

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

IBH

Support person present: No.

1. My name is IBH and I like to be known as IBH. My date of birth is 1980. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before boarding school

2. My father is and my mother is and I have a brother who is about two-and-a-half years younger than me.
3. I was born in Edinburgh, however my father was in the army and we moved to Northern Ireland after a short period and my brother was born there. After Northern Ireland we moved to Germany and stayed in two different places there. The second place we went to was where we spent the majority of time and where I would associate spending most of my childhood.
4. I went to primary school with the rest of the kids from the regiment while we stayed in that second place. I was quite happy at school there, however my uncle had gone to Queen Victoria School in Dunblane and I was fascinated by it. A few kids from Germany had also gone, including one of my best friends who was two years older than me. I'd see him and another of my best friends come back for school holidays and hear all their stories.
5. I read the brochures from the school and when I was about eight I approached my parents and asked to go. Dad was quite supportive, however mum was dead against

it. She knew the opportunities were fantastic, she just didn't want her son in Scotland while she was in Germany.

6. I was quite persuasive though and eventually I went through the application process. At that time my father had to apply on my behalf through his chain of command and they then wrote to the school. The school thereafter sent what everyone called a 'test', although the school was very clear it was not a test, it was merely to establish where prospective pupils were academically. They had just started a learning support package and the assessment was to see if any child would require support.
7. I sat the assessment in Germany under the supervision of my school headmaster there and my father thereafter received a letter through his chain of command saying it had gone well. I then went to an open day the school had in Germany and after that I had to go to Dunblane for an interview process.
8. I'm not sure what time of year it was, however my parents drove my brother and me over for the interview and we made a bit of a holiday out of it, visiting relatives. When we arrived at the school, my mother remembered being there when the Queen came to present the colours to the school and she had good memories.
9. I think the interview process was carried out in the space of one morning, because I remember having breakfast at the guest house we were in and then going out for lunch afterwards. The first thing that happened was we were shown around by a teacher called Graham Beattie, who is a very nice teacher and who is actually still at the school. He showed us around while the rest of the pupils were all in class.
10. After that we went to the boarding house that I would be in and then we met the headmaster, who at that time was Julian Hankinson. He was fantastic and made me, a very nervous nine-year-old, feel very at ease. It wasn't terribly formal, my parents and my little brother were there and Mr Hankinson gave a brief outline of the history of the school. He told us what the charter was and what the school was gearing its pupils towards. He told us that the school had been formed following the Boer War, for Scottish children whose fathers had been killed in action.

11. He told me he had my assessment results and asked what subjects I particularly enjoyed and what subjects I didn't like. He made it clear that I was free to say, so I told him I was quite fond of maths and art. He also asked about hobbies and I told him that was one of the things that interested me about the school. I was aware that in the winter term they had a hobbies programme and I'd learned from my friends there were things like karate and judo at night and all sorts of hobbies I never got in Germany.
12. My brother and I then sat outside while Mr Hankinson had a quick chat with my parents. They came out and seemed very happy and that was pretty much it.
13. Afterwards I was given a chance to meet anybody that I knew who was at the school, so my two older friends were contacted. They came and met me and my family and my father gave them parcels he had brought over from their parents.
14. I can't remember how long it was after that interview process that I received a letter telling me that I had been successful. In the letter I was given my school number and a big list of stuff to go and buy, along with the date I would be starting.
15. The list was all for pretty standard stuff and was probably so that nobody turned up with the wrong things, like shell suits or whatever. Everything was either black or blue, like black or blue swimming trunks, a black or blue tracksuit and plain training shoes, that sort of thing.
16. My father was supposed to be getting posted to Canada, so they were trying to get me in a year early, which was possible because my birthday is in [REDACTED]. They were successful and I ended up going a year ahead of my peers from my school in Germany.

## **Queen Victoria School, Dunblane**

17. Queen Victoria School was known to me and others as 'QV'. It is on the outskirts of Dunblane and as you came through the gates to the school there was a long driveway leading to the main building, which was on three floors and almost in a horseshoe shape. On the right hand side of the driveway there was a road that took you up to the school hospital and beyond that was the staff accommodation, which was out of bounds.
18. When you went in the main building you entered a reception area where there was a porter's lodge on the right hand side. The porter would process all visitors and his office is now a security office. On the left hand side there was a small room that was called the 'colours room', which was more of a museum where former pupils had left medals and where all the old school photographs were kept.
19. You then went into a central hall, where there were brass plates with the names of the senior monitors all around the room. There were also wooden plaques with the names of the headmasters and commandants throughout the years and there were plaques with degrees on one side and commissions on the other. If any former pupil went to university it would have his name, the name of the university and what degree he got and if another boy was commissioned into the military it would have his name and where he was commissioned. Behind the central hall was the dining hall.
20. Also in the main building were the senior dormitories and a number of offices, including the commandant's office and the headmaster's office. There was also a theatre, a gym and the main school library.
21. The dormitories in the main building were called Haig House, Trenchard House and Cunningham House. Haig House, which was for older boys from S4 up, was on the first floor. Trenchard was on the top floor and Cunningham was on the middle floor. They were both for senior boys between S1 and S3. The junior years stayed in Wavell House, which was in a separate building. When you left Wavell you could pick whether

you went to Trenchard or Cunningham, before you moved on to Haig in your final years.

