our year fell right at that
24 point. The school had been everything you had heard
25 about old private schools and it was transitioning

1 across to what was acceptable and what was not.

2 There was no one in the school that I could have
3 gone to. Mrs Marsh would have been one of the people
4 I could have spoken to, but there was no real support
5 offered other than just to keep trying. There was no
6 guidance teacher.

7 I remember having a careers meeting one year from
8 Mr [REDACTED] and he asked me what university I wanted to
9 go to. I said I didn't think university was for me,
10 that I wasn't really enjoying school so why would
11 I enjoy additional learning? He said maybe a vocational
12 course was maybe a bit more my style. We had woodwork,
13 but there was no craft and design. There was nothing to
14 do with your hands.

15 For a school you were paying thousands of pounds
16 a year for, there were no computers. They built a music
17 school instead of a sports ground. One person was doing
18 music. It just felt that it was completely rudderless
19 at that point. I was asked what armed forces I wanted
20 to go into. I just felt they didn't have anything that
21 was catering for me at all. I don't think I had any
22 other careers meeting.

23 The fear of being separated from your group, the
24 fear of getting something wrong, it was just a horrible
25 school. In my last two years at school there were girls

1 introduced. That was the best thing that I could have
2 hoped for. It changed the dynamic overnight. The
3 dominant boys in your year or the year above all of
4 a sudden had girls that they had to impress. It was
5 a different dynamic and they didn't know how to be with
6 girls, how to speak with girls. I grew up with an older
7 sister who had friends and my mum. My dad was never
8 there because he was working, so I was probably a lot
9 more comfortable in girls' company. For me it was
10 a Godsend having girls in the year.

11 Everyone softened, everyone had to soften, because
12 all of a sudden if three guys were putting a boy in
13 a bin, a girl would be there asking what they were
14 doing. It just didn't happen and they very quickly
15 realised that they were being infants rather than
16 grownups. We didn't have many girls in our year,
17 I'd guess around 12 to 15.

18 I don't think much was done to protect the girls
19 either and if they weren't attractive or good at sport
20 then my story would sound nothing compared to what
21 theirs would be. You came to the Academy as a girl
22 because we had a really good art school apparently and
23 it was a good law feeder school. It was those type of
24 girls we were getting. But if they got there and they
25 didn't quite fit, their lives were made a misery by some

1 boys who were verbally horrible to them.

2 Routine at Edinburgh Academy.

3 Obviously when I arrived at the junior school
4 I hadn't been at the school before, I spoke a bit more
5 Scottish than the kids there. I think my accent is now
6 fairly nondescript, because the worst thing you can do
7 at a private school is to be different. I remember at
8 the start people were saying I spoke funny. The
9 teachers didn't treat me any different when I started.
10 There was no systemic classism although we were
11 definitely starting to be taught that we were different
12 to other kids, that elitism type of teaching. You were
13 creme de la creme, top of the top and you had to act
14 a certain way. I think that started in prep school, but
15 more so in senior school.

16 The transition as far as the teaching was concerned
17 was that the school felt a lot bigger. I came from
18 a composite class where there were five boys in my year
19 and nine girls, to a school with 90 boys and no girls.
20 That was a huge change.

21 The classrooms had the old proper school desks that
22 lifted up with the inkwell in the top. We were in rows,
23 so never sat with anyone. We were alphabetically seated
24 front to back. If anyone was bad they would be moved to
25 the front of the class. There was never any group work.

1 Looking back on it, they didn't encourage any positive
2 influences between kids helping each other out. It was
3 definitely sink or swim.

4 Meal times."

5 Paragraph 46:

6 "Until Mr INU arrived at the school, lunch would be
7 served in the main hall to all the school at the same
8 time, with a teacher at one end and another teacher at
9 the other end. There would be over 1,000 kids. We
10 would all sit in a row and the teacher would dish up the
11 food and it would be passed down the row. You would eat
12 what was in front of you, then pass your plate back down
13 the row. It would be questioned if you didn't finish
14 what was on your plate. No one ever forced you to eat
15 it, but you were given a hard time for it. If you saw
16 something you hated, you could ask not to have it, but
17 you were rarely listened to.

18 We got a canteen in our fourth year, where we had
19 a choice and times for lunches. We would take a tray up
20 for our food, a complete step change. I think there
21 were two sittings, the first one for up to third years
22 and then fourth to seventh years would be in after. You
23 could sit anywhere and eat in your peer group.

24 Sporting activities:

25 Paragraph 51:

1 "In prep school we were divided into different
2 levels of rugby. At a boys school if you weren't clever
3 or weren't good at sport you were finished. I was aware
4 of that and had to get good at sport quickly. I loved
5 the sport, but I wasn't built for it. I wasn't a big,
6 strong guy. I was young for my year. Playing rugby,
7 I was never going to be someone who would smash through
8 and score heaps of tries. I already, in my mind, knew
9 that I had to be a kicker. If I was fast and I could
10 kick, it meant that I had a place in society. I loved
11 it. If I could have played touch rugby that would have
12 been even better.

13 If you didn't play rugby at the senior school you
14 were given a little flyaway football and had to stand on
15 a cold field and kick the ball about. You would have no
16 supervision. There was no inclusion for these kids who
17 didn't want to play rugby. There was cricket in the
18 summer until it changed and you could do cricket or
19 athletics, that was encouraged. Rugby was the only
20 winter sport until the new headmaster came in and
21 introduced hockey. There was no football team. Our
22 year was the first year that could play tennis, and that
23 was in our fourth year at senior school.

24 CCF was something that was compulsory from fourth
25 year. I think you had to do two years mandatory.

1 Absolutely horrendous experience. You had to pick which
2 one you wanted to go into and I applied for the Air
3 Force. I was interested in aeroplanes, but because
4 I wasn't in any of the clever classes I went straight
5 into the Army. No questions asked. Access to the Air
6 Force denied. That was just for the clever boys and
7 girls.

8 I was put into the Army and every Monday you would
9 have to stand to attention, be paraded and inspected,
10 another way just to give someone a hard time. It was
11 done by some people from within the school, but they
12 would also bring in support from a local regiment. They
13 would pay someone else to scream and shout at you. It
14 was just a horrible experience from start to finish and
15 it was compulsory. You had to go into school wearing
16 full army gear. So I would be on the train and then
17 walking down the road in full gear, it was just another
18 way to look different and feel different from everyone
19 else in society. They would occasionally take us on
20 exercise up to the Pentland Hills or to an overnight
21 stay at an army camp. I just refused. I went on one to
22 the Pentland Hills and just got verbally abused by this
23 uptight little guy from Dreghorn Barracks screaming and
24 shouting at me because I had brought toilet paper and my
25 own tin opener. I had heard about the issues on the

1 trip, so had brought these things along and was helping
2 others and opening their tins. He came along and just
3 went berserk.

4 Other times we were put in the back of lorries,
5 taken to the back of nowhere, dropped off and given
6 a map and compass and told to get back to a certain
7 point.

8 I refused to go on these trips and ended up stopping
9 wearing the army clothes. I told my mum I had been able
10 to get away with a year off doing it, which I hadn't.
11 I just hated it so much. Every Monday I would be out at
12 school at 3.10 and just be happy. I had to do
13 a detention every Friday. They would get to a roll call
14 and my name wouldn't be there and there would be no
15 letter excusing me, so I would instantly get a Friday
16 detention.

17 In junior school parent evenings went well. Up
18 until incidents in primary 6 I was a happy boy and doing
19 relatively well. I wasn't excelling, but I definitely
20 wasn't failing in anything and didn't feel out of my
21 depth at that point. There was a definite change midway
22 through primary 6 and going into the Geits, which was
23 your first year at senior school.

24 When things started to go wrong for me at the senior
25 school I think my mum went to the parents' night and was

1 more worried about my dad finding out about his
2 investment, what he was paying for and what I was
3 getting out of it. It was pretty much shoved under the
4 rug by my mum and away from my dad.

5 Prefects and discipline.

6 Senior pupils were called ephors instead of prefects
7 and they were as much a law to themselves as the
8 teachers were. I think you became an ephor based on
9 achievement and I think the head ephor was voted on by
10 the staff and the pupils. They could hand out
11 punishments and make you do certain things, like take
12 away your break time, put you in the ephors' room and
13 just have you sit there. You would typically get lines
14 from them, that would be their go-to punishment. You
15 would have to take a book of text and copy out words
16 from the book. It would have to be eight words per line
17 and they could dish out 500 lines. That would be hours
18 of work. You would have to have the lines by the next
19 day, so you would have to do them at home. They could
20 give you a punishment if you spoke back to them, if they
21 told you to do something and you didn't do it, if there
22 was litter on the ground and you didn't pick it up, even
23 although you hadn't dropped it.

24 I received a lot of unreasonable punishments.
25 I'm not saying all of the ephors were like that, because

1 they weren't, but you give some people power at an early
2 age and it doesn't do great things for them or those
3 around them. No one was monitoring the ephors or their
4 punishments. The bin punishment they used was not
5 a recognised punishment. That was them just being
6 bullies. I'd say I was punished by the ephors once or
7 twice a term, nothing more than that. There was a fair
8 responsibility given to those people, who rightly or
9 wrongly shouldn't have had that responsibility, but that
10 was the culture at the time. Technically ephors could
11 dish out punishments to their own peers, even when in
12 fifth and sixth year, although I don't remember it ever
13 happening, but it was possible.

14 I would spend most Fridays on detention for missing
15 CCF and other stuff as well. You would get detention
16 for not having homework done, lines if you forgot
17 a book. I was clearly not happy in my school life and
18 I basically went from punishment to punishment. I still
19 to this day don't think I was a bad kid, I still had
20 really good manners, I wasn't disruptive to other
21 people, I had fun and had a good sense of humour but
22 wasn't giving anyone a hard time.

23 Abuse at Edinburgh Academy."

24 Does my Lady wish me to continue?

25 LADY SMITH: How much longer do you think you have to go

1 with this statement? I wonder if we should leave it
2 until 2.00.

3 MS BENNIE: At least 10 minutes, I would think.

4 LADY SMITH: I think we should rise for the lunch break and
5 start again promptly at 2 o'clock, please.

6 Just before I rise, occasionally a name is being
7 used that is protected by my general restriction order,
8 but everyone will see the statements coming up on the
9 screen and they'll know where the redactions are from
10 that, so the fact that a name is being given that is
11 redacted on screen doesn't mean that it can be repeated
12 outside this room.

13 I'll rise now until 2 o'clock.

14 (1.00 pm)

15 (The luncheon adjournment)

16 (2.00 pm)

17 LADY SMITH: Ms Bennie, can we resume where we left off
18 before the lunch break?

19 MS BENNIE: Yes, my Lady.

20 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

21 MS BENNIE: "Abuse at Edinburgh Academy.

22 Mr Brownlee.

23 Mr Brownlee seemed to be someone that looked for any
24 opportunity to discipline people, to the point of it
25 being completely unfair. You tried to keep your head

1 down when in his class, but from my own experience
2 I remember asking to go to the bathroom when he had told
3 us that we couldn't. It's not the sort of thing you
4 would ask if you didn't need. I was in a situation
5 where I was either going to wet myself or take whatever
6 punishment was going for asking.

7 I asked him and was pulled up to the front of the
8 class where sentence was delivered. My head was put
9 into a cubbyhole in the classroom where we put our gym
10 kit. It was an open square-like zone and he put my head
11 in there and then he hit me with the clacken. It was
12 two fold. I obviously got a sore backside but also
13 battered my head off the wood round the cubbyhole.
14 I subsequently wet myself as well, just to add insult to
15 the injury. I don't think he actually saw that before
16 he sent me out of the class. My form class was next
17 door, so I was able to get my gym shorts and make do.
18 That was just horrendous and he would get the whole
19 class on his side saying that we knew what the
20 punishment was for asking to go to the bathroom.

21 When you're a kid, and probably not the most
22 confident kid anyway, to have that happen to you was
23 just horrendous. I just kind of buried it, I suppose,
24 and tried not to overly think about it because it was
25 quite normal for him to dole out significant

1 punishments, so you didn't feel very different. It
2 wasn't until speaking to other people later in life and
3 then having your own children, how would you feel if
4 they ever came home and told you that had happened to
5 them.

