

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

IUZ

Support person present: No

1. My name is IUZ. My date of birth is 1969. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before boarding school

2. I was born in Ely, in Cambridgeshire. My parents are Scottish and they come from the Scottish borders. My dad was in the air force, because of this we moved every two to three years to bases all around the country and different parts of the world. We stayed in Ely for six months, then moved to Germany, then Cornwall. There were multiple moves. That was a driver for me. It was me that requested I go to a boarding school. I'd been to about four or five primary schools by the age of nine, when I went to Queen Victoria.
3. My family didn't have any connection with any boarding school. Both my parents came from farming backgrounds. They both left school at fifteen. My dad joined the air force at that age and my mum had her career. So I suppose I was the first one in my family to go away to boarding school. My parents are still with us. My dad's name is , my mum is and my sister is , to us. Her name was spelt with a but she changed it to a , being a teenager. They now live in Yorkshire, as does my sister.
4. I went to Queen Victoria in the September, then turned ten in 1979. My sister went to a British Forces school in Germany. My parents moved to Richmond, in Yorkshire and my sister went to high school there and remained there until she left

school. I left school at sixteen in 1986. We had a family friend, who had a son who was a year or two older than me, and he had been to boarding school and during one of the holidays I was chatting to him and he said it was great and you got to do lots of things. I thought that sounded great, I hated being the new boy in school, not knowing anyone, so I asked my mum and dad about it. I then had to sit an entrance exam for Queen Victoria. I sat that in a school in Germany.

5. I think kids going to boarding school now have these thoughts that it's like Harry Potter, but back then there was no sense of what it would be like. For me the big draw was that I was really in to sports when I was younger, so I could do all these sports and I'd be in the one place and not have to move all the time.

Queen Victoria School, Dunblane

6. Picking the school was largely out of my hands and as an adult I can see why Queen Victoria was chosen. The fees for boarding schools were large and my dad didn't earn a big wage in the air force. Queen Victoria was a school for Scottish children with parents in the armed forces, air force, army and navy personnel. As such, a lot of the fees were paid for by the government. There was a contribution by my parents but I don't know what that was, but I guess that was the reason for going to Queen Victoria. So I hadn't chosen that school myself, it was a case of 'this is a boarding school and this is where you are going to go'.
7. I didn't visit the school before starting there and I hadn't even seen any photographs of it. My first dealings with it was doing the entrance exam in the headmaster's office in the school in Germany. That would have been in the summer term, before the summer holidays. I was successful and started [REDACTED]

Routine at Queen Victoria School, Dunblane

First day

8. My parents and my sister came to the school with me when I started. They came for the afternoon and we had a tour around the school then they left and that was it. My grandparents and cousins were all from Kelso, so wherever we were in the world, we would always go back there about twice a year. I think we must have stayed there, although I don't have any memory of that. We went to Stirling the day before I started school to buy various items like PE kit, a set of pyjamas and a dressing gown. I remember doing that shopping in Stirling the day before and going to the school the following day. We were given the actual school uniform by the school.
9. I actually had to repeat primary six. I'd already done it in Germany, but because of my age I had to do it again at Queen Victoria. I started in Wavell House, which was for primary six and seven age groups. All the names of houses were named after generals in the army. I was in a dormitory of twelve with single, army style beds and a locker. My uniform was on the bed there, so, I think my parents must have forwarded on my sizes to them. One of the first things we had to do when we got there was change out of what they called 'civvies' and into the uniform.
10. Boys in primary six were referred to as rookies and we were assigned someone from the year above to mentor us and show us around, mine was a boy called [REDACTED]. He showed me and my parents where the gym was, where the dining hall was, where the classrooms were, all that sort of thing. I can't remember a member of staff being there to welcome us, but there may have been one.
11. Each house had a housemaster, in Wavell it was a man called CRC [REDACTED]. There was a teacher called Mr OLB [REDACTED] and another called Mr QYL [REDACTED]. I can't remember their first names. We may have met them at some point on that first day but I can't remember it.