22. At the back of the main building was a gymnasium, which had the clothing store underneath, and beyond the gymnasium was the teaching block. The teaching block was kept separate from the boarding houses, however attached to the teaching block was Wavell House. Although the buildings were attached, they were still kept separate and there was only one way in and out of Wavell.
23. At the back of Wavell House was a small wooded area called Wavell Woods, which was exclusively for the use of the younger boys. The school chapel was right next to Wavell House and beyond that there was a large sports field and another games hall. There was also a piping and drumming building down at the sports field, along with a small indoor shooting range and a tennis court. While I was at the school there was a huge fund raising campaign and they built another sports hall down there too.
24. QV is the only school that is funded by the Ministry of Defence. The MoD covered staff salaries and uniforms and all that the parents of pupils have to pay is a nominal fee. I think it was about £250 per term in my time, which was to cover trips, pocket money and some of the extra-curricular stuff.
25. The charter of the school is to provide a stable education for children whose parents moved around a lot in the armed forces. When I went, boys had to be the son of a Scottish soldier, sailor or airman. The stipulation was that their father had to have joined as a private soldier, they couldn't be what is called a direct entry officer, although that subsequently changed.
26. The school was all boarding when I was there, although I know that there is now an option to be a day pupil if you live near enough. There were always approximately two hundred and fifty pupils and, until my last two years there, they were all boys. Girls only started being admitted to the school when I went into S5, which was around 1996.



27. Amongst the staff at the school was a senior management team, which consisted of [REDACTED], SNR [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED] who was IUR [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] GDP [REDACTED]. I'm not sure if [REDACTED] had a dual teaching role, but IUR [REDACTED] IUR [REDACTED] also taught [REDACTED]. They all used to take it upon themselves to make sure we were alright and they looked after our welfare.
28. The commandant's role changed to that of bursar and they were the link to the board of Her Majesty's Commissioners, which was headed up by the General Officer Commanding Scotland.
29. As well as [REDACTED] the school had [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and who was in reality the closest person to what your dad represented. We had a guy called QTR [REDACTED] who was a fantastic guy. His responsibility was primarily the [REDACTED] side of things and he was also involved in the combined cadet force and [REDACTED] the vehicle fleet.
30. Each house had a housemaster who lived in a separate part of the accommodation along with his family. There was also a deputy housemaster who lived there with his family and there was a matron who had her own accommodation block. In addition, every member of the teaching staff was a house tutor and usually they all taught the age group for which they were house tutor.
31. The housemaster of Wavell when I was there was OLB [REDACTED] and he too was a fantastic guy. The deputy housemaster was QYL [REDACTED] and there was Graham Beattie as well. They were also really nice guys.
32. The only junior teacher who was not a house tutor for the junior years was Ben Phillip, who was the housemaster of Haig House, the house for the oldest pupils.
33. As far as I'm aware, any prospective member of staff of the school is interviewed both by the school and by Her Majesty's Commissioners, who themselves have an understanding of military matters. I think they look for staff who also have an

understanding of military life and who have an understanding that some of the pupils might be children who had lost parents in conflict.

### **Routine at Queen Victoria School**

#### *First day*

34. I started at Queen Victoria School in August 1989, when I was nine years old. My parents drove me over from Germany again, along with my brother, however when we arrived my mother refused to leave the car and I went in with my dad and my brother. Apparently my mother cried all the way back to Germany.
35. Although it wasn't an official term, new boys at QV were called 'rookies' and the first day was known as 'Rookies Day'. When a rookie arrived they were given a second year boy who met them and showed them and their parents around. The boy that showed me around was [REDACTED] and he was a really nice guy.
36. All rookies were given a school number that was allocated alphabetically, mine was [REDACTED]. Everything we were issued with was labelled and that number was written on the labels. We were never referred to by that number, in the main we were called by our surnames.
37. As it happened, my dad's posting in Canada didn't materialise and my parents stayed in Germany, however I had already started at QV by that time. I was a year ahead of my peers, but that wasn't a problem because I had quite a few friends there anyway.
38. It was made clear that if I excelled I would go along with that year, however if I didn't I would do primary six again. It was probably quite apparent early on that I would do primary six again and I was quite happy about that. It meant I would once again be in the same class as my friends from Germany.

#### *Mornings and bedtime*

39. At that time all the primary six and seven boys were in one boarding house, Wavell. Within Wavell House there were five dormitories, which were Baird and Abercrombie on the top floor, Hopetoun on the middle floor and Lyndoch and Moore on the bottom floor, I forget what they were called. Next to Hopetoun on the middle floor was the library and attached to each dorm was an ablutions block that was shared between the two dorms on each floor. Hopetoun had its own ablutions block.
40. I ended up in Hopetoun when I first started, which was the same dormitory as one of my friends from Germany. When I was old enough, I chose to go to Trenchard House because I liked the housemaster, Bill Webster and when I moved onto Haig House my housemaster was Steve Laing, who was also the technical drawing teacher.
41. There were sixteen boys from both first and second year in each dorm in Wavell, eight down each side with a locker and a bed for each boy. Each bed space would alternate between a second year, then a first year, then a second year, all the way round.
42. In the morning either the housemaster or his deputy would come in and switch the lights on and everyone would go next door to the ablutions block. We would wash and brush our teeth, get dressed and then we would all form up outside and walk across to breakfast.
43. After breakfast we would return to the dorm and have about fifteen minutes to get our stuff ready for our first lessons. Then we would go to assembly which was held in the chapel every day for the whole school. Assembly lasted for about twenty minutes from eight-thirty and classes started at eight-fifty.
44. The second year boys obviously knew the routine and would keep us right. Every morning we had to make our own bed and, although there was no strict inspection as such, there was a points system for cleanliness and tidiness. Once a week the housemaster would have an informal inspection, usually on a Sunday, when we were in our ceremonial kit ready to go across to the chapel for the service. Each dorm would be awarded points and the dorm with most points would be rewarded and might get to stay up late and watch a movie or something like that.