6 When you knew you had his lesson next and were
7 waiting for him to arrive you just felt terrified the
8 whole time. I felt physically sick going to his
9 classes. When you are in his class, everything is
10 heightened. Any noise or whatever happens you obviously
11 don't want to react in a certain way, but it's almost
12 like you can't help it. This time we were sitting in
13 the class in complete silence as always. He almost set
14 conditions that were unachievable so someone would step
15 out of line. Looking back as an adult, 24 boys in
16 a class, how on earth could he expect everyone to be
17 silent all of the time?

18 One day the boy next to me broke wind. Obviously
19 you don't want to laugh and are trying to suppress every
20 single part of you, but of course the whole class
21 erupted into laughter. We just couldn't believe anyone
22 could be so stupid to do that. This kid just did it.
23 I don't know why or what possessed him. Brownlee went
24 absolutely ballistic. Slamming things on the desk,
25 telling everyone to shut up, telling us we were all

1 a disgrace.

2 From memory, he found out who it was and threw them
3 out of the class. We knew they were for it. If you
4 were thrown out of the class that was worse than being
5 dealt with in class, because you were then with him on
6 your own and we heard about people being thrown out of
7 the class and essentially being beaten up.

8 I just physically could not stop laughing to the
9 point I was trying to think of the saddest thing I could
10 think of and I was still erupting. I think I only
11 laughed when everyone else did, out of fear and probably
12 awkwardness. He had a way of moving people. He would
13 come up behind you. I don't even know what he did with
14 his hands but it was extreme pain. So you would just go
15 wherever he needed you to go. He would get his knuckle
16 into your shoulder or grab your hair at a really sore
17 point at the back of your neck. I have met policemen in
18 later life and they have shown me holds they've learned
19 and I've thought that's familiar, a real horrible move.
20 He got me in this two-handed grip on the hand or wrist
21 and something in the shoulder and took me out of the
22 class, making sure it hurt the whole way before throwing
23 me out.

24 Me and the other boy just sat in the corridor in
25 complete and utter terror. At the end of the class, the

1 other boys were marched past and they weren't allowed to
2 look at us.

3 Brownlee again put me in some kind of hold and moved
4 me down so I was bent over and my bum was up towards
5 him. Then took three steps and then absolutely launched
6 his foot into my backside and to the point I fell
7 forward on to my stomach further down the corridor.
8 I'll never forget it. I've never been hit as hard as
9 that in my life and I played rugby all the way through
10 school but was never hit as hard as that.

11 I was so shocked and turned around. The other kid
12 was just being put in the same position but he knew what
13 was coming so he half jumped. Brownlee kicked him and
14 the kid went up in the air but Brownlee wasn't satisfied
15 with that, so he had to reset him. He got launched as
16 well. I can't remember if another teacher came or
17 someone was going past, but it all stopped very quickly
18 and he went back into his room and we left.

19 We were just looking at each other. I couldn't
20 believe what had happened. I would have had a bruise,
21 but there was no way I was saying anything about it to
22 anyone.

23 My form teacher in primary 6 was Mr Archdale and he
24 was next door to Mr Brownlee. I'm certain Mr Archdale
25 knew what Mr Brownlee was like. I'm certain every

1 teacher knew what he was like. There was a primary 6
2 block from memory which housed two downstairs classes
3 and two upstairs classes. Mr Archdale and Mr Brownlee
4 were on the top floor. Mr ICA and possibly another
5 teacher were downstairs. There may only have been three
6 classes. If a teacher was shouting in one class, you
7 could hear it in the neighbouring classrooms and in the
8 stairwells and corridors.

9 I would say I've seen Brownlee slamming boys' heads
10 together, saw people being clackened, hit with a board
11 duster. It would be a monthly or bimonthly occurrence,
12 I would say. That was just one class. He wasn't my
13 form teacher, so we would maybe have him three times
14 a week maximum.

15 I never told my parents. Brownlee made sure that if
16 you were going to go home and tell your parents you were
17 already a disgrace. You were conditioned not to say
18 anything and you didn't want to get into trouble again.

19 These are the only two things I can talk about with
20 complete confidence on regarding Mr Brownlee. There
21 were other minor things, knuckles on the head, and I can
22 remember being hurt by him on other occasions for menial
23 things like dropping a pen or forgetting a book.
24 Forgetting a book was quite a serious thing and you
25 would be terrified.

1 Mr Burnett, the headmaster in the junior school, was
2 equally handy with the clacken. What was different
3 about him to Mr Brownlee was that that there was light
4 and shade with him. There was just no light with
5 Mr Brownlee at all. He was always just absolutely
6 terrifying. Whereas Mr Burnett you could get that
7 jovial side of it, but if you stepped out of line he
8 would still administer a clacken. I never saw
9 Mr Burnett giving the clacken, but from people who got
10 it from him, it seemed that it was more so people would
11 be told he had done it rather than to leather someone.
12 Mr Brownlee would leather you.

13 Mr IDO

14 There were no other teachers in the junior school
15 who punished me, although I saw people being punished.
16 Mr IDO in various guises would punish people, even in
17 the playground he would clip people around the ear. You
18 felt when Mr IDO lost his temper you knew he was going
19 to lash out at someone, but it tended to be more
20 troublesome boys that he would get a hold of. Whereas,
21 I genuinely didn't feel like I was a troublemaker.

22 Mr IBU

23 Mr IBU was the PE teacher, he would definitely
24 take things too far. For example, he would chest pass
25 a basketball into someone's face which would be sore.

1 He didn't do it to me, but I saw him doing it. Noses
2 burst and people being taken out of the hall and thrown
3 half down the stairs. The only thing he did to me was
4 when I was playing rugby and had missed a tackle. He
5 was angry and picked me up off the ground by my armpits
6 and gave me a right talking to. He was a strong little
7 guy.

8 I wouldn't say he was particularly fair to the
9 coloured people in the school. He had quite a streak
10 where that was concerned. We maybe had two or three
11 Asian people in our year, a tiny percentage. This one
12 guy just wasn't good at gym. I don't know if there
13 would have been much of a difference if he had been
14 white, but I think he would have been afforded a bit
15 more leniency. We were trying to run and jump and do
16 a forward somersault in the air and land on the mat. If
17 you landed on your back it was fine, but if you landed
18 on your feet then that was the desired effect. It was a
19 big deep mat.

20 Every time this kid ran up he would bail out halfway
21 through and rotate to the side. This infuriated
22 Mr **IBU** and he told the kid if he did that again he
23 would kick the mat away. The boy said he was trying,
24 but next time he did it Mr **IBU** kicked the mat away and
25 the boy landed on the floor on his back.

1 I would say there was a reasonable amount of racism.
2 There was a younger kid, two years below us, who wore
3 a turban and everyone would grab at the turban. I can't
4 think of anyone other teachers treating anyone
5 differently, but Mr [REDACTED] definitely did with the Asian
6 boy. It was clear he had a disdain for this kid.

7 I wasn't really comfortable with what Mr [REDACTED] would
8 do in the changing rooms. He would come in and stand in
9 the shower block when we were all told to shower. He
10 would stand and make eye contact with you. There was
11 never any touching or anything like that, but it felt
12 wrong. You definitely felt that he was looking at you.
13 What was his reason for being in there? I just didn't
14 think that was right. All the boys spoke about it and
15 thought it was weird.

16 We weren't allowed to wear boxer shorts under our
17 gym shorts. We were supposed to wear supportive pants.
18 He told us that if we were caught wearing boxer shorts
19 he would make us run round the school yard naked, which
20 was never handed out but the threat was weird. He was
21 only a gym teacher and I think he retired in 199[REDACTED] or
22 199[REDACTED].

23 Ephors.

24 On my first day or first week of senior school,
25 I was walking through the playground and a tennis ball

1 hit me. You weren't allowed to play with footballs, you
2 had to use a tennis ball to play football. I wasn't
3 even aware there was a game going on. Two ephors picked
4 me up and took me into the ephors' room, which was
5 directly underneath the teachers' common room at the
6 corner of the play yard. There were different play
7 areas depending on what age you were.

8 There was a big thing at the school which was being
9 binned. You had the big refuse bin in the corner of
10 your classroom and if your own classmates were doing it
11 to you, you had a relative chance of survival, being
12 able to fight it off. If it happened typically they
13 would help you out of the bin after it happened. It was
14 a bit of a laugh.

15 When guys are doing it and they are seven or eight
16 years older than you it's not the same. These guys put
17 a chair on a desk and put me on top of that in a bin,
18 which was on the chair. They forced my bum into the bin
19 so my feet and arms were pointing up and then left me
20 there for the rest of the break. Until the bell went.
21 The whole time people would come in and just be throwing
22 stuff at you, making you wobble so you would maybe fall.
23 I doubt they would have let me fall but you don't know
24 that as a 10- or 11-year-old kid, you are just
25 terrified. That happened during the first couple of

1 days of me going to the senior school.

2 When the bell went we all moved classes at the same
3 time, but there was a ridiculous bottleneck that they
4 had between two buildings between Donaldson's and the
5 main school yard, which was called the hole in the wall.
6 The hole in the wall would just be populated by older
7 delinquents. You would go through there and get kicked,
8 pushed over, spat at, all sorts of things. There would
9 be teachers walking through there, but they would just
10 be minding their own business.

11 Exams/leaving Edinburgh Academy.

12 I didn't finish my education at the Academy. I was
13 held back a year after not achieving enough GCSEs. You
14 needed to get five or more at C grade or higher to
15 progress to the next year. There were so many kids in
16 our year that didn't achieve that. Normally there are
17 one or two a year, but for some reason in our year
18 I believe there were maybe 12 to 14 of us that didn't
19 get five GCSEs. There would have been around 95 pupils
20 in our year, so quite a large percentage of pupils from
21 a fee-paying school didn't get a basic level of
22 education that year.

23 I was made to resit fifth year along with the other
24 three boys, even though I believed there were more than
25 three boys who hadn't achieved the five GCSEs. I had to

1 attend classes with the year below me. My friendship
2 groups were changed immediately and I was put into
3 a different form class. I was instantly labelled. The
4 only time I saw my original year was at break time,
5 lunchtime and at sport.

6 When the results came out and before I went back to
7 the Academy, my recollection is that they said that they
8 didn't think I was going to get any more from the
9 school. I don't think that was ever officially put in
10 a letter or spoken about. They could have asked me to
11 stay on, but they made me feel like a failure the whole
12 time anyway. If they were telling me that I wasn't to
13 be there any more, I wasn't going to be there.

14 Life after Edinburgh Academy.

15 I went to Telford College to do my Highers.
16 I needed help. I didn't need it taught, I needed
17 guidance with school work. I didn't know how to get
18 from a point to passing the exam unless someone spent
19 time with me. At that point I had accepted that I was
20 stupid and I didn't really want to move forward with
21 further education.

22 I dropped out of college and literally did ad hoc
23 work. I then got a job with a finance company.
24 I literally started at the bottom and worked my way from
25 the mail room up to the sales job. I then got a job in

1 the motor trade. I worked there for the next 20 years
2 or so and ended up running a dealership. I moved across
3 into oil four and a half years ago and I am in business
4 development, sales, relationship building, that sort of
5 thing.

6 My son is dyslexic and has dyspraxia and I'm fairly
7 certain I am, although I've never been tested. I had
8 some learning difficulties to a point, but clearly
9 something happened to me in primary 6 that made me
10 really unhappy as a child. Mr Brownlee had left his
11 mark on me as I came through and I was just terrified of
12 any confrontation or conflict. The school just
13 completely and utterly failed when it came to me.

14 I have stayed in touch with lots of my peers and
15 have a really good friendship group.

16 We have a WhatsApp group with about 15 or 16 of us.
17 Of that group, seven of us went to a reunion. Out of
18 the 95 kids in our year, and including the seven from
19 our group, only nine people went to the reunion. One of
20 my friends thought it would be good for me to put some
21 current perspective on the school. None of us really
22 had fond memories of the school. He said I should go
23 back down and go round the school again and he would
24 come with me. I went a few weeks ago. It's really
25 different. It's really co-ed now. They have taken away

1 the hole in the wall and there is a huge big space you
2 can walk between. A lot of it looks more like a school
3 and is more child friendly.