12. There's only two hundred and forty students at Queen Victoria, so it was a relatively small school in terms of high schools now but it was a large setting and the old part of it is a very imposing, Victorian building. The building I was housed in for the first couple of years was the modern block, built in the sixties or seventies and there's a teaching block attached to that. When we went into first year we moved into the old part. I remember being struck by this, it was massive. There was a big chapel, a big playground and huge playing fields. I'd never been to a school that big before, it had always been small town primary schools or village primary schools of about fifty pupils. So I remember being struck by the size of it.
13. In Wavell House there was the dormitory side of things and doors connecting it to the classrooms, but we never used that to get into the school. We had to use a different entrance, but there was the ability to go backwards and forwards if you needed to, or if you were allowed to. There were four dormitories in Wavell House, then there were common areas that had things in them like table tennis tables. Mr OLB one of the teachers, lived in a flat off there. CRC lived in a flat off there as well.
14. I don't have any memory of that first day after my parents and my sister left, but I guess we must have been told the routines and stuff, time for dinner, etc. Every time there was a change of pace in the day, whether that was going to school, or going to dinner, we had to line up. That might be in your dorm and you would stand by your beds and someone would come in and tell you, you could go to dinner or whatever. That was just how the day went.

Mornings and bedtime

15. I don't remember what time we got up, it was around seven thirty. We'd get up, get changed and then head to breakfast for eight o'clock. At eight thirty you would brush your teeth and get your dorm sorted, then school at nine. Certainly in the morning there was very little free time to do anything. It was very regimented. There were bells that went off at break and lunch time and at four o'clock when we finished.

16. In the first two years of school we had letter writing three times a week, on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday, so we had to go back into our classrooms and write a letter to our parents. They were then given to your teacher and sent on our behalf. They weren't sealed, so I can only presume that they might have been read by the teacher. My parents moved house about ten years ago and my dad got rid of stuff from the attic and he had kept all these letters. They were only a paragraph or two on how I was, what I'd been doing at school and that I'd write again in a couple of days. So we did this three times a week, on other days we would have hobbies.

17. We would have about half an hour of free time, then in the evenings it was a choice of hobbies that you would have to take, like the computer club, chess club, that sort of thing. I was in the air force cadet force. Every evening we would do prep as well, homework. Everyone would sit in the classroom, for an hour I think it was, and we would have an older pupil in the class that would supervise that. There was no-one to help you if you were struggling with your homework, it was fifth or sixth year students that supervised and they were doing their own work. The whole culture of the school was that the older pupils ruled, so if they told you to do something, you did it. We would do prep for about an hour and be quiet and not talk. We would have a little free time before bed time, then get ready for bed. In your first two years, the free time was restricted to the building, you weren't allowed out. There were chess boards and table tennis tables, that was about it, or you would be sitting on your bed talking. I can't remember there being much more to do. When I was at the village primary school, I'd go out and play with friends, there was a lot of free time.

18. I can't remember if we showered in the morning or showered before bed, I think it was in the mornings. You would clean your teeth, get into your pyjamas and dressing gown and you had to wear slippers. There would be a period of being in bed for about twenty minutes with the lights on, then it was lights off and there was no talking. Whatever teacher was on duty would come in. The beds were about a metre and a half to two metres apart, so you could talk to the person next to you, but you had to be quiet. The dormitories were large rooms, so the voices carried. If the teacher heard you talking he would tell you to be quiet.

19. The headmaster was a guy called Justin Hankinson. He was in charge throughout my time there. He was the head for both the junior and senior school. CRC was the housemaster, I guess he SNR and Mr Hankinson was responsible for the whole school. we also had a SNR I'm not sure if he was retired, or still serving in the army. I think there was two whilst I was at the school. One was called GDP I can't remember the other chap's name. They were around on ceremonial days and Sundays. There was also a school ZQTR. Some days after school we would do drill sessions and learn how to march properly. We would go to the sports hall and he was barking orders and shouting, and if you messed up you'd do press-ups, that sort of thing. He had a type of divider thing, I don't know the actual name of it, but he would mark out how far you had to be from the next person, and if you got that wrong he would wrap you over the knuckles with that. It was wooden, a couple of feet long and an inch or two thick. We did that a number of times a week, I can't remember how many.
20. Some of the teachers lived in the village in Dunblane. There were some semi-detached houses within the grounds of the school and there were flats that were attached to the school. Some of the staff and teachers lived in them. So Mr OLB and Mr CRC had flats attached to Wavell, I think Mr CRC had an upstairs flat. I think Mr QYL lived in one of the other houses in the grounds. Mr OLB and Mr QYL didn't have a military background. I don't know about Mr CRC I don't think he did. I think it's safe to say the only military personnel were SNR and the SNR.
21. In primary six and seven Wavell House was quite distinct and very separate from the high school. We went to the high school for our meals, where there was a large dining room. That was really our only time in that building. Our time was taken up mostly within that small teaching block. So we didn't have much to do with teachers or students in the other part of the school until we went into first year. Within Wavell there were four dormitories. Each one had a leader and what was called a seconder. I suppose their job was to keep that dormitory in line with what we had to do, so tidying and making sure everybody was standing beside their beds at certain times.