45. In the evening there was prep in the teaching block, which for us in Wavell was easy, because we'd just go next door. We would do forty minutes of homework in the classroom from seven till seven-forty and then everybody would go back to their boarding house.
46. Everyone would have to have a shower and brush their teeth and then we'd get into our pyjamas before supper. At supper we were given a small snack and some milk and then we'd get into bed and read. Normally during the week it was lights out at nine o'clock, but on a Saturday that was extended to ten. You could either read until ten or watch the movie, if you'd got the movie night.
47. I don't recall there being a lie in on a Sunday morning, but I think there may have been because we had a slightly later start. We'd get ready and have the dorm inspection and then go across to chapel. After that you were free for the rest of the day.

*Mealtimes/Food*

48. All the meals were served for the whole school in the dining hall within the main building. The food was great and we were never hungry. The cooking used to be done by army chefs, although they were eventually replaced by contractors. There were usually three choices and there was always something you liked. I'm not aware of anyone having a problem with the food. Breakfast for example was either a full cooked breakfast or a choice of cereals and there was tea and coffee for the older guys.
49. The junior boys would always eat first. Each dorm would be split between two tables of eight and we all knew where our table was and could sit wherever we liked at it. There was a servery that had two sides and each week dorms would go in a different order, because obviously some items were more popular than others. One week it might be Lyndoch up first on one side and Moore on the other and the following week it would change. We would queue and tell the kitchen staff what we wanted and take it back to our tables.

50. Each day one of us would be responsible for cleaning the table up at the end. Whoever it was would clear up all the cutlery and hand it over to the kitchen staff, before giving the table a quick wipe.

*Clothing/uniform*

51. Even though we had all arrived at QV with the kit we were told to get in our letters, we were also issued with a whole load of other stuff, everything right down to pyjamas, underpants and socks, so that everyone was the same. The only thing that wasn't the same was our dressing gowns, which we'd brought ourselves. We had to send in rough measurements in advance and when we arrived we were taken down to the store rooms by the second year boy who showed us around.
52. We were given several sizes to try on before we were issued with a ceremonial uniform as well as a day-to-day uniform, socks and underwear for sport and two pairs of socks that we wore with the ceremonial uniform. We changed into what we were given for that day and then when we got to our dorms at night everything else was there for us, stamped up with our names and numbers. The ceremonial uniform, which was a kilt and a red jacket, arrived a few days later because we wouldn't need it until the Sunday.
53. At that time we used to have what was called 'walking out' dress, which you had to wear if you went outside the school grounds. It served a purpose, but it singled you out as being from the school. Walking out dress was the ceremonial kilt, shoes and socks, grey shirt with a tie and a tweed jacket, a raincoat and an 'Inverness jacket', which weighed a ton and was incredibly itchy.
54. On a school day we wore black leather shoes, black socks up to the knee and in the first two years we wore blue corduroy shorts all year round. In the older years we wore green issue trousers and if you were a prefect you were given a set of tartan trousers. We also wore a grey shirt and a blue ribbed jersey, which was MoD issue. In the summer term we would be in shirtsleeve order, with the sleeves rolled up past the

elbow. If it was cold, the housemaster would tell us to put on our tee shirt or vest that we had all also been issued with.

### *Schooling*

55. The schooling was very good, even from the beginning. We weren't bouncing between classrooms in primary school, one primary teacher would teach us the whole curriculum with the exception of P.E. In the senior years different teachers taught the various subjects and we moved from class to class.
56. When I first started I went into Ben Phillip's class and he was a very engaging teacher. He was very good at what he taught and would put his own spin on everything. He was fascinated by the Inuit people and I remember we did a really interesting project on that. Usually primary six would do a bigger project in the summer term, but because it was Italia 90 in my first summer, we convinced Ben Phillip to let us do a project on the football.
57. When I went back to do primary six again I went across to Graham Beattie's class and for my third year at QV, when I went into primary seven, my teacher was QYL [REDACTED] QYL [REDACTED]. The primary seven classroom was upstairs and mirrored the primary six classroom.
58. After primary, boys went across to S1 where there was a full range of subjects, each taught by a different teacher. I don't recall any of the teachers being poor, they all seemed to get their subjects across.
59. When we chose our Standard Grade subjects the classes split down, however until fourth year there were twenty boys in each class and when Standard Grades were finished, classes were slightly smaller. I remember in technical drawing, or graphic communication as it was called, there were only six of us.

60. The only compulsory subjects for Standard Grades were English, Maths, a science and a language and then, depending what you preferred and based on your performance in Standard Grades, you would choose your subjects for Highers.
61. Classes ran for forty minute periods, with a break at ten-past-ten until ten-thirty, then we would work until twelve-thirty and have lunch. We would all go over to the dining hall for lunch, which lasted for about an hour and classes would start again at thirteen-thirty.
62. We also worked on Saturday mornings, which consisted of two periods of classes or sport. If you were in the rugby teams there would be a competitive match and if it wasn't a home game you would travel for that and miss the classes. Come Saturday lunchtime you were free.