4 When we were at the reunion and speaking to other
5 people about it, people who had done really well in
6 life, despite not doing particularly well at school were
7 saying: how did we let this carry on? How was this
8 normalised behaviour? None of us could really get our
9 heads round it. There were obviously boys who did very
10 well at school, who fitted in that school perfectly,
11 whose parents before them will have fitted in perfectly,
12 who were academic. I just think it was the wrong school
13 for me, but I also think the school was wrong.

14 In general, you can't set yourself up to deal with
15 the 5 per cent of people who are going to do great at
16 school. You need to set the school to cater for
17 everyone and they just didn't. They weren't even close
18 with that.

19 I walked around with some of my friends but didn't
20 go into any of the classrooms. It felt nicer to see it
21 more like a school, but it brought back some horrible
22 memories.

23 Impact.

24 The main impact for me is that I can't bear
25 confrontation. Anything to avoid it. I will lead with

1 an apology every time and expect it to be my fault.
2 I have spoken to my wife about it. She is one of five
3 siblings, so was brought up with confrontation. Loudest
4 is right, whether right or wrong with her. She comes
5 from a family with very healthy confrontation. I'm the
6 complete opposite. I'll avoid conflict at all costs and
7 to the point that it is not healthy.

8 I think my experience at the Academy has affected my
9 relationships with my children, but probably in a good
10 way. My son works in the same building as me. It's not
11 that I keep a constant eye on him, but I know he does
12 have struggles. I knew there would be another avenue
13 for him rather than school. He didn't perform
14 brilliantly at school, but he did get additional
15 support. It's made me a lot more aware that it's not
16 a one suit fits all. He's proved he can disassemble
17 a high-pressure tool and can put it back together again.

18 When my granny passed away, I was close to her and
19 I asked about counselling but I never followed it up.
20 Clearly I need to. I know that. It's the cost
21 I suppose and if you wait for it on the NHS it will take
22 forever. I had no idea how affected I was with
23 everything until I started talking about
24 Edinburgh Academy. Today's been another indicator.
25 I thought I would be able to talk about it without

1 getting upset, but I'm not.

2 Recently I think about my time at the Academy daily.
3 Before that I probably tried not to consciously think
4 about it.

5 Reporting of abuse.

6 I had a conversation with my parents before my mum
7 died. I had a brilliant bond with my mum. She probably
8 overly protected me from my dad, maybe she should have
9 let him know how I was doing at school. It turns out my
10 dad had a horrible experience at his school. He had
11 been sent to a boarding school hundreds of miles away
12 with his trunk on an overnight train. He ended up down
13 there as an only Scottish boy in his school and his life
14 was made hell.

15 I've spoken to him about Mr Brownlee, who was
16 actually a member of his golf club. If he any idea of
17 what went on he would have done something about it. My
18 dad's full of anger and full of regret. He had
19 a similar teacher who he has told me about and he's just
20 gutted that I had the same.

21 There have obviously been some allegations made
22 against the school. The police sent out a letter to
23 some who had either been named or who were of our year.
24 I'm not sure what the criteria was, but I didn't get
25 a letter.

1 My friend got one. He knew that I had had a tough
2 time, because I had spoken to him about it. My friend
3 said that maybe I should took into it. It stated the
4 name of the Operation, I can't remember what it was,
5 something tree. I contacted the police and made
6 a statement against Mr Brownlee.

7 I've had a letter from the Justice Department saying
8 that they are still considering evidence against
9 Mr Brownlee. I have had two letters from them just
10 keeping me abreast of what's going on.

11 Lessons to be learned.

12 Hopefully the school has learnt that you can't give
13 power to pupils who haven't been trained. If there is
14 smoke about a teacher, go and see if there is a fire.
15 I understand that we live in a society where you can
16 stop the job and say something now and something has to
17 happen. It just felt that they were aware of violent
18 and unacceptable conduct and abuse by staff and by
19 senior pupils to younger pupils and they just didn't do
20 anything about it. It was widely discussed by everyone
21 at the school, who had been given the clacken, or had
22 been struck with an object. We spoke of which teachers
23 were to be feared. So I'm sure the teachers would have
24 been aware of this as well.

25 There wouldn't have been one teacher at the school

1 who wouldn't have known Mr Brownlee's reputation, that
2 wouldn't have known Mr [REDACTED]'s reputation. Someone just
3 needed to be brave enough and to say: this isn't
4 working.

5 I felt that at the time the teachers were perhaps
6 fearful of speaking out, especially when Mr Ellis was in
7 charge, as I doubt they would have been listened to or
8 perhaps they would have been seen as being soft. It is
9 hard to speak up when you are seeing something that is
10 not acceptable, which I can relate to, as it has taken
11 me over 30 years to speak about the things that happened
12 to me.

13 It felt normalised by the school that this type of
14 behaviour was 'just how it was' and therefore would just
15 be the same for you. It would probably have done the
16 teacher a favour by others speaking out and have taken
17 him out of that situation. To do what the Academy did,
18 give people a glowing reference and send them on to
19 another school, was wrong. Since leaving the school,
20 I have read that Edinburgh Academy gave a reference to
21 a teacher who was known to them as an abuser to move the
22 problem on. This was rather than expose themselves and
23 have the law deal with the teacher and the school take
24 the negative press. This isn't something I can vouch
25 for or that I have witnessed. It is only something

1 I have read since leaving the school. I am not sure of
2 the teacher in question. The school needed to be brave.
3 If there was a problem, they should have communicated it
4 to everyone and have it sorted out.

5 In my mind, I don't think seven senior school years
6 is a sensible thing. I think six is a push. You look
7 at the English structure and they have four years and
8 then an upper form college. We seem to be stuck and say
9 it's always been done like this, so we'll just leave it.
10 We need to be able to look at different ways to educate
11 people who don't fit in that perfect box of knowing how
12 to read and write, study and perform well in an exam.
13 They might be terrible in real-life situations. I found
14 that I am a leader. I found that in sport because
15 I could inspire people to do better than they thought
16 they could. But the minute I went back to the classroom
17 I was battered back down again. They should have
18 encouraged that.

19 An all-male school is totally wrong, there is no
20 place for it in society and I was glad that the Academy
21 is co-ed now.

22 I think we could have benefited from a guidance
23 teacher. Someone we could go to and speak to. We did
24 have Mr Haslett, who was our RE teacher, he was also the
25 school reverend. He made it clear you could go to him

1 with any problems. He was always warm and friendly, but
2 I don't think there was ever anything specific that you
3 could go and chat to him about. He would never check in
4 on you, but you did feel you could go to him. It was
5 just that culture was normalised. People getting
6 beatings, punishments, it was all normalised. My kids
7 maybe saw one fight when they were at school. We were
8 living in fight club, there were constant battles.

9 I think they need to integrate the prep school into
10 the senior school so people know what they are going
11 into. The access week my kids had before they went to
12 their senior school was really important. Even having
13 buddies from older years to younger years would have
14 been helpful. Also regular career advice with proper
15 options, just because your parents are wealthy enough to
16 send you to private school doesn't mean you want to go
17 to Oxford, Cambridge or St Andrews.

18 I have no objection to my witness statement being
19 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.
20 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are
21 true."

22 My Lady, the statement is signed and it is dated
23 15 August 2023.

24 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much, Ms Bennie.

25

1 of time was a really good part of my life.

2 There were a couple of factors that led to the
3 decision to ultimately send me to boarding school. The
4 first factor was that my parents were keen for me to
5 have a good education. Some of the state senior schools
6 in the area we were living at the time had their
7 challenges. My parents were happy to work hard so that
8 I could get a decent senior school education.

9 The second factor was that my parents were starting
10 to get worried that they were reaching a stage in their
11 careers where they needed to start moving around. The
12 economy was beginning to turn and they were beginning to
13 think that they may need to move around and travel a lot
14 because of business. There was a general feeling that
15 they might have to move and it would help my education
16 if I was consistently in one place.

17 I don't remember the detail of what was discussed
18 with my parents, but I do remember them talking with me
19 about going to boarding school. I understood from our
20 discussions that my parents genuinely felt they might
21 have to move because of work commitments and because of
22 that boarding school did make sense to me.

23 I genuinely felt that going to boarding school might
24 be good and that it would be worthwhile thing to do.
25 I felt that it was something which I would get a good

1 outcome from.

2 I ultimately took the entrance exam for George
3 Watson's College and Edinburgh Academy just before the
4 summer holidays of 198█. My father had actually gone to
5 Watson's. After passing both entrance exams I had
6 a choice of which school I would like to go to. I was
7 very much involved in a discussion surrounding where to
8 go. In the end, after visiting both the boarding houses
9 at Watsons and Edinburgh Academy there was something
10 that left me feeling that things were a bit more
11 welcoming at Edinburgh Academy.

12 Looking back, although I felt everything was all
13 right, I didn't really know what I was letting myself in
14 for. I suppose I was just hoping for the best and not
15 really considering the enormity of it all.

16 Edinburgh Academy was a fee-paying school that
17 accepted both day and boarding pupils. I started at
18 Edinburgh Academy in August 198█, when I was 11 years
19 old. I ultimately left when I was 17 in the summer of
20 199█. I was a full fee-paying pupil at the school.
21 I'm aware that there were other pupils who received
22 reduced fees and bursaries, but that wasn't the case
23 with me.

24 Academic years and classes.

25 There were seven academic years at

1 Edinburgh Academy. The first year would be for the
2 children who ordinarily would have been in their final
3 year of primary school or prep school. A number of boys
4 joined in the second year because they would finish off
5 their time at their primary school or prep year first.
6 Your second and third year at the school were more
7 generic years, where you were taught a number of
8 subjects. Fourth year was your foundational year ahead
9 of your GCSEs. Fifth year was when you actually took
10 your GCSEs. There were two further years, sixth and
11 seventh year. Seventh year was optional. Over those
12 years you would sit either A-Levels or Highers. You
13 could, if you wished to, do your Highers and A-Levels
14 over the course of either one or two years.

15 There was a lot of discussion with your teachers
16 surrounding what route you would take in sixth and
17 seventh year, with much depending on what levels you
18 were at in particular subjects.

19 The way the subjects were taught was that it was
20 streamed into sets. Because of that you wouldn't
21 necessarily have the same set of pupils around you as
22 you went from lesson to lesson. You would be in the
23 same class with whoever was at the same academic level
24 as you were in the particular subject you were doing.
25 I think what set you were in was determined by your year

1 end results. That was problematic, because you could be
2 doing very well over the course of the year but you
3 might just have bad results in the end-of-year exam.
4 I presume the ultimate decision was made by the head of
5 the respective department.

6 Staff who were present at Edinburgh Academy.

7 Staff structure.

8 There was a court of directors who oversaw the
9 governance of the school. When I was at Edinburgh
10 Academy several of the directors had been there a long
11 time. There were directors who had been on the court
12 since the 1960s. That would have meant that they had
13 been there for 20 or 30 years. Evidently, there was no
14 diversity or healthy turnover among directors. Looking
15 back, given my knowledge of other institutions, that
16 wasn't a healthy thing. To me, that may have been why
17 the school was still living many of the challenges it
18 had faced in the past.

19 There was a housemaster attached to each boarding
20 house. Housemasters were probably the staff members who
21 you would get to know the most if you were a boarder.
22 Those were the people you had most contact with. You
23 were living in the same house with them in the evenings
24 and the weekends, so there was more interaction there
25 than with your class master or any other staff member.

1 There was a matron attached to each boarding house.
2 I recall them, but couldn't name any of them. The role
3 of the matron evolved over the time I was at school to
4 one that was quite important. There was a little bit of
5 a maternal aspect attached to their role. They would
6 have a role in caring for boarders in the boarding house
7 and generally make sure everything ran properly. They
8 would tour around and make sure that you weren't doing
9 the wrong things. I have memories in particular of the
10 matron in Jeffrey House making sure we were all okay.
11 That wasn't necessarily through directly asking us how
12 we were, but more keeping a general eye on us all.