They were just pupils that were deemed to be model pupils or that were seen to be able to lead other students.

22. There was no initiation ceremonies when you started the school. It was run on a very military basis. There were unwritten rules within the students, within the peer group. If anything happened, then no-one told. If there was a fight between two pupils, and even if a teacher came in, then no-one saw anything, and if you did then the rest of that year group would turn on you for being a 'grass'. Everything was kept within dormitories. I think that culture was set by the adults. Certainly looking back on it, every adult in that school was aware of what was going on, but chose not to be involved because that's how it managed itself. In terms of two hundred and forty students boarding, the amount of teachers around at any given time was pretty small really. I guess they relied on that way of students self-managing to a certain degree.
23. I can't speak for every teacher, but certainly in primary six and seven the teachers were more empathetic and more there for you if you were home sick, that sort of thing. I didn't want to show any sort of weakness about missing home because thinking as a nine year old, I thought that was a babyish sort of thing to do. But a lot of kids would be missing parents and crying, and things like that. So Mr QYL and in particular Mr OLB was quite empathetic and would consult people and talk to them. He was quite a decent guy actually. I wasn't comfortable with Mr CRC, the housemaster. If there was anything wrong Mr OLB would be someone that I could go to. It's interesting, because some of this has carried on into my adult life, and it's only recently I've shown more vulnerability. The school was very sporty. I was always a big chap growing up and very good at sports, and that set me aside from some of the other pupils. But for me, I would talk about things I had to talk about, I would never talk of feelings, I would never talk of missing my parents. I kept my feelings to a minimum.
24. There were no girls at the school when I was there. It went co-ed in 1988 I think. The age range was from nine years old to eighteen.

25. The difference between the primary school in Wavell House and the senior school was that there was more free time in the senior school. In primary six and seven your day was time-tabled to within a minute, very structured. In the high school it was still very much structured, but there was a bit more leeway, there was a bit more free time. Whilst we still had hobbies, you didn't have to do them. If you wanted to go to the gym, you could do that, or you could play football, so there was more space.
26. The make-up of the school week was, academic on Monday to Friday, with Thursday afternoons for sports, for whatever season it was, athletics or rugby. There were school competitions. I played under eighteens rugby, so that was your release, getting on a bus and going to a different school and playing rugby or racing against different people, it was an escape if you like. We were in school on Saturday mornings, but the weekend afternoons were really our own. You would gravitate towards your friends and go and do stuff. There was much more freedom there. That was the positive side of being older, each year you got a bit more freedom. In fourth year, at fifteen/sixteen years old, I was able to get a weekend pass and go and visit family or friends as long as it was cleared by my parents. I went to Edinburgh quite a lot and went to a couple of gigs and stayed over at a friend's house. Normal stuff, if you like.
27. In fourth year there were school discos and local girls would be invited. We used to get a coach to Kilgraston Catholic girl's school and we'd have discos there sometimes. There was more of a social side with girls, not just boys all the time. We could also go down to the village at that age, where there was conflict between us and the local kids. We were seen as posh by the kids at Dunblane high school. I had a couple of girlfriends over that time in the village, that I saw at weekends. So things were relatively normal. I actually got suspended from school. We bought some alcohol and we were caught drinking, so I was suspended for a week. Just normal stuff that fifteen and sixteen year old boys do, get into a bit of bother, but nothing too serious. The school called my parents and I went home for the week. It was just before the exams.