*Sporting/other activities*

63. Twice a week there were games, which in the winter was rugby or, if you didn't play rugby, swimming, or you could choose another sport. In the summer it was usually athletics or football.
64. When I first started at QV it was compulsory to learn a musical instrument for Highland Dancing. You could pick what you wanted and I started off playing the bagpipes, but I only lasted a couple of years. If guys were good they got picked to play in the band, which used to play at every Scottish rugby international at Murrayfield. They also played at the Edinburgh Tattoo at the end of my first year at QV and they went across to Nova Scotia for one of the tattoos there.
65. The school sergeant major taught us drill, which was built into the school day. I think we had two forty minute lessons a week when we would go across to the gym or one of the play halls. When the rest of the school had a church parade on a Sunday, the rookies would stand at the side at first before they had a pass out parade, which their parents would come to. After that the rookies joined the main parades on a Sunday.

66. I think there were six or seven parade Sundays a year, before we had the grand day, which was a big parade at the end of the year. There was always a member of the royal family present or a senior commissioned officer as their representative. They would take the salute, do the inspection and carry out the academic and sporting prize giving.

*Leisure time*

67. We had free time on Tuesday, when we finished classes slightly early, and on Saturday afternoons and Sundays after church.
68. On the Tuesdays we could walk down to the first shop in Dunblane and at lunchtime on a Saturday afternoon we could walk right down into Dunblane. I used to go to the cafes and maybe eat something downtown. Saturday night was always quite chilled out and we would watch TV in one of the two TV rooms that were in Wavell. One was at the side of the library and the other was downstairs, but usually we would go and play football or mess around in Wavell Wood, where a little burn ran through.
69. Whichever dorm had won the most points that week would have a movie night on the Saturday and get to stay up late, while everyone else was in their beds reading.
70. In the winter term there were hobbies, which all the members of staff took and some of the staff were very talented. There was a judo black belt, a karate black belt and a national runner among the teachers.
71. A hobbies list would come out at the start of term and we would put our name next to whichever hobbies we wanted to do. They were mandatory, but there was a good choice and we could choose what we wanted. Some were more popular than others, however there was something for everybody and if there wasn't something you liked you were allocated a hobby. I did various things, including running and shooting and I ended up shooting competitively for Scottish schools.

72. There was only one day in the week when we had full classes and didn't finish till about four o'clock or four-thirty. Evening meal was at five o'clock so as a result we never had much time to ourselves that day. We would go to the evening meal dressed in whatever we would need for our hobby that evening, eat our evening meal and then go to our hobby, which was usually from five-thirty to six-thirty before prep at seven o'clock.

*Trips and holidays*

73. When I was in the junior school we went on a ski trip to France for a week and again when I was in one of the senior terms. I also once went to a cross country training camp run by Steve Laing and [REDACTED] two of the teachers. It was held over a weekend at Croftinloan near Pitlochry and was for the cross country teams. We stayed in a little cottage there for three or four days of hill running and it was quite good.
74. Other than that any trips away would have been for games of rugby or football and occasionally into Edinburgh with another teacher called Geoff Halliburton, who was the music teacher. If guys were interested he would take them in to watch classical music concerts.
75. In my last year we were supposed to go on a rugby tour of Australia, but much to my disappointment they delayed it by a year and I never went.

*Healthcare*

76. They took care of all health matters at the school, including all the inoculations we needed. There was a small isolation ward in the hospital that had three beds, where I spent two weeks when I had chickenpox, and there was also a bigger ward. A doctor would come and visit twice a week and there was a school sister, who lived in the grounds, and a nurse, who lived outside. A dentist also came to the school and carried out any dental work that was needed there.



77. If you felt sick you would speak to whoever the duty house tutor was and they would normally send you to the sick bay at the hospital. If I remember correctly, you had to be there between eight and half-past in the morning. When you got there you'd sit outside and wait to be seen by the nurse.
78. The school sister was great. Sometimes people would go to see her to report sick and she would ask what year you were. When you told her, she would check the timetable and see what subject you had next. It might be double maths and she would make you tea and toast with a knowing smile and tell you to go back at half-past nine.
79. If anything else was required, the doctor would refer you to Stirling Royal Infirmary for treatment.

#### *Birthdays and Christmas*

80. While I was in Wavell House the local cake shop used to send a cake up when it was someone's birthday. The cake was always given out at mealtimes, usually in the evening. It would be brought to your table and you'd share it with the guys from your dorm and everyone would sing 'Happy Birthday'.
81. Everyone went home for Christmas, although the school would put on a concert before the end of term. In my first year my parents came over from Germany to watch it and then we all travelled home together.

#### *Pocket money*

82. We got one pound pocket money every week, which meant there was a bit left over at the end of term from the fee my parents had paid so that we could get home. Every Saturday we would line up in numerical order for our money and we could do what we wanted with it. Some weeks we might save it up and spend it on something bigger a few weeks later.