13 Every year you had a different class master. The
14 class master's role was to look after a cross-section of
15 boys from the academic year you were in and to keep
16 an eye on how you were progressing across the individual
17 subjects you were being taught. I guess the hope was
18 that if you had a consistent class then you would make
19 some friends from that. Looking back, it was quite
20 difficult for the class master to gain a thorough
21 understanding of what was going on with each particular
22 child, because they weren't thoroughly exposed to what
23 was going on across all of the classes.

24 The only classes they would have seen their pupils
25 in would be the class in which they were teaching them

1 a subject themselves.

2 The majority of staff members had arrived from
3 an earlier time. There were more than ten staff members
4 who had arrived in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s when I was
5 at the school. I think that left a legacy of teachers
6 who had been at the school throughout the period prior
7 to me starting, when I understand there was all sorts of
8 terrible instances of abuse.

9 However, over the time I was at Edinburgh Academy,
10 there were new members of staff who came in with new
11 ideas that did improve things to a certain degree.

12 Staff.

13 Laurence Ellis was the rector of Edinburgh Academy
14 throughout my time there.

15 Mr **IDX** was my first housemaster in Mackenzie
16 House for the first couple of years I was at the school.
17 Dr Blackmore was my second housemaster in Mackenzie
18 House. He was my housemaster for one year. He was also
19 a chemistry teacher. He was a very nice guy.

20 Peter Wilmshurst became my housemaster when I moved
21 to Jeffrey House, he was my housemaster until I left the
22 school. He joined the school in January 1966. He took
23 more of a worldly view of the boys in the house. His
24 wife would occasionally become involved in looking after
25 the boys in the house.

1 IBU was my PE teacher and sports master. He
2 would have been roughly in his 40s or 50s when I was at
3 the school. When I was there he would have been one of
4 the longest serving teachers at the school. He was
5 there throughout the whole time I was at the school.
6 I think he left the school the year after I left. He
7 was stocky and about 5.5 feet tall, he would have been
8 a similar height to me by the time I was 13 years old.

9 Tony Cook taught science. I am pretty sure he
10 taught me biology at some point. He was a good teacher
11 and a genuinely nice person.

12 The children at Edinburgh Academy.

13 There was a mixture of day and boarding pupils at
14 Edinburgh Academy. The composition of the pupils was
15 one of the interesting dynamics at the school. The new
16 joiners to the boarding house, Mackenzie House, in the
17 first year at aged 11 generally did not know each other.
18 A lot of the day pupils in the first year of the senior
19 school however did know each other from the prep school,
20 that could lead to you feeling a bit of an outsider when
21 you went to the school during the day when mixing with
22 the day pupils. I remember feeling relieved to be
23 returning back to the boarding house at the end of the
24 day because of that.

25 I am aware of some people describing that there is

1 a hierarchy among pupils at boarding schools. I have
2 seen it described that some pupils were regarded as
3 first division and second division among staff. Those
4 who are first division are the ones who are good at
5 sports and academia, with the rest being regarded second
6 division.

7 From my experience, it is a lot more granular than
8 that. It was any detail that made you vulnerable in
9 such a setting, such as your social standing or what
10 your parents did, physical appearance, whether you were
11 introvert or extrovert, your accent, every feature that
12 stood out was potentially a weak spot. I think your
13 social standing was crucial in Edinburgh Academy.
14 Whether you were part of a family of wealth or whether
15 your parents were influential was key. I think it made
16 a difference if your parents knew someone who was part
17 of the court of directors and so on. Some boys were
18 from families who were part of royal families and
19 governments abroad. All of those things fed into how
20 vulnerable the boys were.

21 Unfortunately for me, I didn't tick many of those
22 boxes when it came to social standing. There was
23 an incident that I think speaks of the differing ways in
24 which staff spoke to you and your parents depending on
25 your background. There was either a parents' evening or

1 parents' day some time early on during my time at the
2 school. My father and grandmother had come to the
3 school. The rector, Laurence Ellis, came up to say
4 hello in the yard. I suppose my father in that moment
5 was excited and proud to show his mother that I was at
6 Edinburgh Academy.

7 Laurence Ellis had barely said hello when he
8 literally, mid sentence, cut off talking and walked off
9 to speak to another set of parents. Both my father and
10 grandmother were completely speechless as Laurence Ellis
11 clung to the other set of parents right across the yard.
12 He had completely bizarre body language as if he was
13 almost bowing down to these other parents. I think it
14 was at that point it started dawning on us all that
15 I was just there to be making up the numbers.

16 Routine at Edinburgh Academy.

17 I remember being dropped off by my father at
18 Mackenzie House. I was a big bag of emotions because
19 I had left my mother. I was frightened because I had
20 never spent any significant time away from my parents up
21 until that point. The reputation and even the
22 architecture of the school was quite imposing. It was a
23 place that was totally different to anywhere I had
24 experienced before.

25 I can't remember anything along the lines of who

1 welcomed us or who spoke to us on our first day.
2 I can't say that they weren't welcoming. Neither can
3 I pinpoint any memories surrounding there being
4 a concerted effort to make sure new arrivals or first
5 years were put through some sort of process to make sure
6 they were welcomed or to make sure any concerns were
7 addressed.

8 When you were a new boarder at the school in the
9 first year you had two key things to be concerned about.

10 The first is following the routine and rules of the
11 boarding house and making sure you're on time and
12 following the rules.

13 The second is the routine and rules of your time in
14 the school building and making sure that you're on time
15 and following the rules there.

16 I remember that Edinburgh Academy was a difficult
17 place to find your way around when you first started.
18 You had a map, but you would pretty much have to find
19 everything on your own. I would often be running from
20 one class to another because I was late and had got
21 lost.

22 One of the first big challenges was walking from the
23 boarding house to the school. You quickly realised that
24 if you were in your uniform and you were on your own you
25 were a bit of a target for boys from other schools. You

1 quickly learned that you needed friends around you and
2 to be in a big group in order to ward off any potential
3 issues. I was made aware that there were fights between
4 boys from Edinburgh Academy and Broughton High.
5 Typically the issues surrounded one boy from Broughton
6 High that consistently targeted Edinburgh Academy pupils
7 on their way to the school.

8 I remember that during my early time at the school
9 I was desperately trying not to break any of the rules
10 or to do anything wrong. I just hoped that I would
11 through the process of osmosis eventually work out how
12 things worked. I vividly remember an occasion on my
13 second or third day when I got lost on my way to
14 an English class. As I was running towards the
15 Donaldson building there were quite a lot of people
16 coming towards me in the opposite direction on the
17 footpath. I momentarily stepped on to the grass so that
18 I could get around and carry on running. After doing
19 that I was pulled aside by a teacher and given quite
20 a telling off for running on the grass. My heart was
21 beating 1,000 miles an hour. I just thought to myself,
22 'Oh my God, is this what it is really like?' I couldn't
23 believe it and hadn't ever experienced that sort of
24 discipline before.

25 Looking back, I spent the opening weeks and months

1 at the school just doing everything I could to get
2 through each day and get from one thing to the next.
3 I adhered to all of the rules and followed the routines,
4 but would think throughout a lot of the days at the
5 school I just want to be home back to the boarding
6 house.

7 Sleeping arrangements.

8 Mackenzie House was a boarding house where pupils in
9 first, second and third year boarded. I think somewhere
10 between 20 and 30 pupils boarded in Mackenzie House at
11 any one time. There were three dorms of between six and
12 eight pupils within each boarding house.

13 Jeffrey House is the boarding house where pupils
14 boarded from fourth year onwards. From records I have
15 seen, there were approximately 27 pupils boarding there
16 at any one time. In terms of dorms and bedrooms, there
17 were approximately four or five dorms and then
18 approximately between six and eight single rooms for
19 boys in the more senior years.

20 Meal times and food.

21 Nothing remarkable happened during meal times. Meal
22 times were places of general safety and togetherness
23 among the boarders.

24 Washing and bathing.

25 When I first joined the boarding houses we typically

1 washed in one big room with seven or eight baths in it.
2 You would try to time your run from when there was no
3 one else there or when the other boys who might annoy
4 you might not be there. There was no supervision of
5 those bath times and I don't remember any staff being
6 near us.

7 At some point in Jeffrey House the baths were
8 replaced with showers. There again was no supervision
9 by staff. You had a shower and that was it. My
10 experience in the boarding houses contrasted to the
11 showering times after sports and PE, where the master,
12 **IBU** would, for whatever reason, be watching us.
13 That felt unusual when compared to our experiences
14 elsewhere in the school.

15 Schooling.

16 There were many areas where the quality of the
17 education at Edinburgh Academy was good. My main
18 observation was that it was important to get into the
19 right level of class or set. It was also important to
20 get into the set where there was the right teacher.
21 A lot of it did come down to which teacher you had and
22 the class environment you were in, rather than the
23 overall approach."

24 My Lady, I move to paragraph 47 on page 13:

25 "The school did a great deal in terms of events and

1 things to do, which was good. Some things were arranged
2 for all pupils and others were arranged for groups of
3 pupils. There were things arranged by the housemaster
4 and housemaster's wife, just for boarders. Most of the
5 activities were optional. You began to realise that if
6 you picked the ones you were interested in, you would
7 probably have a good time. It was another way you could
8 settle into the school. Your participation activities
9 were seen by the school as a big thing. It was viewed
10 very negatively if you weren't participating in anything
11 at all. A lot of things were good fun and created good
12 memories.

13 You would be regarded as very strange if you didn't
14 play rugby or cricket. There were a range of other
15 things you could do, but only a tiny fraction of boys
16 did them. That was partly because there weren't many
17 teachers available to expand those activities. The
18 teachers that were available mostly focused on sporting
19 activities. Fortunately for me, although I was pretty
20 useless at cricket, I had played rugby for a number of
21 years prior to starting at the school, that really
22 helped me.

23 Looking back, had I not been a boy who had got
24 involved in rugby I would have been a boy who would have
25 been even more on the fringes of the school. I would

1 have found things much more difficult.

2 Inspections.

3 I'm sure I do remember at least one inspection at
4 the school. That was of the school in general rather
5 than the boarding house. I can't remember any of the
6 details surrounding that. I just have a feeling that we
7 were told to behave when someone or other came in.
8 There might have been the odd inspector sitting in the
9 classes. I don't remember anyone speaking to me during
10 those inspections. I don't remember inspections
11 happening regularly. I can say for certain that I have
12 no memories of inspectors coming into the boarding
13 houses or there being regular inspections of the school
14 in general.

15 Pastoral care.

16 There wasn't anything formally in place when it came
17 to pastoral care. There wasn't a guidance teacher or
18 someone like that. I don't remember anyone being
19 specifically assigned to me. You could, should you
20 wish, speak to your housemaster or your class master,
21 but there wasn't a formal system or structure
22 surrounding that. The onus was very much on the child
23 seeking someone out to speak to.

24 There was a chaplain attached to the school, but
25 there wasn't a great deal of contact with him. You

1 might come across him in religious education or during
2 morning assemblies, but there wasn't any one-to-one time
3 with him on a prearranged basis.

4 Healthcare.

5 There was a sick bay in the boarding houses where
6 you would be sent if you had a fever or needed to be
7 isolated from the rest of the boys in the house. At the
8 school there was someone you could go to, but I don't
9 recall what they were called. Interestingly, I note
10 from the records that [REDACTED] in the
11 school was IBU [REDACTED]. I can see that there were
12 various other staff members assigned various roles
13 surrounding health and safety. I don't remember going
14 to see IBU [REDACTED] with any ailment.

15 Looking back, I would never have gone to him were
16 I to be ill or injured

17 Discipline.

18 You were issued a book that listed all the rules
19 that you were expected to adhere to by when you began at
20 the school. That book was called 'Notes for the
21 information of parents, Geits and new boys and girls'.
22 There are rules surrounding how you should behave at
23 school and how you should behave going to and from
24 school.