Mealtimes / Food

28. The food was really awful. It was a cooked breakfast, porridge and toast. The breakfasts were probably the better meals of the day. I remember an occasion there was porridge that was green and it tasted really foul and we were forced to eat that. Everyone pushed their bowls away, but we were all told to eat it by the teachers, I can't specifically remember who. Lunch was generally soup and bread. Main meals were like stews and dumplings, that sort of thing, chips on occasion, but pretty much the same sort of thing most of the time. If anyone didn't like what was on offer then they didn't eat.
29. We lined up for food, we had a dining room that was quite large, before that was a hall with busts of famous people and plaques on the wall with the names of students that had gone to university, very formal. We lined up in there and we would be called into the dining room by house and dorm name. We would go in, get our meal and sit at our table. If someone was talking or fidgeting while we were lined up outside the senior monitor would send another group before you. If the senior monitor didn't like you, or someone was always talking, then you would always go last. So you would stand to attention and sometimes for half an hour, just waiting for your dinner. If you had to wait until you were last, as a punishment you had to clear all the tables. Normally you would just take your own bowl or plate over when you were finished and scrape away what you didn't eat. Some of the senior monitors were really nice guys, but some were vicious and mean.

Washing / bathing

30. In primary six and seven there were four dormitories, two upstairs and two downstairs, and they were separated by a communal area and off that was a toilet with five or six cubicles. At the side of that was an area, which was maybe six metres wide, where there were communal showers. Each dorm was called for when they had to go through to shower and everyone had a shower together. So there would be about twelve of us sharing. From memory there were only perhaps six showers, so you would be sharing a shower, obviously naked. The school was always cold,

except for in the summer months, so you would want to be in the shower getting warm, so being tall you could put your hands up higher into the warm water. That's one of the things I remember. Then you would brush your teeth afterwards.

31. We were supervised, not all the time, but Mr **CRC** would come in sometimes and stand there and make sure the boys were washing themselves properly. We would all turn around because we didn't want him to see us, but he would make us turn round to face him and make sure we washed our private parts and watch us do that. At the time I didn't think much of it, although my mum and dad didn't do that when I was in the shower, but when I was growing up I thought that wasn't right. I don't remember him showing any pleasure when he was watching, so maybe he was just making sure we were keeping ourselves clean, but as I grow older I don't think it was appropriate at all.
32. If we were playing sports outside, rugby or athletics, then we would have a shower after that too. So we would have two showers a day most days.

Clothing / uniform

33. The uniform was very, very dated, something they probably wore in the 1900's. It was very stiffly starched blue, corduroy, knee length trousers, grey shirt, a tie and a grey tank top, with a blue, waist high, corduroy jacket, leather brogues and socks that were pulled up with a garter. A very old fashioned uniform. I remember putting it on and it was very stiff and felt really uncomfortable. It was a bit strange, as I'd never worn anything like that before. That was the uniform we wore day in, day out, and then we had a kilt and tunic that was called the number one uniform. We wore that to church on Sundays or particular functions.

School

34. Rugby was a big part of the curriculum, as was athletics, running and cross country, depending on the time of year. I'd played rugby before I went to Queen Victoria and I was a good swimmer, the school had a swimming pool. So those were the things I

particularly excelled at. I wasn't very academic, in fact not at all. So for me, doing well was being recognised at sport, [REDACTED] inter house, or inter dormitory champion, I would win races, that sort of thing. That's where I got my praise from teachers. It certainly wasn't from the academic side of things. I struggled a bit, to be honest. I didn't get any help at all. Right throughout my school time, I didn't get any help at all. I think that was just the times, late seventies, early eighties, and there was none whatsoever.

35. I left school at sixteen with two 'O' Grades. I sat five but only passed two. I thought of myself as stupid for a long, long time, just because I'd been told that on a regular basis in class. I'd be asked a question, not just myself, but others too, and you'd get it wrong and be berated and made a bit of a fool of. So again, I adapted the same kind of protective issue there, didn't answer any questions and just kept my head down. If a teacher asked if everyone understood something, I would just say yes. Even if I didn't I would just keep it to myself, to the point where, when I left school I wanted to join the police and I had to do an exam and I didn't know how to do long division. This was in my mid-twenties. Throughout my time at school I just didn't understand long division at all but I didn't have the voice to say I didn't understand it. Mr ^{OLB} [REDACTED] was my class tutor in primary six, Mr ^{QYL} [REDACTED] in primary seven. Mr ^{OLB} [REDACTED] and Mr ^{CRC} [REDACTED] would talk to me outside of the school day as I was [REDACTED] asking who should be picked for the team and things like that, so I was involved in that way. But not in relation to academic stuff, and at prep, again, you wouldn't ask the senior monitor. So there was very little educational support. Perhaps if you were more academic you may have got more, but it wasn't my experience.
36. In my last year at school there was a change in personnel. Two younger teachers came in, a man called Mr Robertson, who was a music teacher and a bit of a breath of fresh air. Still very much a bit of a disciplinarian, but a nice guy. The other teacher was called Stevie Lane, again a younger guy in his early thirties, so closer to our age and he hadn't worked in that school and hadn't been part of that culture. There were slight shifts, I think things softened a little bit in my last year at school. So there was a slight culture shift and a bit more freedom to do things that interested me.