### *External Inspections*

83. As I remember, while I was still in Wavell House in my junior years, a teacher called Glen Harrison made allegations that there was a bullying ring at QV. He never taught me and I only met him once, however I know that he reported it to Central Scotland Police.
84. There was a police investigation and some sort of Inquiry, which I think involved Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Schools. Five or ten pupils from each year group were selected to speak to the Inspectorate and I was taken aside and asked various questions. I was asked what the routine was like and whether there were any problems.
85. I was never spoken to by the police and I'm not sure of the outcome, however I don't think there was any evidence of bullying. I think there were recommendations that there needed to be some sort of reorganisation and as a result there were changes to the senior management team. A new headmaster was taken on, Brian Raine, and a lady called Alice Hailey was brought in to overhaul the personal and social education side of things.
86. The school did change and probably for the better. It was a tough school and, although in my experience there was no bullying, it became a more open and welcoming place. We mixed more amongst the year groups and girls were then allowed to attend the school. It was a huge culture shock for us when girls started, but I think overall it was a really positive change.

### *Family contact*

87. For the first six weeks at QV we weren't allowed to phone home, although we could write as much as we wanted. It was one of those things where they didn't want children feeling too homesick, however some boys did phone home when they went for a walk into town. They would find a phone box and reverse the charges to make a quick call,

but the problem was that there was only one phone box within walking distance and there would often be boys skulking around it, waiting to get their turn.

88. After the first six weeks you were permitted to use the telephone in the town or you could ask to use one of the house phones. They were on the military network so it didn't matter where your parents were, although that was only really in special circumstances, if you'd been in hospital for example. When I was in the hospital with chickenpox the school sister phoned my parents to let them know and I could ask to use the phone there if I wanted to.
89. Everyone got mail and some boys were sent parcels of food. Often boys would not bother to write home, so to make sure we all did there was a letter writing period once a week. Letters were never vetted, we would write them, address them and seal them before posting them ourselves in the Royal Mail post box.
90. Some boys would go home for the weekend and it was okay to go and stay at another boy's home as long as it was agreed with his parents and yours. I had some friends who stayed in Scotland and I went for the occasional Sunday and stayed overnight on a Saturday sometimes. There was a good team spirit at QV and nobody was ever alone at the weekend.
91. We all went home for the three main holidays. Christmas was three weeks, Easter was three weeks and we were off for about nine weeks in the summer. The MoD would fund the return flight for any pupil who required it for those main holidays.
92. There was always a gang of us going back to Germany on various flights. The school would provide the transport to the airport and they would do the check-in. We used to have to wear a sticker that read 'U.M.' for unaccompanied minor and the airline staff would take us through to the lounge at the back. At the other end they'd walk us out to be met by our parents.

93. The half-term holiday was two weeks long and our parents would self-fund us getting home. There was also a weekend that was five days long and I always went to my friend's house in Scotland.
94. On one occasion I was the only one at the school after the army booked a flight on which I was the only one coming back. A friend of my dad's picked me up from Edinburgh airport and drove me to the school. He had work so I was dropped off about six hours early, however all the catering staff were there and they looked after me and spoilt me with chocolate.
95. In my first year my parents came over for the Christmas concert and for the 'grand day', which was the last day of term. We all travelled back to Germany together on that occasion.
96. My dad left the army in 1993 when I was in S1 and they moved back to Scotland. For them it meant they were closer, but for me it was a bit intrusive having my parents so near. After they moved I used to go home for the occasional weekend.

### *Support*

97. In a dorm of sixteen people, some were obviously homesick at times and I remember feeling it sometimes. It was very rare to see somebody upset though and I think that was because we were kept busy, because we were with like-minded people and because, even amongst boys of that age, there was quite a lot of camaraderie. Additionally, the second year boys in our dorm would generally look out for us.
98. I remember that in the first couple of weeks I didn't really like to be on my own, I preferred to be busy. I liked to be in the class working or doing the hobbies. When guys did get homesick it was always at lights out, but there were never sixteen of us all lying howling for our mums.
99. Graham Beattie, who had shown me around the school, was a very well-liked teacher. If someone was homesick he would make a point of coming into the dorm to make

sure everyone was okay and he would often tell us a story. The school was losing a lot of its military discipline by that time and Graham Beattie was one of the first teachers to realise that we were just nine and ten year old boys.

100. The staff all had an acute awareness of what it was like to be in a military family that moves around a lot. They recognised that we were all away from home and that we were all from a military background and there was an esprit de corps amongst both the staff and the pupils. If I had not gone to QV I would probably have gone to three different secondary schools.
101. I think there were sixteen pupils whose fathers went to the Gulf War in 1991 and the MoD and the school arranged for those pupils to have a long weekend with their parents before their fathers were deployed. Their parents were flown over and the families were each given time with one another.
102. Every Monday morning those pupils were taken aside and given a briefing from someone from the army who came to the school. He knew which regiment those pupils' fathers were in and he gave a brief overview of where they were and what they were going to be involved in. They showed a bit of the CNN News and they were given a drink of juice and a biscuit and told which teacher they could go and speak to if they had any problems.

#### *Discipline*

103. Discipline was never what you might imagine it would be in a military school, I always thought it was very fair.
104. There was a points system for discipline if a boy had done something wrong. The system went from point-four to point-eight and punishments were based on that. Point-four was twenty minutes detention on a Saturday, but you could still go out afterwards. Point-five was forty minutes detention and you could only leave the school to go to the first shop in Dunblane. The most serious was point-six, which was an hour

detention and you weren't allowed to leave the school. A point-seven or point-eight would carry over from Saturday into Sunday.