25 It contained quite an extensive list of regulations.

1 Reading some of the stuff that featured in that book, at
2 the age of 11 years old, could be really intimidating.
3 Coming from the background I had, a lot of what was
4 contained in the book was quite alien to me. Reading
5 through the stuff now I appreciate just how serious it
6 all was. The whole framework of it. The language used
7 and the quite cold way the rules were communicated spoke
8 to the system. It was all quite daunting.

9 Nobody really talked you through what the various
10 forms of punishment entailed or how they would be
11 applied when you started at the school. That certainly
12 wasn't the case when you were applying for the school.
13 When you applied for the school everything was glowing
14 and full of positivity about just how great the place
15 was. The existence of various forms of discipline only
16 became apparent by the time the book arrived. I don't
17 remember anyone ever saying for example 'this is what
18 red lines are' or 'this would be where informal corporal
19 punishment would be used'.

20 Even by the end of the first year you weren't
21 familiar with all of the rules that the book contained.
22 In my first few years I was generally fairly fearful of
23 getting into the trouble, so I did my utmost to make
24 sure I wasn't in a position where I might have to face
25 discipline. After I was assaulted, I started to feel

1 angry at the school. I think that led me to thinking
2 about doing things more contrary to the school rules.
3 My perception of the school was irrevocably changed.
4 I can see on reflection that I must have felt incredibly
5 unsafe after the assault. Subconsciously I think
6 I wanted to be around older boys or boys who teachers
7 were more wary of, especially in groups. Over the years
8 after the assault I would get into more trouble.

9 The varying use of discipline by staff.

10 Nice teachers would ask if anything was wrong, but
11 a lot of them would proceed straight to some form of
12 punishment. There were varying approaches amongst the
13 housemasters towards discipline. On the whole,
14 Peter Wilmshurst, my housemaster in Jeffrey House, was
15 fair, balanced and took everything into account. He
16 would put everything else aside to support boys rather
17 than taking the side of the system or the school. If
18 you ever got into trouble, he made an effort to see
19 things from your point of view. I'm not sure whether
20 that perspective was always the case among all the
21 housemasters. I think that some took a more
22 disciplinarian approach to the boys and were guided more
23 by the school rulebook. Those housemasters took a more
24 binary approach to the rules. They would inflict
25 whatever punishment was due, irrespective of the

1 circumstances of the perceived misdemeanour.

2 I can't pinpoint specific examples, but there were
3 times when the way which a boy was disciplined by staff
4 was affected by the background or social standing of the
5 particular boy who had misbehaved. I didn't directly
6 see that happening, but you did sense those things were
7 going on in the background. There were times when boys
8 had transgressed and miraculously the punishment would
9 be minimal or non existent. Sometimes that can be
10 because a punishment might affect whether a boy would
11 get a certain thing or get on a particular class. The
12 boy would appear doing something you couldn't do where
13 you would have misbehaved in similar circumstances. You
14 would question why they were allowed to be doing
15 whatever they were doing.

16 Red lines.

17 The warning shot for pupils who were behaving badly
18 was to work on red lines. Red lines were pieces of
19 paper with red lines on them which you had to write on
20 by way of punishment. I don't know whether the school
21 chose the colour red because it was the colour of
22 danger. Red lines might be issued for things like
23 repeatedly not handing homework in on time or minor
24 things in class like talking or being disruptive.
25 I think the original intention was that you would have

1 to write an essay on those pieces of paper as
2 a punishment. However, quite regularly the more
3 vindictive teachers amongst the staff would make boys
4 write out lines on the paper instead. That could be up
5 to 200 lines at a time.

6 Corporal punishment.

7 There is a line in the rulebook which states,
8 'Informal corporal punishment will be used but rarely by
9 masters only and in all cases it is reported to the
10 rector'. I don't know what informal corporal punishment
11 means or how it was distinguished from formal corporal
12 punishment. My impression was that things were just
13 beginning to move away from corporal punishment as
14 a general practice around the time I began at the
15 school.

16 I remember that in first year there were instances
17 where friends in the boarding house told me that they
18 had been hit with a slipper by the housemaster,
19 Mr [REDACTED]. I more specifically recall an example of
20 one boy saying that the next time it happened he would
21 put a comic book down the back of his pyjamas to help
22 lessen the pain of the slipper. I never saw Mr [REDACTED]
23 administering the slipper nor was that something
24 I experienced myself. I only saw boys coming back after
25 receiving that punishment.

1 I don't think the use of corporal punishment in the
2 boarding houses was something that happened a great
3 deal. It wasn't something that appeared to be
4 administered to boarders regularly. However, there were
5 boys in other rooms I might not necessarily have been
6 aware of.

7 Dr Blackmore replaced Mr [REDACTED] during my time in
8 Mackenzie. I have no recollection of Dr Blackmore using
9 corporal punishment. I would never imagine that he was
10 the sort of housemaster who would have used that as
11 a reprimand.

12 Hard labour.

13 There is a line in the rulebook which states 'the
14 second master may impose hard labour and there is also
15 a system of daily reporting to class masters'. Hard
16 labour generally consisted of work around the school.
17 It entailed things like picking up litter in the grounds
18 or cleaning parts of the school. The job was invariably
19 something physical along those lines where you had to do
20 stuff with your hands. You would see boys who were
21 issued hard labour. It was something that was very
22 visible. I don't know whether that aspect was something
23 that was done deliberately by the staff.

24 I can't think of any specific boys who were given
25 hard labour, but it was issued quite a lot. It was

1 generally known among the pupils when someone was given
2 hard labour. Word would get around that such and such
3 had been given it. I think that was partly because
4 pupils were trying to get a sense of what sort of things
5 were getting punished and what was the level of threat
6 at a particular time in the school. Unfortunately,
7 pupils who were issued hard labour would be the target
8 of name calling from other pupils. It could be a pretty
9 lonely place to be when you are undertaking that
10 particular punishment.

11 Hard labour was something that I experienced on at
12 least one occasion. I seem to remember there was
13 something happened in the boarding house where
14 Peter Wilmshurst was not happy with us for whatever
15 reason. I can't remember the specifics of what
16 happened, but the entire boarding house was asked to do
17 something. Looking back, I think that particular
18 incident was probably all handled quite well.

19 Detention, suspension and expulsion.

20 Within the book it states that 'discipline is
21 maintained by all masters, masters may impose lunchtime
22 detention or in more serious cases Saturday morning
23 detention. Before a boy will normally be put in
24 detention they should be given red line paper'. If you
25 got into further trouble after red lines had been issued

1 that may have led to the boy who was getting disciplined
2 receiving detention on a Saturday. Detention would only
3 come in where there were more major things happening.
4 Often the incident would involve groups of boys and
5 would be for things that were more serious. It could be
6 things like getting caught smoking and so on. Beyond
7 detention there was suspension and expulsion used in
8 particular extreme situations.

9 Bullying and rituals in the boarding house.

10 From time to time, there was bullying and things
11 happening among the pupils. When I first arrived there
12 were various rituals among pupils, but I can't remember
13 the detail of those. I think there was one where there
14 was a bath filled with cold water and several boys would
15 be forced to get into the bath. I think if you didn't
16 win a particular competition then you had to go up and
17 take the cold bath. My impression was that as the new
18 housemasters came in there was more of a focus on
19 identifying these things and making sure that they
20 weren't happening. As far as I recall, the new
21 housemasters were generally successful in removing those
22 traditions.

23 Abuse at Edinburgh Academy.

24 Having read into Edinburgh Academy and some of the
25 abuses that historically occurred there I feel fortunate

1 that I didn't suffer anything further at the school.
2 However, I think the challenge for me was that the
3 single big incident that happened to me had such a big
4 impact. Being assaulted by a teacher in the manner
5 I was really did have a big effect on me.

6 Unnamed teacher.

7 I can't remember which teacher it was, but they
8 would occasionally throw board rubbers across the
9 classroom at boys who weren't paying attention. I saw
10 instances of that over the years.

11 **IBU**

12 **IBU** was a PE and sports master at
13 Edinburgh Academy. He had this constant aura around
14 him. You would be constantly on edge around him because
15 of the way he handled certain situations. You were
16 constantly in fear of what he might do next, because he
17 was quite unpredictable. He would regularly stop
18 a class to single out something a boy had done. He
19 would do that in quite a dramatic fashion. All the
20 other pupils would stop what they were doing to watch
21 and think, here we go and what is going to happen to
22 this boy now. You would be sitting there hoping that
23 you wouldn't be drawn into what was going on. It would
24 be the more vulnerable boys who tended to be singled
25 out. If you were one of his top rugby players you would

1 never be one of the boys who was singled out.

2 I remember one occasion where I was singled out. We
3 were in the PE class playing basketball. I can't
4 remember it was before or after March or April 1989.
5 A basketball came in towards me from quite a high
6 height. I caught the ball into my chest as if it were
7 a rugby ball. Seemingly that wasn't to [REDACTED]'s
8 taste because he stopped the class. He said to me
9 something along the lines of, 'What the hell do you
10 think you're doing?' It felt like a disciplinary
11 moment, even though it was something minor I had done
12 wrong from a sporting point of view. I think I said to
13 him something like, 'I suppose, sir, I was trying to
14 catch it like a rugby ball'. That must have made the
15 situation worse, because as far as he was concerned that
16 wasn't how you caught a rugby ball either.

17 The incident didn't end in anything further like
18 physical contact, but it did end with me being
19 completely humiliated in front of my fellow classmates.
20 I felt like I was absolutely nothing and my confidence
21 knocked.

22 I think in either March or April 198[REDACTED] in [REDACTED]
23 I somewhat on a whim enrolled myself in an 800m running
24 race for sports day. I would have been about 13 years
25 old at that point. I put my name down on the list of

1 all the sporting events that had been placed up on the
2 notice board outside of the gym. As sometimes happens
3 when you enrol yourself in things like that, I started
4 questioning why I put myself forward. Having changed my
5 mind about competing in the event, I later crossed my
6 name off the list that had been placed on the notice
7 board. I knew that the right course of action would
8 have been to discuss my change of heart with IBU
9 but I didn't because I was scared of him. I just didn't
10 have the courage to do that.

11 Some time later I was sat in a French class in the
12 main school buildings. It was a classroom above the
13 canteen and the dining area of the school. The teacher
14 taking the class was Madame Anne Kennedy. Suddenly
15 there was a knock at the door. Everybody in the class
16 stopped what they were doing, because they were
17 wondering what was happening. At the door was
18 IBU and he said he wanted to see me. He had
19 taken the time to figure out what class I was sitting in
20 at the time. He would have had to have looked up my
21 lesson plan to find me and made the decision to
22 interrupt the class to summon me out. Being taken out
23 of the class was unusual, so my heart was beating 1,000
24 miles per hour. Knowing how IBU was I just knew
25 that whatever was going to happen wouldn't be good.

1 I left the classroom and IBU closed the door.
2 Outside the classroom door we were standing at the top
3 of the stairs. I was standing with my back to the
4 classroom door with IBU in front of me, the
5 stairwell to my left, and not much room to the right.
6 There was no one around because it was the middle of
7 lesson time. I think he knew that there wasn't going to
8 be anyone around where we were standing. I remember
9 standing in front of him and seeing pure anger in his
10 eyes and facial expression. He then said something
11 along the lines of, 'Who the hell do you think you are,
12 crossing your name off the list?' That was the sort of
13 way that he would talk to pupils. From the perspective
14 of discipline, when thinking about the other things you
15 could get into trouble for at the school, crossing my
16 name off a list probably wasn't the biggest
17 transgression in the world. The only thing I remember
18 after being told off is IBU punching me in the
19 face. He punched me once to the side of my face. It
20 was quite hard. I remember being really scared.

21 I then walked back into the class with a clear red
22 mark on the side of my face. The impression I got was
23 that my other classmates thought that I had been hit in
24 the face. I remember them looking at me with their own
25 eyes of fear thinking something had happened outside.

1 I just sat down at my desk. I remember I was sitting at
2 the front of the class because it was one of the
3 subjects I really enjoyed. I did everything I could to
4 stop the tears and my emotion coming out. That was my
5 instinctive reaction to what had happened and that's how
6 I continued to feel for the rest of the day. I didn't
7 want to show any weakness. I was basically in fight or
8 flight mode.