37. I had one teacher that I really, really liked, and that was my maths teacher. Maths was my least favourite subject, but he was a really nice, gentle guy and he took the time to talk about music. He was really into Dire Straits and some of the music I liked at the time. He lived in the village, but he would be on duty in my house and I would be able to talk to him about music and other stuff. There was another teacher called Ben Philips, he unfortunately died a couple of years after I left school. He was very strict, I was on the receiving end of the belt from him but he was really fair. He had a caring nature as well. Those were probably the only two teachers out of the whole school that were like that.
38. I think things changed a couple of years after I left, when it went co-ed, there were female teachers too, and I think that influence of female input, stereotypically a more nurturing environment, and girls are different to boys, and that mix. Probably the sixties, seventies and eighties in that school were horrific. I imagine it would be worse before I was at the school.

Chores

39. Chores were part of the morning and evening routines. The dormitories had linoleum floors, so we would take turns sweeping the floor, emptying the bins and cleaning the showers. We were on a rota for that. It was a kind of rotating rota, it would change daily or weekly. There were about twelve boys in my dorm from memory, and in my year group I think there were about thirty boys. It did change, everyone started at primary six, by first year I think there were thirty-six in my class, then it sort of dwindled. Some people would leave school, some would be expelled.

Trips / Holidays

40. When I was in primary seven we went to Aviemore for possibly a week. We stayed in what was like a bunk house and went hill walking, kayaking and that kind of stuff. I think the place we stayed at was a military lodge, or it was run by military personnel. I enjoyed the week away. Mr **OLB** and Mr **QYL** were both there.

41. Mr CRC had a speedboat and he would take it to one of the lochs at Callander and in the summer months he would choose a group of pupils to go with him for the day on his speedboat. I went once or twice on those little trips.

Birthdays and Christmas

42. The school didn't celebrate people's birthdays from memory, but my birthday was always in the holidays anyway. Other pupils would give boys the bumps on their birthdays but there was no cakes or any of that sort of thing, or presents. There might have been a present sent from home perhaps. On occasions my parents, and other boy's parents, would send what we called tuck parcels containing a chocolate bar, a comic and bits and bobs.
43. I think a few boys stayed at the school over Christmas. In either 1979 or 1980, it was a really bad winter and my parents had just moved back to the UK from Germany. There were people that were going to faraway places and couldn't get flights. I'm not sure if they stayed the whole time, but a few students did. There would have been a Christmas tree in the room outside the dining room, but there were no concerts or things like that and there were no decorations, certainly not in the dormitories.

Visits / Inspections/ Review of Detention

44. Other than through letters, I didn't have much contact with my parents or my sister. In my first year we had half term but I didn't go to Germany to see them. At that time we would get military passes for flights and train travel. They would be booked by someone else and we would just have to show a card. So the October holiday that first year I didn't go home, I went to family in Kelso, to my auntie's house. I stayed there for the entirety of the holiday. I went home for Christmas. I hadn't seen my parents from until Christmas time, and then when I returned to school until the Easter holidays. I can't remember if I was in Kelso or Germany then. When my parents moved back to the UK I'd see them pretty much every holiday. In the summer holidays I would generally go to an army, air force or marine camp for a week, sometimes two.

45. There were no day pupils at the school, only boarders. Some of the students lived in Stirling or Edinburgh, so some of them would go home for weekends. Not every weekend, maybe once a month. In high school, some of my friends would invite me to their parent's house for a weekend. That happened a few times. My auntie came once when I was in primary six and took me out for the day, and it happened a couple of times in high school.