105. There was one punishment book, which was kept in the housemaster's office. He was always extremely fair and he would always make sure you deserved the punishment. A lot of the time he would bring you in and ask if you understood why you were being punished.
106. Whoever was the duty house tutor for that weekend would then supervise the detention and the punishment was whatever they decided. They didn't waste your time with lines, or anything like that, most of them would read you something and you'd have to write about it for twenty minutes. If you had a project ongoing in the class you could work on the project or you could use the time to catch up on work. My housemaster in Wavell, OLB, was mad on Scottish history and he might read something and you would have to write all about it in the time you were given for detention.
107. You were always given the opportunity to work points off, so if you were given a point-five you could go down to a point-four if you volunteered to do something like sweep the stairs.

*Prefects/senior pupils*

108. There were prefects and monitors at QV and it was seen as a privilege to be made one. They had a ceremonial role, whereby they were the guard command when we were on parade and they had the ability to dish out minor punishments, which were called a 'day'. If you were put on a day, you would have to go and see the headmaster who would query every one and he would ask whether or not you had committed the offence.
109. A day might involve getting up early in the morning and you would be given a choice of going litter picking, polishing the brass plates in the central hall, or you could put sports kit on and run a lap of the fields. I always chose the run because it was done



in five minutes. After you had completed whatever punishment you'd chosen, you would report back to the prefect and it would be signed off.

110. Prefects were chosen on academic or sporting ability, but they weren't all academic or sporting superstars because they were also chosen on extracurricular things like charity work. Selection was on merit and from across the board and you also had to have been in the combined cadet force from S2, part of which was participating in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.
111. The housemaster would decide who was deserving of becoming a prefect and he would produce a list that would then go to the headmaster and his deputy. When we returned for fifth year we would be told who was going to be a prefect and we would find whether our bed space had been moved to the prefects' area. I was a prefect in my last year, but not in fifth year.
112. You could lose that prefectship by doing something stupid, although I don't recall that happening. Those that stood out would become monitors. There were only ever three monitors, including a senior monitor and they were supposed to supervise the prefects, although that never really happened.
113. Some changes were made after the inquiry by the school Commissioners following the accusations that were made by Glen Harrison and the prefects were given additional responsibilities. After that they supervised meals and the prep period for S1 to S3 years that was held in the teaching block. Previously both had been supervised by a member of the teaching staff.
114. It was a hard, tough school, but there was no bullying. I was quite a small child and quite quiet at the beginning, but I never felt bullied or threatened. In fact I looked up to the prefects and monitors and I thought they were incredibly approachable if you did have a problem and they were very protective.

## **Abuse at Queen Victoria School**

115. Ben Phillip had the unfortunate nickname of 'Bender'. He was a single guy who must have been in his forties, with an old-fashioned moustache. He was quite strict and when I met him as a nine year old I was intimidated by him. I remember asking one of the older pupils why he was called Bender and being told I would find out.
116. I was at QV well after corporal punishment had gone and teachers had stopped wearing the black gowns a long time before, but on my first or second day at the school, Ben Phillip gave a demonstration of how proficient he was with the belt. He came into the classroom wearing the gown and had the belt draped over his shoulder.
117. He put a piece of chalk on the desk and whipped the belt so that the chalk rolled one way, then whipped it again so that the chalk cracked in half. I remember at the time thinking how strange it was. I looked around the room and saw other boys were wide eyed and clearly terrified.
118. He made it very clear that he wasn't somebody to be messed with. He said to us all that we were not to cause him any problems and that even though he was the first teacher we would have, he was also the housemaster for Haig House and he was the one that would write our references. He told us that if we wanted a good start and if we wanted to do well at the school, we should not upset him.
119. Within the first couple of weeks at the school Phillip would call boys up individually to his desk to get things marked. His desk was to the side of the classroom and all the pupils' desks faced to his left, toward the blackboard at the front. Boys had to walk around his desk when they approached and the way it was positioned, there was only one way in, you couldn't get out the other side because there were a number of large cupboards that blocked the view.
120. Boys would have to stand to Phillip's right hand side, so that their view of the classroom was obscured. Similarly, the rest of the boys could only see the top half of any boy that was standing there. The boy would then put their jotter down for him to see and

he would start going through their work. I remember waiting for my turn and looking over and seeing a friend of mine, [REDACTED] and he looked terrified.

121. As [REDACTED] stood there he turned to Ben Phillip and shouted "stop fucking touching me you poof". Ben Phillip stood up instantly and told him to get out of the classroom. I don't know what happened to [REDACTED] after he was sent out and I don't know if he was punished, however he never finished the year and I've never seen him since he left QV. He never goes to any school reunions and I've never found him on social media.
122. Along with another boy, [REDACTED], I was the smallest in the school and, although I've always been quiet, I'm definitely not shy. I think people often mistake my guarded quietness for shyness when they first meet me, but I was nervous because it was a new school and a new teacher. Although I was a year ahead of my peers, I was coping quite well, but when I saw [REDACTED] face I thought it was going to be horrendous. I didn't realise the reason why.
123. When I went up, I opened my jotter and stood there. Ben Phillip told me to relax, that it was the best way to learn, and suddenly I felt his hand on the back of my neck. He started rubbing my neck and I instantly felt cold and stiff. Even to this day I still feel that. He kept telling me to relax and then he pulled the shirt out of my shorts and started stroking my back. At that point I was really uncomfortable, so I turned round and went and sat down.
124. Later that day I met [REDACTED] and some other people in my class and I asked them whether they thought it was normal. They replied that they didn't know, but that they didn't like it. As this had happened in my first six weeks at QV, I was unable to phone home and ask my parents about it, so I decided to tell Ben Phillip not to do it again.
125. The next time I was called up, he told me to relax again and again I felt his hand on the back of my neck. I asked him firmly not to touch me and his hand came off and he never did it to me again. Afterwards, for that whole year, I remember being absolutely terrified of him, thinking I'd really annoyed him.