9 I can't remember whether Madame Anne Kennedy asked
10 me anything after I returned back to her classroom after
11 the incident. I do remember that she wasn't happy about
12 me being taken out of the class. She was a very proud
13 lady and I think she was offended at her class being
14 interrupted by IBU I must have caught some sort
15 of facial expression on her part to be thinking that
16 now.

17 After the incident I don't think IBU's
18 attitude changed towards me. I don't remember anything
19 of great significance. However, more generally it did
20 sort of feel that I was back to square one within
21 myself. I began to see the school in a completely
22 different light. I was away from home and I no longer
23 felt safe. All the efforts I had made to settle into
24 what I felt were scary surroundings were all unwound in
25 that one moment. I suddenly didn't know who I could

1 trust or who might hit me next. It just completely
2 changed my view of the school.

3 I never saw [IBU] be physical towards anyone
4 else. I can't think of any situations where I saw that
5 happen. I don't recall any other boys reporting being
6 physically assaulted by him. However there were rumours
7 around [IBU] being sexually inappropriate with
8 boys. There was one rumour surrounding an incident with
9 one boy, but I don't remember the specifics surrounding
10 that. I can't remember the name of the boy who told me,
11 but I recall he said the incident had occurred years
12 previously. I don't remember any further details than
13 that. I didn't see any sexual abuse happening, nor did
14 I experience anything directly myself.

15 [IBU] did hang around the showers in a way that
16 was quite odd. That was a topic that was regularly
17 discussed among the boys and was something that
18 I experienced. It was pretty universally discussed
19 among the boys. He would stand watching us getting
20 undressed and going into the showers. He would be fully
21 dressed and he would be hovering. He wouldn't
22 necessarily be there all the time, but he would pass by,
23 look in and stand around watching. Sometimes he would
24 be there watching for longer periods. Looking back,
25 I don't understand why we couldn't have got undressed

1 and washed ourselves in the showers without having him
2 standing there watching us.

3 LADY SMITH: Ms Bennie, I think I'll just take a short break
4 now for the mid-afternoon break and sit again in five or
5 ten minutes. Thank you.

6 (3.06 pm)

7 (A short break)

8 (3.13 pm)

9 LADY SMITH: Ms Bennie, would you like to pick up where you
10 left off?

11 MS BENNIE: Thank you:

12 "Reporting of abuse whilst at Edinburgh Academy.

13 I don't remember who, but I almost certainly told
14 one or more of my classmates what had happened after
15 being physically assaulted by IBU. I didn't
16 report what had happened to any staff members. Looking
17 back, me not reporting what happened speaks to the
18 environment of the place in general. I just didn't feel
19 comfortable that there would not be unintended
20 consequences if I had reported it. There was no one
21 available at the school who you could readily and easily
22 speak to.

23 The main people that you could have gone to were
24 your class master or your housemaster, but I chose not
25 to speak to them. My housemaster at the time,

1 Peter Wilmshurst, and his wife were both incredibly
2 caring people and I would say that looking back at my
3 report they were trying to understand what was wrong.
4 However, one way or another I just didn't feel confident
5 enough to raise with them what had happened.

6 I didn't speak about the assault with my parents.
7 Looking at the access we had to communicating with our
8 parents there was no ready, quick way in which we could
9 contact our parents if something happened at the school.
10 If you felt comfortable reporting something to them in
11 the heat of the moment, then that opportunity would be
12 lost because of the practicalities of quickly doing
13 that. There would inevitably be a period of time where
14 emotions would subside and you would decide that you
15 didn't want to worry your parents with whatever the
16 thing was. I think that was what happened with me."

17 My Lady, between paragraphs 84 and 98, 'Josh' covers
18 what happened when his parents ran into financial
19 difficulties. This was when he was at the stage of
20 sixth year of his school. His parents could not pay his
21 outstanding fees, interest rates were high at that time
22 and when fees and the interest due on the fees remained
23 unpaid 'Josh' tells us that the Edinburgh Academy
24 pursued his parents for payment.

25 'Josh' speaks of the pressure exerted on his father

1 by mounting debts. Those debts included what was owed
2 to the Edinburgh Academy. Although the school discussed
3 the possibility of a structured repayment plan with his
4 father, 'Josh' tells us that his parents could not
5 afford the restructuring that was proposed. Very sadly
6 'Josh's' father committed suicide shortly after 'Josh'
7 had received the results of his Highers. His father's
8 estate was then sequestrated.

9 'Josh' explains that he and his family consider the
10 school, or at least the bursar's office, to have been
11 insensitive to his parents' plight and also lacking in
12 compassion, particularly after his father's suicide,
13 when his widowed mother was having to cope with the
14 financial fallout that ensued.

15 My Lady, I then move on to paragraph 95, on page 28:

16 "Leaving Edinburgh Academy.

17 I ultimately managed to complete my studies at the
18 school."

19 My Lady, I then move on to paragraph 99, on page 29:

20 "One of the offers I had was for Manchester
21 Polytechnic to study European business with French.
22 Unfortunately I was one grade short. I can't remember
23 whether Peter Wilmshurst got in contact with me or I got
24 in contact with him, but he helped me through putting
25 a word in with Manchester Polytechnic. He explained to

1 them what had happened, that my father had died.
2 Incredibly Manchester Polytechnic agreed to let me in.
3 They phoned me to say that they had received a letter
4 from Peter Wilmshurst and that they were going to allow
5 me to come."

6 Turning to paragraph 101:

7 "I came away from Manchester Polytechnic with
8 an upper class second degree. I then moved to London.
9 The company I now work with is a company which has
10 a fantastic culture and looks after its staff. In many
11 ways it does a lot of the things that Edinburgh Academy
12 didn't do when it comes to looking after the people who
13 are there. Managers step in if they see someone is
14 struggling. That had been the case with me."

15 My Lady, I now move on to paragraph 108 on page 32:

16 "Impact.

17 When I look back on the time when my parents decided
18 to send me to boarding school, I think in hindsight
19 I should have probably sat my parents down and told them
20 to do something different. Reflecting back, I was
21 probably quite a sensitive boy. I was naturally quite
22 introverted but quite thoughtful. I was quite shy and
23 was generally quite afraid of being involved in big
24 group activities or performing in front of an audience.
25 That was my personality profile when I began at the

1 school.

2 I think the physical abuse I suffered had
3 a significant impact on my education. I do think had
4 I not experienced what I had at the school in terms of
5 the incident with IBU [REDACTED], the management of the
6 school and the way the school was surrounding the
7 situation regarding fees I would have done much better.

8 For years following leaving the school and my
9 father's death I suffered anxiety, panic attacks and
10 depression."

11 My Lady, I move on to paragraph 120 at page 36:

12 "Reporting of abuse after leaving Edinburgh Academy.

13 I randomly chanced upon the Inquiry on the internet.
14 That, combined with the Nicky Campbell coming out with
15 saying what he experienced at the school, was the final
16 bit where I realised I had to tell my story. It was
17 then that it dawned on me that my story tied in with the
18 culture, the duty of care and the governance at the
19 school. All that came together and gave me the
20 confidence to say something.

21 Following contacting the Inquiry, I was contacted by
22 the police. I can't remember exactly how that came
23 about. The interview with the police focused on the
24 assault by IBU [REDACTED] "

25 My Lady, I move to paragraph 125 on page 37:

1 "Records.

2 I still hold a set of my school reports. Reports
3 were firstly compiled with each individual subject
4 teacher placing a grade and a comment. After that, your
5 class master and housemaster would read all of those
6 entries prior to making their own comments within your
7 report. The housemaster and the class master's comments
8 effectively provide a summary of what everybody was
9 thinking was happening to the pupil at that moment in
10 time. It's been really instructive for me to read over
11 my school reports. Looking at them now, through the
12 lens of things that were happening to me, which were so
13 negative and the more traumatic events at the school,
14 I find them completely enlightening.

15 They have allowed me to see what was going on and
16 understand what the impact was when incidents did occur.

17 The reports from first year tell the story of a boy
18 who is quiet, withdrawn, reserved, tense and anxious.
19 There are comments like, 'Concerned he's not
20 participating in class'. Some of the teachers were
21 quite neutral about how I was presenting but others are
22 more frustrated about it. The latter teachers are
23 saying that they don't understand why I am so quiet and
24 wish that I had participated more.

25 All of that just tells me that I was a boy who was

1 frightened and wasn't in a place where I felt safe. The
2 way I was then wasn't because anyone had done anything.
3 It was more the environment, the atmosphere, the
4 discipline and the framework of the school that was
5 having an impact. An interesting thing that I also
6 noted was that I was performing badly academically which
7 I hadn't felt before reading back the reports. I have
8 to give my last two housemasters credit. I can tell
9 from their comments in my later reports that they tried
10 to focus and thread things together. However, there
11 wasn't any kind of follow-up during the first year.
12 I don't recall any housemaster or class master sitting
13 me down and asking me why I was so quiet and defensive.

14 I can see from my reports for second year that I am
15 clearly starting to settle into the school. The reports
16 are showing some promise in terms of my work. It can be
17 seen from the comments that I am making a real effort.
18 There are still some comments surrounding me being quiet
19 and reserved, but many of the teachers are quite
20 optimistic about my future. I can see my housemaster
21 noting that I have become a prefect in Mackenzie House
22 and notes that I have become one of the most effective
23 leaders in the house. The rector, Laurence Ellis, ends
24 my second year report with "well done, going nicely all
25 round".

1 My third year reports are glowing. There are lots
2 of use of the word 'excellent'. I am noted as working
3 hard and a pleasure to have around. My academic
4 performance is quite strong. I'm doing well in maths
5 and science and the housemaster reports that I am
6 reliable and good company. I think those reports show
7 that I have clearly come out of my shell and was someone
8 who had become confident in their surroundings. That is
9 all positive. However, what is really important to
10 highlight is that it took me three years to get to that
11 position. I think what my second and third year reports
12 reflect is that I was determined and made a huge effort
13 to settle in. They evidence just how much hard work
14 from an emotional development perspective was required
15 to settle into such a tough environment.

16 Every confidence step in a teenager's development
17 generally is hard fought. However, going back going ten
18 steps backwards can happen in a heartbeat. I think that
19 change is reflected in my reports subsequent to the
20 incident with **IBU** and into the remaining years of
21 my time at school. That was towards the end of third
22 year and into fourth year in 1989. My class master,
23 Mr Zambellas, notes in a subsequent report "he has
24 hitherto been very quiet". Another report refers to
25 "taking a back seat". My housemaster, Peter Wilmshurst,

1 sums up the change by saying, "I also think 'Josh' is
2 passing through somewhat of a difficult phase. It is
3 difficult to analyse it, but it manifests itself in
4 a somewhat surly response to any form of criticism".
5 Notably, academically my reports deteriorate as well.
6 This is particularly so when it comes to maths, where
7 I had previously had no issues and had done quite well.
8 Taking the reports at face value alone they evidence
9 that I had suddenly withdrawn from the school process.
10 I have become defensive. I am seeing the school in
11 a different light. I'm fighting the system and
12 I haven't found a way of telling anyone what had
13 happened.

14 Lessons to be learned.

15 There are multiple comments in my reports from
16 teachers commenting on how quiet and withdrawn I was.
17 Observations may have been made in reports but nothing
18 really further was done. None of those teachers ever
19 sat me down and attempted to get to the bottom of why
20 I was the way I was. There was no real follow-up. None
21 of them called for any investigation surrounding why
22 these things were happening. The comments in my reports
23 were left hanging in the air as if it was quite normal
24 for them to remain a mystery.

25 Looking back, the school weren't very good when it

1 came to interpreting why they weren't doing something or
2 why you were on the fringes. There wasn't really a good
3 system present to question why a pupil would not be
4 performing well, not getting involved in activities or
5 becoming withdrawn.