Healthcare

46. The matron in my first two years was [REDACTED]. There was a hospital in the grounds of the school and there was a nurse in the hospital, so if you had a cough or a cold or something you would go and see her in the morning. [REDACTED] would look after any minor cuts or grazes and things. Not for myself, but I remember her being quite supportive with other pupils. [REDACTED] didn't have any children themselves, but I remember her being quite a motherly figure.
47. The only time I ever went to the hospital was when, on a number of occasions, I tried to get off school. If you were off school for being sick you got to be in the hospital, sitting in one of the wards. So I did that a few times and pretended, feigned illness. On one occasion I was in hospital for a day, it was clear that I wasn't ill. I was getting my temperature taken so I put my tongue on the radiator to make it hot. My temperature must have been about a hundred and fifty! But I wouldn't go to the nurse with any injuries. I was very active, playing rugby, climbing trees and jumping over burns, so I was always getting cuts and scrapes anyway. So injuries from assaults probably wouldn't have stood out above the ones I got naturally.

Abuse at Queen Victoria School, Dunblane

48. In primary six, if you were messing around in class or misbehaving, in whatever manner, you were given the slipper. There was this interconnecting door between the classrooms and the dormitories. We would have our fairly thick shorts on and we would be told to go and put our gym shorts on. We would have to change into them as they were thinner material, return to the classroom, bend over a desk and be hit

with a slipper. From memory we were hit a maximum of four times over the backside, then we were told to go back and change into our school uniform shorts and continue with the lesson. Although it was called the slipper, it was actually a plimsoll, one of the old-fashioned black ones.

49. In primary seven and going into high school I was a bit disruptive in class because I didn't think I was learning much and thought of myself as the class fool in some ways so I got the slipper a few times. I got the slipper over fifty times over that period of two years.
50. In high school there were two grades of corporal punishment. There was the belt, of which you would get a maximum of six over your hands. You would hold your hands out, one over the other and you would tuck your thumbs away as it was sorer over them. That was for general misdemeanours. There was also the cane. You put your gym shorts on for this as well. The belt was administered in front of other pupils, the cane was in an office, away from everyone. The slipper was always in the class too.
51. Different teachers would have different methods of administering these punishments. One teacher would take a run at you and jump when giving the belt. This was a zECA [REDACTED] zECA [REDACTED] He was a [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] teacher in high school. We had two [REDACTED] teachers. My first one, in my first two years of high school was called IVA [REDACTED] He would give you a choice of whether you wanted to be belted or wear a crocodile clip over the top of your ear for the duration of the class. He called his belt 'Gnasher' and the crocodile clip was called 'Nipper'. I got 'Nipper' a couple of times. When you took it off, your ear would be bleeding.
52. All the teachers belted. If someone was talking and it wasn't known who, and no-one owned up, some teachers would belt the whole class, all twenty pupils. After the lesson, the nineteen who weren't talking would give the boy who was a kick or a punch. There were other teachers, like Mr zECA [REDACTED], in [REDACTED] who would hit you over the head with a big heavy book, another teacher would throw blackboard dusters at your head. I can't remember his name. In first year I took technical drawing and metal work and that teacher asked you to put your hands up and he would hit you

over the knuckles with an eighteen inch ruler. That was the general nature of the corporal punishments. I don't know if there were records kept of these punishments, but I would guess not. I don't know if my parents were aware of the discipline regime at the school. My dad was very strict when I was younger, and I do remember discussing with him that I'd been belted when I was fourteen or fifteen and he said, "Well, you must have deserved it".

53. Senior pupils were not allowed to dish out the belt or cane. There were sort of formal/informal arrangements and depending on what level of misbehaviour it was deemed to be, punishments would be meted out. This was in high school. In the summer months you would have to go to the gym at seven in the morning and you would be forced to do sit ups and press ups, physical exercises. If you didn't do it, you would get kicked. That was administered by the senior monitors. That was quite brutal, being made to do press ups or sit ups until you were sick. Bizarrely I quite enjoyed that, I didn't enjoy being brutalised, but I enjoyed the fitness aspect of it. I loved rugby and running so I could do lots of them. In the winter months you had to do cross-country laps before breakfast. I can't remember how many, but several laps, two or three miles. Again, I quite enjoyed that. This would be for things like answering a teacher back. You couldn't not turn up.