126. I had no contact with Ben Phillip after that first year in primary six and never experienced any of his behaviour again, however I am aware that his behaviour continued with other boys.
127. I became friendly in my later years at QV with a boy called [REDACTED] and I recall speaking with him about Wavell House. I remember we had found him crying in Wavell Woods on a number of occasions and he told me he had hated Wavell because of what Ben Phillip had done at his desk. He didn't go into detail, but he was very cagey about what had happened.

### **Reporting of abuse at Queen Victoria School**

128. I'm not sure how long after it had happened it was, but I remember another pupil asked one of the teachers why Ben Phillip was called Bender. I'm not sure which teacher it was, possibly Graham Beattie, and this boy asked if it was because he was gay or because he touched people.
129. The teacher asked what he meant and I said that Ben Phillip had touched my neck. He told me that if I thought it was serious and I wanted to make a formal complaint I needed to go to the headmaster, but I didn't want to take it any further. I didn't want to be the one guy that came forward, even though there had been open discussion about it amongst my peers.
130. I never told any other teacher or anyone else in authority, but I would have been confident that if I'd gone to QYL [REDACTED] or OLB [REDACTED] they would have done something about it. Equally though, I can't help but wonder if there was a reason why Ben Phillip was the only primary teacher that wasn't a junior housemaster.
131. One pupil, I can't remember his name, did say something in front of everyone else in the dorm about getting his bum felt. The reaction was that this pupil got a whole lot of verbal abuse from the other boys and it was because of that sort of reaction that no one was ever going to come forward.

132. When I eventually got a chance to speak to my parents I told them what had happened and that it felt very wrong. My dad told me to be very firm and if it happened again to tell Ben Phillip not to touch me and to get all the other pupils to do the same. My dad was in a difficult position being in Germany, because he couldn't just come across. He told me that if it continued after I had spoken up I should go to a member of staff and complain about it, however it never did happen to me again.
133. My parents came over for the parents' night at the end of term and when they spoke to Ben Phillip he told them that I wasn't cut out for the school and he recommended that I leave. I was very upset because I was loving my time at the school. My parents then spoke to OLB who told them that it was his decision who stays and who doesn't. He said that as far as he was concerned, although it was a challenging year because I had gone up a year group, I was getting on very well.

#### **Death of Ben Phillip**

134. I was fourteen or fifteen and in S2 when Ben Phillip died. He had been up a ladder in the theatre, putting up posters for a school disco when he slipped and sustained a severe head injury. He died shortly afterwards.
135. A memorial was held and a tree planted and I remember thinking that there was no way I was going to it. About six or seven other pupils also refused to go and our housemaster at the time asked why we weren't going. I said I didn't really feel comfortable and was just told it was up to me and it was left at that.

#### **Leaving Queen Victoria School**

136. I finished sixth year at Queen Victoria School in June 1998, when I was eighteen. I was very fortunate in that I managed to get on a gap project and I deferred a place at university I had already been given. I had applied on a whim for the gap project and had gone down to Edinburgh Academy for an interview.

137. I was advised by a teacher who was also one of the rugby coaches and the careers development master, Graham King, on how to deal with the interview. He told me I had to sell the uniqueness of Queen Victoria School, what I had done that was different and that I had to sell the leadership qualities the school instilled. I was successful and managed to get an opportunity coaching sports overseas for a year.
138. All I needed to pay was the flight, the rest of the trip was funded, so I applied to a memorial fund for extracurricular activities that the school still have and received a sizeable contribution toward the flight. My parents paid the rest and I went on that gap project for a year.

### **Life after Queen Victoria School**

139. After I had completed my gap project I went travelling for another year and then worked in a warehouse for a time while I awaited going to university. I realised I didn't want to do the course I had originally applied for and did an access course toward a different degree at one of the Scottish universities.
140. I had always wanted to be a soldier and it had only been on my dad's advice that I got a degree first so after I graduated, I applied to the army. I did the interviews at the careers office in Edinburgh and went down to Sandhurst for the officers selection course. Ultimately I was successful and started at Sandhurst later that year. I received my commission a year later and after further courses joined my battalion.
141. I have had a varied career in the army including a number of postings throughout the world in various conflict zones and I have had a number of promotions. I left the army in 2018 after I received the offer of a job elsewhere and I am still in that role.
142. I met my wife in England, while I was still in the army, we married a number of years ago and we now have a young child.



## Impact

143. I rarely think about what Ben Phillip did to me and to others. I only really do so when someone else mentions it and when I became aware that QV was to be included within the scope of the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry.
144. I suppose anyone attending any boarding school has been relatively sheltered throughout their childhood and part of the charm and the attraction of QV was the fact that it was so unique. However attending a school that only has two hundred and fifty pupils and is so unique means that you too have had a somewhat sheltered upbringing. The cure for that for me was spending a year away on my own as an eighteen year old, which opened my mind a bit.
145. I wouldn't necessarily send my children to a single sex school. Not being in a co-ed environment from the age of nine to sixteen doesn't set you up well for life in the real world. I don't think it affected my ability to form relationships, but I think it is something that would now be considered dated.
146. Despite that sheltered upbringing, QV instilled in me quite a lot of self-reliance and confidence. I think anyone that went to boarding school is possibly a bit more mature and has leadership qualities that they might not otherwise have had. Those qualities are not necessarily only applicable for the military, however I found Sandhurst incredibly easy. At QV I had been barracking my bed and doing parades since I was nine. Even for those that went to other places I think having the routine and the self-reliance behind them has a really positive effect.
147. Now that QV is co-ed, I would send my children there if my wife would agree, although I don't think she would. My overall experience was a positive one and a lot of my friends send their children there. I know through my nieces that QV has a lot going on with other schools in the locality. They do various projects together and there is much more involvement between the schools.