6 There shouldn't be anything at stake when you are
7 trying to report something that has gone wrong. The
8 whole environment of Edinburgh Academy didn't lend
9 itself to being a place where things could be reported.
10 You just didn't have any confidence that you would be
11 believed and you worried about the potential
12 repercussions. There was just too much at stake. From
13 what I have seen reported in the media, I wasn't the
14 only one who was too scared to say anything. There
15 should be a mechanism that addresses boys who are in
16 distress and tries to identify situations where they may
17 have been harmed at school. I would hope that now far
18 more time is spent with individual pupils in really safe
19 places. It should be a safe place where children can
20 say things in the knowledge that there will be no
21 repercussions.

22 I think many of the teachers felt alone. It didn't
23 feel like they felt they were part of a team, a system
24 or a cohesive framework. It just didn't appear that the
25 teachers and the school were acting together as a really

1 strong team. I remember in particular supportive
2 teachers who I was very close to being very critical
3 about certain things that were either going on at the
4 school or things other teachers had done. My sense was
5 that those supportive teachers didn't have any way of
6 overcoming or solving those things. That isn't to say
7 that teachers didn't collaborate with one another.
8 I remember all the teachers in each department being
9 close and collaborating with one another. However,
10 I don't remember there being a more cohesive approach
11 across the organisation as a whole. I would say that
12 the debacle in the maths department and me needlessly
13 being dropped down a lower set in French are examples of
14 what was going on in that respect.

15 The composition of the court of directors, and their
16 disconnect from the rest of the school in my view, had
17 an impact on the overall governance and culture at the
18 school. It was as if it was a mysterious body that no
19 one knew anything about. If I work my way down the list
20 of members from my time at the school there were
21 brigadiers, major generals, lords and ladies. I don't
22 know whether or not they were former teachers or pupils,
23 however we're talking about people in high and prominent
24 positions. To me, it would be more sensible to have
25 persons with experience in teaching and running schools

1 on the Court of Directors rather than people from
2 military backgrounds. I think the composition of the
3 court of directors did lead to there being a more
4 military approach to things in the school, in terms of
5 discipline, the decision making at the school and the
6 more regimented way that they went after fees.

7 Boarding schools need to have a governance structure
8 that is transparent and displays a visible connection to
9 the school. It should be laid bare for everybody to see
10 what they are doing. That allows schools to be open to
11 critical challenge from parents and anybody else.
12 Transparency allows people to form their own views on
13 how the school is being run and the decisions that are
14 being made. It enables parents, and anyone else, to
15 make their own judgments about whether the school does
16 have its pupils' best interests at heart and are
17 following their duty of care.

18 Boarding schools should publish in totality all of
19 the contents of their minutes, like other organisations
20 who are charitable or public bodies are obliged to do.
21 I think that Edinburgh Academy, even now, isn't being
22 transparent enough about its activities. I don't think
23 that is necessarily a sinister thing, but more something
24 that is just good practice. There's a point about ten
25 years ago where everything seems to stop in terms of

1 their archives. I can see from their website that they
2 aren't keeping their digital archives up to date. I can
3 further see that all of Edinburgh Academy's posts on
4 social media have disappeared. Why they have done that,
5 I do not know."

6 My Lady, I move on to paragraph 139, on page 42:

7 "Hopes for the Inquiry.

8 I can't quantify or actively relate to all of the
9 experiences of other pupils who attended the school.
10 However, I can quantify and discuss my own story.
11 I think it is interesting to explore who governed the
12 school, how the school was being governed and the
13 overriding culture of the school. I would hope that
14 through looking into those aspects the links between my
15 story and the experiences of others would become
16 apparent to the Inquiry.

17 When you tell a story such as my own and focus on
18 specific incidents and experiences, it can leave people
19 with the impression that everything was terrible.

20 I don't want my story to detract from the achievements
21 of the other pupils or my huge appreciation for those
22 teachers who supported me during my time at the school.
23 There were teachers present at the school who tried to
24 help me. There was a small handful of teachers,
25 particularly towards the end of my time at the school,

1 who I couldn't be more grateful for. There were all
2 types of individuals who supported me regardless of what
3 the school was doing and irrespective of my behaviour.
4 They were just there for me.

5 However, leaving that aside, my experiences were
6 that the boarding school I attended made a choice to
7 protect their own interests over and above me as
8 a pupil. They chose to effectively override the duty of
9 care they held for a child in their care. I hope that
10 the set of circumstances doesn't continue into the
11 future for children at fee-paying schools.

12 I have no objection to my witness statement being
13 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.

14 I believe the fact stated in this statement are true."

15 My Lady, the statement is signed by 'Josh' and it is
16 dated 31 March 2023.

17 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

18 MS BENNIE: My Lady, that completes the read ins that were
19 listed as being agreed for today.

20 There are some remaining on the non-agreed date read
21 ins.

22 LADY SMITH: When you say that, these are some read ins that
23 weren't planned for any particular day and the authors
24 of the statements aren't expecting them to be read on
25 any particular day, but know it may be where they could

1 be fitted in.

2 We have about half an hour. Would either of the two
3 that I know are sitting on the possible list fit in that
4 period?

5 MS BENNIE: The shorter of the two.

6 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

7 Just while you are getting that out, in case anybody
8 didn't pick it up, we were using [REDACTED] s name
9 again, but of course he's redacted because he has the
10 benefit of my general restriction order, so please don't
11 identify him outside this room.

12 Right, so where are we going, Ms Bennie?

13 'David' (read)

14 MS BENNIE: My Lady, the statement bears the reference,

15 WIT-1-000001224.

16 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

17 MS BENNIE: My Lady, this witness wishes to remain anonymous
18 and he's adopted the pseudonym of 'David'.

19 My name is 'David'. My year of birth is 1966.
20 I was born in Sheffield. I have two sisters who are
21 older than me. I started off at nursery school before
22 I was sent to preparatory school for boys in Sheffield.
23 I went there from five years old and I think I was there
24 from about 1971 to 198[REDACTED].

25 It was day pupils that went there. It was

1 a horrible school. There were some rather rough lads at
2 the prep school. I got picked on and there was lots of
3 corporal punishment for the whole school."

4 My Lady, I now move to paragraph 15 on page 4:

5 "My dad was relying on promises of a pay rise which
6 never materialised to pay fees for my school and my
7 sisters. When he died of cancer in 1980 I left the prep
8 school and went to another school in Sheffield because
9 we couldn't afford the fees.

10 Thereafter, in the same year my father died, my
11 sister suggested to my mother that we move to Edinburgh
12 where she was at university and that I go to a Scottish
13 school.

14 Edinburgh Academy.

15 My sister and my mum chose for me to go to
16 Edinburgh Academy because we could not afford to go to
17 Merchiston Castle School, where the Edinburgh side of my
18 dad's family went. None of my family or my dad's family
19 had ever gone to Edinburgh Academy.

20 In late 1980 I went for a visit to Edinburgh
21 Academy. I had an interview with them and sat the
22 entrance exam to get in. I passed that just and no
23 more. I found the teachers a bit aggressive and I could
24 tell they had a temper. My family had a chat with them
25 about my difficult circumstances around losing my dad.

1 I had a look around the main school and it was quite
2 impressive. I felt like I was going on a great
3 adventure and that I was just getting away from a bad
4 experience.

5 I started at the beginning of the school in the
6 September 198█ when I was 13 years old. I had to board
7 in Mackenzie House for the first term because my mum was
8 staying down in Sheffield until she sold the house.
9 Once she sold the house and moved up here, she got
10 a house in Edinburgh. I moved in there and became a day
11 pupil.

12 The actual school was in Henderson Row, Edinburgh
13 and there were pupils from all over. Some of them came
14 from abroad, from all around the world.

15 It was mainly boys but latterly there were some
16 girls in the A-Level year, who came from St George's
17 Girls' School to Edinburgh Academy for the final year.

18 There was a junior school for the Geits and there
19 was a separate building near the Botanical Gardens,
20 Edinburgh. There was a Rector, a Deputy Rector, then
21 there was the Senior Master and the rest of them were
22 junior staff. However, because I was having to survive
23 on a daily basis I never really recognised anybody other
24 than the rector, Mr Ellis. He was the headmaster of the
25 whole school and Mr ICL█ was the █ for the

1 third year of the senior school. I was in class 3█
2 There was Mr David Standley who took an interest in the
3 senior matters.

4 Mackenzie House, where we boarded, was situated
5 somewhere between the school and the junior school, it
6 was about a 10-minute walk from the school. The house
7 was an old fashioned Victorian building and had probably
8 been adapted to house the pupils. Everything about my
9 one term there is a bit of a blur really. The
10 housemaster and mistress there were Mr Lister and his
11 wife, Mrs Lister, and they stayed there. They were very
12 nice people and when I was ill once they gave me very
13 nice minced beef food.

14 The maths teacher, Mr Buckley, and the matron also
15 stayed there. I never knew her name but Mr Buckley and
16 the matron got on rather well.

17 The staff were really quite unassuming people, but
18 didn't take much interest in the boys. I don't remember
19 them having kids of their own.

20 There were about 20 or 25 boys at most in Mackenzie
21 House. They were about my age and some a bit younger.
22 It was a mixture of boys from the senior and junior
23 schools. There was another house for older boys, but
24 I cannot remember what it was called.

25 Mackenzie House had at least three floors, the staff

1 quarters were on the top floor and the dormitories were
2 on the one below them. On the ground floor we had
3 a central room where we had our meals and we did our
4 studies in the evening. It was like a lounge and dining
5 room. There was also a sick room. There was also
6 a back garden and I remember having a Bonfire Night out
7 there.

8 When I started at the school I had a Yorkshire
9 accent, but not a strong one because I had gone to prep
10 school and it was a bit of a nondescript accent."

11 My Lady, I move to paragraph 40 on page 8:

12 "Schooling.

13 I was a depressed sort of boy and maybe my academic
14 side was affected. When you are depressed, you are
15 abused and ill treated in all sorts of social ways and
16 being ostracised that depression can turn into
17 psychosis. That is the way I was being pushed in the
18 aftermath of my father's death. You can tell you are
19 becoming psychotic because your thinking changes. There
20 wasn't any mental health support at the Academy.

21 [DX] who was [REDACTED] was a kind
22 person who you could get more sense out of, but that was
23 as good as you got."

24 My Lady, I move to paragraph 62 on page 12:

25 "Discipline.

1 There was never any disciplinary deliverance that
2 I saw. It was all kept very private and secretive if
3 someone was disciplined. Any instances of lack of
4 control or anything getting out of hand they tried to
5 keep it quiet.

6 There was the cane getting used, but the only one
7 I knew that got caned was a boy who was friendly and
8 I don't know why he got it, when it seemed like the
9 other boys that were bad didn't.

10 I think there was a detention but I never got it.
11 I was too scared after prep school in Sheffield to do
12 anything wrong. The teachers at prep school in
13 Sheffield were vindictive to me and that was what caused
14 my fear. The teachers at the Academy weren't personally
15 vindictive to me. Pupils did get suspended or expelled,
16 but it was kept quiet and you didn't hear about it until
17 much later on. I think it was all done in a polite way
18 where they would get in touch with parents and basically
19 say your boy isn't wanted at the school anymore and they
20 would be taken away quietly.

21 Mr ICL [REDACTED] did once get me and another boy and
22 grabbed us by the scruff of the neck when we had
23 a disagreement.

24 Prefects.

25 Some of the senior boys were known as ephors, who

1 wore different ties and administered justice. They were
2 basically prefects who reported any bad behaviour to the
3 teachers. The ephors were only in the school and not in
4 the boarding house. To be an ephor you had to be good
5 at rugby and in the First XV or a top sportsman, be at
6 the top in the cadet forces or excel at school. I never
7 saw them doing much to be honest. If there was any
8 fight they would break it up. I don't think they gave
9 out any punishments, they just reported to the teachers.

10 I was never an ephor as I was never good enough at
11 the different things. I was only good at chemistry and
12 you had to be a sporting and academic superstar. It was
13 the teachers who picked them I suppose, but there was
14 a secrecy around it.

15 Culture.

16 There was a culture in the school where people
17 weren't supported very well and if they were a bit
18 different they didn't get proper support. There were
19 two American boys who weren't treated well and their
20 parents removed them from the school before they even
21 got to sit their exams.