54. There was also something called 'barricade bed'. In the dorms the beds were like military, metal framed beds with a spring mattress. We had a bottom sheet, a single white sheet and an itchy grey blanket and on top of that we had a top blanket and a pillow case. So you would get up at an uncomfortable time, I can't remember exactly when, and you had to fold all of those and have them set at the end of your bed. You would stand by your bed, at ease, until a teacher, or the housemaster, or whoever, came in, then you stood to attention. So you would be up at before seven in the morning, everyone else was sleeping as the alarm hadn't gone off yet, and you would be doing that. When they came in they would tell you to make up the bed. Some teachers, I can't remember names, would come over and knock everything off the bed and tell you you hadn't folded it properly and to do it again. By then everyone was up and showered and you had to catch up and get ready for breakfast. So that was the more formalised punishments that were carried out in the mornings.

55. There were the informal ones. They happened to me in second and third year. This was administered by senior students. You would be told to be at the fifth year dorm room at a certain time. You would go up there and there were two things in particular that they did. They had long dormitories, with maybe twenty boys in them. Some senior boys had their own rooms, or shared with one other boy, but most stayed in these dorms, which were more private as they had walls up between the beds, that didn't go up to the ceiling, like they were partitioned off. So you had to go down to the far end of the dormitory and all the fifth year boys would stand in their doorways with brushes or shoes, or whatever, and you had to run from one end to the other and they would kick you, spit on you, hit you with brushes, and you'd get to the end and you might have to do it again, several times sometimes. That happened to me quite a lot, I didn't like being told what to do by other students. You would run this gauntlet and if you'd done well and hadn't cried, the older boys would say, "Well done", or "You did well there".
56. The other thing that happened, and it happened to me quite a lot, was again, you would be summoned to the dormitory for a certain time and there was a beam across the door way of a room, you had to climb up there, or they would lift you up and then they would hang on to your legs and arms with your tummy over the beam. That one was particularly painful. You would have a boy, or two boys on each arm and leg, tugging. I remember coming away from that with injuries, cuts and bruises to my ribs and torso. It happened to other students as well. I'm not sure if those two punishments were known by the teachers. This would have been when I was in second year, so I'd be thirteen or fourteen.
57. The senior students were fifth and sixth year and the younger students were first through to fourth year. There were three houses in the senior school. There was Trenchard, Cunningham and Haig. Haig was years five and six. The other two houses were split between the younger years, first to fourth, mixed in together. There were smaller dormitories and bigger ones. If you were better behaved you were in the smaller ones, so it was like a privilege sort of thing. When I was in third year, I played in the school rugby team alongside fifth and sixth years. I was quite physically

big for my age. So, some of those people that had done those things to me in second year, I was playing in the same team as them. As such, those things didn't happen as of third year. I gained a bit of a reputation in third year.

58. One day, a fifth year pupil hit me in front of a teacher and I hit him back. I can't remember his name. He was sort of embarrassed by this so he challenged me to a fight after school. I had to go over to the senior common room, and there was me and all the fifth and sixth years and this fellow that I'd hit and I was made to fight him. One of the teacher's lounges was adjacent to that room, so they would know there was something happening as it was very noisy, with chanting and stuff like that. I went in there thinking, I'll let him hit me, I'll get a kicking and I'll walk out. I thought that was the safest thing for me to do. He started hitting me and he kneed me in the face. I lost my temper and I hit him back and I guess I beat him up quite badly. When that happened everything stopped and I was given a bit more leeway. It was obviously perceived that I was a bit tougher, or a bit crazy.
59. That had happened a couple of other times, and I'd went to the room and there would be a circle of older boys and I would get a kicking. I didn't go once and two older boys came and got me and I got more of a beating. The teachers would have definitely knew there was something going on there. There was so much the teachers saw, but turned a blind eye to. I remember when I was in second year, a boy several years older than me, called [REDACTED], a physically big guy, asked my group to be quiet as we lined up to go into the dining hall. I didn't stop talking, so he walked up and punched me in the face, in front of a teacher. I didn't retaliate because there was a teacher there. He told me to shut up and I think I smirked, so he punched me in the face again. The teacher in the room didn't say anything. He just allowed him to manage the situation as he saw fit. I can't remember the name of the teacher, but that sort of thing happened a few times, where teachers saw older boys hitting younger pupils and didn't do anything. It wasn't a stand-out occasion when it happened to me. [REDACTED] hit me a number of times on a number of occasions.