148. I would however say that I had an issue making what we at QV would have called 'civilian friends'. In the holidays, after my parents moved to Scotland and my dad left the army, my closest friend from QV was some distance away. I didn't go to school in the area my parents had settled and therefore it was difficult making friends there.
149. My parents did try and signed me up for all sorts of clubs during the summer holidays and as a result I did make some friends that way, however I suppose that is a problem all army kids have.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

150. I have never reported what Ben Phillips did to the police or to any other authority. I put it behind me and it's only since I learned of the Inquiry's interest in the school that I felt a moral obligation to come forward.

### **Records**

151. I know that under the Freedom of Information Act I could apply for my school records, but it has never occurred to me to do so. My mum still keeps my school reports somewhere, but other than those I have not seen any other record regarding pastoral care or any other incidents that might have been recorded.
152. When I left the army I was given a copy of my medical records, which included everything from my time at QV as well.

### **Old Victorians' Association**

153. When I left QV everybody paid £10 and that was your life subscription to the Old Victorians' Association. Now there are various fund raising projects and everyone who has been at the school is entitled to join the association.
154. Some members of staff are made honorary Old Victorians because we appreciate that we probably weren't that easy to teach, having come from army housing estates. We

also appreciate that for the staff it was a very unique school too and so any that are considered to have done a particularly long period at the school are given the honour.

155. Every year there is a reunion in March, at which the annual general meeting is held on the Saturday and then there is usually a sporting event, a rugby tournament or something similar. We tend to go out on the Saturday night in Stirling and then on the Sunday there is an Old Victorians' Parade. An old Victorian commissioned officer or someone who is quite high up in the police will come and accept the salute.

### **Social Media**

156. There is also a 'Facebook' group for Old Victorians, which I am a member of. When it was first announced that QV school would be included in the Inquiry, lots of people were very quick to say that nothing had ever happened in their day. They said that it was such a small school, that if something had happened we would all have known about it.
157. I realise the dangers of posting on an open forum and how any allegations could possibly affect a criminal trial if there ever was one, but I wanted to encourage others to feel they were able to speak openly, so I put up a post saying that if people were to be expected to come forward, they couldn't just be dismissed on a social media group.
158. I said that something had happened to me and that I knew of at least three other people who had experienced something that wasn't right. I mentioned that if it happened to my child today it would be treated as really inappropriate behaviour.
159. Whoever is the administrator of the group quickly removed all the comments and I can understand why. A lot of the old Victorians that had access to the forum also sent their children to QV and it might have been alarming for them. Some might not realise that Ben Phillip isn't there anymore. It was also said that if somebody did want to report to the police and all the comments remained, it might not help.

160. After I posted my message I instantly received two private messages. [REDACTED] wife was one and she asked whether I thought anyone was going to say anything about Ben Phillip. I said that I knew it had happened to other people and I was going to come forward to the Inquiry. I didn't think it was right that even though he was dead it should be brushed over. She told me that [REDACTED] was still really quiet and cagey about it.
161. I am astounded that even to this day some people say Ben Phillip was a saint and a great guy. I exchanged a few messages with some friends I am connected with on a 'WhatsApp' group and I have provided copies of those messages to the Inquiry. There are a few comments from different people about what Ben Phillip did and how his behaviour would be regarded now. I think QYF [REDACTED] said something and I think [REDACTED] did too.

#### **Lessons to be Learned**

162. When I learned of the Inquiry's interest in QV I couldn't rightfully not say anything. I know that Ben Phillip is dead and it's not that I am looking for any sort of justice, but I hope that other people come forward. I wouldn't call what happened to me as tame because we all experience things differently, but I hope that if anyone did experience anything worse, my coming forward will assist in giving them the confidence to do so as well.
163. I think the culture nowadays is different and people are more savvy. There are mechanisms kids can use to report anything, everyone has a mobile phone and kids record all sorts of stuff now. There is good and bad with that, but I think kids now have much more awareness of how to make reports anonymously, whereas we didn't when I was at QV. The negatives of that are that there is then potential for false accusations to be made.
164. At that time I don't think much could have been changed. Even if someone external had come in and every pupil was given time with them, I still don't think many people would have come forward.

165. The teachers at QV were great and I am confident that a number of them would have fully looked into any allegation had any been made. Equally though, I can't get it out of my head that Ben Phillip was the only member of staff that taught juniors, but was housemaster for the seniors and was never seen in the junior boarding house. Although I have no evidence to substantiate this, it seems to me that it was almost as if he was kept away.

**Other information**

166. I went back to the school once after I was asked to go back as the inspecting officer at the reunion parade and found that a lot of the staff that taught me are still there. It was good to see them and it's good to be able to say that despite having gone through university and having had a career in the army, my best friends are still the friends I had in school. Disregarding my experiences with Ben Phillip, my memories of QV are happy ones.

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

Signed.....  .....

Dated..... 11 November 2021 .....