22 David Standley, who was a physics teacher, always
23 loomed large in pupil psychology, his presence
24 threatened against telling tales and giving anything
25 away about the school. He was a malevolent and dominant

1 figure in the school for years. At one stage he
2 headhunted a boy to the Academy from Dundee High School
3 because he was a very good cricketer. He was Indian.
4 He was brought to the school and didn't live up to
5 expectations, both at cricket and academically. He was
6 a very nice lad but people didn't like him and he didn't
7 fit in. You could say it was racist.

8 He didn't get the support from Mr Standley or
9 anybody else when he needed it and by the end of the
10 year he was very down about it. I tried to be friendly
11 with him and he told me how he felt he had been treated.
12 He felt that because he was a low class in the Indian
13 caste system it put him off making friends with people
14 and he didn't feel he could be with friends with me.
15 That is when he needed support from teachers and he
16 didn't get it. He ended up leaving and going back to
17 Dundee.

18 There were two Africans at the school as well but
19 they were treated well so there was an imbalance in the
20 way that they treated people culturally.

21 There was a real lack of supervision and discipline
22 where the teachers allowed boys to be unruly.

23 In the fifth form Mr MacIlwaine was a French teacher
24 and I felt sorry for him. One day he was out of the
25 room and the boys had a bit of a riot. One boy threw

1 a chair at the white board and put a dent in it. The
2 rest of the class started rocking the wooden lockers
3 against the wall and deliberately breaking up the
4 plaster. When Mr MacIlwaine came back in I think he
5 noticed what had happened but he never did anything. He
6 was such a gentle man and he couldn't really cope with
7 such violent boys.

8 There was another couple of teachers who taught
9 physics and French and I suppose the boys would have
10 called them 'weedy'. There was bullying and threatening
11 towards them and they got no support from the teaching
12 peers. They just had to give way to the bigger boys and
13 play second fiddle to them.

14 The physics teacher didn't last long at all and very
15 quickly left to go to Europe to do a physics job at The
16 Hague. The French teacher actually witnessed an assault
17 by a boy on another boy and never did anything about it.
18 The French teacher wasn't able to control the class and
19 was easily influenced by the boys. I never witnessed
20 this as it happened after I left, but I was informed
21 that the gym master, **IBU** had been beaten up by
22 the boys. He was small in stature and it is another
23 example of how unruly behaviour wasn't stopped and the
24 teachers were vulnerable when the boys wanted to have
25 a go at them.

1 There was a culture of drinking among the pupils.
2 There was a chemistry conference at Stirling University
3 where some of the older pupils were drinking and one got
4 drunk and was sick. Other incidents included boys who
5 were out on canal boats in the evening would just tie up
6 the boats at a mooring and go to the local pubs. There
7 was a lack of supervision from the teachers that allowed
8 this to happen.

9 There was a rather unpleasant culture in Mackenzie
10 House which is why they closed it down. The boys even
11 harassed Mr Buckley and the matron and they made her cry
12 once. They were picking on her and bullying her.
13 Matron and Mr Buckley once went on a trip to the beach
14 and the boys followed them. They went to extreme
15 lengths to make life unpleasant for them.

16 On Bonfire Night they even aimed fireworks at Mr
17 Buckley's window that faces onto the garden. They were
18 out of control. I was trying to keep a low profile and
19 keep away from it all, but there was the threat of
20 reprisals at every stage to be honest.

21 Abuse at Edinburgh Academy.

22 Whilst I was boarding, my family were sending me
23 letters and they were being stolen and intercepted by
24 boys in the house so I never got to see them. They were
25 also stealing my personal belongings, including a pen

1 I got from my father from his university.

2 There were two particular boys from the year below
3 me and a boy who was in my year. They were the ones
4 that would be at the pigeon holes, muck about with my
5 mail and steal it. They ridiculed me when I made
6 mention of it being missing. They would steal stuff
7 from my desk or from my personal belongings like the pen
8 and just say: I'm having this, and just take them.
9 I sort of tried to get at the boys from the year below.
10 I caught one of them chasing another boy. I thought
11 this was an opportunity to get him for stealing my
12 letters so I chased him and when we were in the dining
13 room I gave him a bit of a thump. Unfortunately, his
14 friend came by fairly quickly. He hit me quite hard and
15 beat me up in the study area in the boarding house.

16 This other boy was younger than me but very violent
17 and very aggressive and he could have been a boxer.
18 I tried to fight him, but he beat me up worse than
19 I beat his friend up. There were other boys there, but
20 they weren't going to interfere. When there were fights
21 there was always an audience and they used to enjoy the
22 prospect of a bit of a fight.

23 After he had beaten me up another boy came along.
24 I thought he was rescuing me from being beaten up any
25 more, but he sexually abused me. He gripped my

1 testicles, sort of held on and told the other boy to go
2 away. I was left alone in the study area with him and
3 the intimation I took from it was that I have stopped
4 you getting beaten up, but I will sexually abuse you
5 instead. After that I got left on my own feeling
6 bruised and bashed. I don't know if he ever did this to
7 anyone else, because some of these people were quite
8 private about what they do.

9 I had severe bruising on my face and that was
10 noticed by Mr Lister, but he never bothered to do
11 anything about it. He asked me what had happened.
12 I was too scared to say, as there would have been
13 expulsions. There was a strong peer-group pressure not
14 to tell tales. I just told him it was nothing to worry
15 about.

16 The boys in my class gave me a rude nickname which
17 was 'Faeces', and that was horrible. They gave me
18 wedgies, which meant they put their hands down your
19 trousers and pull your pants up. It wasn't just me. It
20 was common and one that used do it, he was a very angry
21 boy and I think he had issues with his father. He later
22 joined in a full sexual abuse on me when we were at
23 school.

24 This happened when I was about 16 or 17 years old
25 and was in the sixth form, in class 6■. Two boys who

1 were in the same year as me jumped me when I was in the
2 classroom and put their hands down my trousers and
3 groped my testicles. One of the boys was the same boy
4 that had grabbed my testicles in Mackenzie House.
5 I suppose by this stage I was a bit numb, oppressed and
6 suppressed not to disclose these things and I didn't
7 tell anyone because some of the teachers just thought
8 that you were not telling the truth or that you were
9 just causing trouble and they didn't want to hear it.

10 I noticed some boys from my class got beaten up
11 rather a lot. There were some little boys in our year
12 in the least academic class. They had to put up with
13 being regularly ill-treated. There were lots of
14 nicknames in the school, but these two just had to put
15 up with the ill-treatment because they were short in
16 height and stature and were not very intelligent, so
17 couldn't get themselves out of difficult situations.
18 They were picked on by anybody and everybody in the year
19 and the teachers just turned a blind eye.

20 Another pupil who was the same age as me was a lot
21 bigger than me. He was a rugby guy and had big muscles
22 and he decided to fight with me and he whacked me in the
23 head. Mr ICL the form master, broke us up and he
24 got very angry. He was an angry man. Mr ICL used
25 to shout a lot. He never did anything, just told us to

1 get on our way.

2 I later tried to be friends with that pupil. He had
3 more friends than me and they were mocking me saying
4 'friendies, let's be friendies'. In the fourth form one
5 day between classes a guy was sitting behind me and
6 trapped my legs against the back legs of the chair using
7 his legs. He started attacking me from behind. He was
8 a vicious lad and had quite a bad temper on him.
9 Mr Davies, the form master, blamed me for that one, gave
10 me a harsh word and ticked me off.

11 One day a boy kicked me in the biology department.
12 He was a big lad, over six feet tall and it was
13 unprovoked. Once of the female pupils saw this and
14 asked why I had let him do it. I told her I didn't want
15 involved in a fight because I wanted to keep on good
16 terms with the biology teachers and thought I just might
17 get ticked off for being in a fight. The teachers
18 developed an attitude towards you if you were involved
19 in fights. They took a dislike to you and became more
20 prejudiced against you.

21 I witnessed a technician one day trying to push
22 a pupil into a metal cupboard which is used as storage.
23 The pupil was just walking past and the technician made
24 body contact and tried to push him inside and close the
25 door on him. I felt he was being a bit amorous and

1 fancied the pupil. The pupil didn't like it. The pupil
2 pushed him away. It was the sort of thing that went on
3 under the radar and if it was reported would have made
4 you unpopular, so nothing further was said or done.
5 I don't know the technician's name.

6 I saw a boy chase a girl in the school yard into
7 a Portakabin which was in the females' common room. He
8 was showing off later that he had molested her. There
9 was something of a sexual nature, something like what
10 had happened to me but I don't know if it was consensual
11 or not. He just made out that it was sort of
12 satisfactory to both of them.

13 I never heard her version of what happened from her
14 or anybody else. He was actually all right, apart from
15 the incidents and was quite popular amongst everyone.

16 Mr Dawson, who had a nickname, Dowie Dawson, was
17 a teacher when I was there. He was a history teacher
18 and I heard on the television and read in the papers
19 what Nicky Campbell recently said about him. I knew he
20 had a temper, because one of the first days I was on the
21 canal boats I made him a lukewarm cup of tea and he
22 wasn't happy, he made me make him another one.

23 He never abused me physically or otherwise, but
24 I witnessed him striking pupils with bits of wood and
25 throwing the board rubber at them. He was the most

1 overtly violent teacher I saw at the school when I was
2 there. I only had him as a teacher for one year, when
3 I was in year 3. He left me alone but I had to get out
4 in case he had a go at me.

5 I dropped history because I didn't like what I was
6 seeing.

7 Reporting of abuse at Edinburgh Academy.

8 I didn't report any of the abuse I suffered at the
9 school to them, because the teachers weren't very
10 pleasant. They would just have assumed it was lies.
11 I had no trust in them and nothing would have been done.

12 I left Edinburgh Academy in 198█ and it was a big
13 relief to be finishing. After I left I went to do
14 a chemistry degree at University College London and then
15 did my PhD in Durham."

16 My Lady, I move to paragraph 116, page 21:

17 "After I left Durham I came back to Sheffield, where
18 I have worked for the NHS in mental health psychiatry
19 for the last 20 years, reading data about patients in
20 crisis."

21 My Lady, I now move to paragraph 126:

22 "Reporting of abuse.

23 I never reported any of the abuse I suffered at
24 Edinburgh Academy to the police. We were burgled when
25 we stayed in Edinburgh and I didn't find them very

1 approachable.

2 Lessons to be learned.

3 Teachers need to be kinder and more observant. Most
4 of the teachers I experienced were unkind people and
5 slightly unhinged. They just weren't the right
6 temperament for teaching lots of rather awful boys.
7 Lots of them were too soft, they need to be tough, you
8 know tough love and they need to be strong, to be
9 disciplined, but need a kind side as well. They've got
10 to be receptive and notice what is going on.

11 Boarding houses have got to be specially regulated.
12 The boarding house staff need to have proper training
13 and qualifications for working in boarding houses.
14 I will never forget Mackenzie House, not in a million
15 years. I believe it has closed down anyway.

16 I hope the Inquiry can help get new laws for
17 Scottish schools, private, fee-paying and boarding
18 schools. As far as I know, these physical aspects are
19 still going on in boarding houses."

20 My Lady, I now move to paragraph 137:

21 "I have no objection to my witness statement being
22 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.
23 I believe the facts stated in this statement are true."

24 My Lady, this statement is signed and it is dated
25 30 August 2022.

1 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much, Ms Bennie.

2 I think we'll stop there for today and tomorrow
3 resume in person --I think is it all the evidence
4 tomorrow is in-person evidence?

5 MS BENNIE: Yes, my Lady, there are three live witnesses.

6 LADY SMITH: That's right.

7 We'll start that at 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

8 Thank you.

9 (3.55 pm)

10 (The hearing adjourned until 10.00 am on

11 Tuesday, 22 August 2023)

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

I N D E X

1		
2		PAGE
3	'Andrew' (read)	2
4	'Charlie' (read)	32
5	Jenny Pearson (read)	57
6	'Mike' (read)	103
7	'Josh' (read)	140
8	'David' (read)	185
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		