60. I don't know their names, but I remember there were boys that I was scared of. I was in first or second year and they were big kids, physical. They weren't kids you would answer back or they would give you a kicking, and they would be part of the group in the common room baying on people to fight, but there wasn't one person who led the group, who instigated things. The culture of the school was violence, every aspect of it.
61. There was always something about **CRC**, the housemaster. Nothing conclusive and I didn't witness anything but I just had that sense that something might have happened, but I couldn't say for certain. I know he had his favourites, and some people would go into his flat and watch Top of the Pops on a Thursday. Even though I was probably one of his favourites for a while, I never went to his house. Again, not at the time, but looking back on it as an adult, there was something predatory about it. I remember going on a couple of trips on his speedboat with other boys at the time. We would go in his car, a big Rover 3500, and I remember being impressed with the car as a kid. I remember being on the boat once and him letting me drive it. He was behind me and helping me steer and helping me use the throttle and I felt really uncomfortable. Again, he didn't touch me or do anything, I just felt I didn't want him there. I remember other boys saying to me, "Oh, you've been chosen to go on the boat". I had a couple of friends that I still keep in contact with from school and both still refer to **CRC** as a paedophile, but I certainly never seen him doing anything. Whether they'd seen that or heard that, I don't know.
62. When I was in high school my year group had a locker room next to a staff room. I was trying to close my locker and it wouldn't close and I tried and tried. The door to the locker room opened and a teacher called **IUR**, a **teacher**, came in and slapped me full across the face and knocked me to the floor and started shouting at me that I was making too much noise and disturbing their lunch. He left and I picked myself up. My face was all red, he was a huge man, about six foot five inches. When he hit me I was lifted off my feet. He had gone to school with my grandad, and before that incident he had always had a soft spot for me, asking how my grandad was and I actually like him as a teacher, but after that point I didn't.

63. Corporal punishment was still legal in boarding schools, but I think in state schools it was stopped the year before. So that was permissible. If you messed about you got the belt or the cane. The rest of the stuff wasn't legal, but there were always fights, whether it was in my year, or other years. There was an area of woodland in the grounds of the school called the 'Magic circle'. If someone annoyed you, or grassed, they would be challenged to fight in the magic circle. You'd be given a time and you would meet there and there would be a crowd of whatever year of pupils gathered. I remember there being lots and lots of people there, more than forty or fifty, and there would be a fight between these two people, but if one of them fell, or was pushed into the crowd, they would be kicked or punched and pushed back in. That was a regular occurrence, not necessarily for me, I wasn't particularly a fighter.
64. I remember an occasion when two boys in my year had an argument and one of them had hid in some toilets. The other one was told he wanted to see him in the toilets, but he had hidden behind the door and when the other boy walked in he punched him in the face and beat him up in the toilets. One of the boys was called [REDACTED]. I think the other was called [REDACTED]. But these sort of things happened day in, day out, as I remember, that wasn't out of the ordinary. I as a pupil knew that was going on all the time, so I find it incredulous if the teachers weren't aware.
65. There was a new boy that started in primary seven when I was in that year called [REDACTED]. His dad had been shot dead in the Falklands. He was in his first class and he said, "I was the bully in my last school, so you better not mess with me". So one of the boys from the school punched him in the face and said, "Well, you're not here". A teacher came in and asked what was going on and the boy from the school said, "He said he was a bully, so I hit him". So both of them were belted. That boy from my year was a bit of a bully too and there were lots of fights with him. He was quite aggressive and had a lot of issues with other people. I can't remember his name.
66. There was no softness, no nurturing from the teachers. They were all male. The only female staff worked in the kitchen. It was very male orientated. It was the type of

environment where you had to establish yourself, be tough, so that no-one would mess with you. In some ways I kind of feel I was lucky because I was a physically big kid for my age and in my year group I was always seen as one of the harder kids. I didn't get bullied by people from my own year group, or even the year group above. However, because I was physically big, those two or three years above me would challenge me and say things like, "You think you're hard". I'd say I don't and I'd get a punch in the face and asked what I was going to do now. I would say I'm going to do nothing, because I knew if I retaliated I'm going to be hauled into this common room. So I just tried to keep myself safe. There were other pupils that were smaller in stature or what others would class as 'Nerdy', and they were beaten up almost every day by people from my own year group and others in the school. That was open, it wasn't a hidden thing.

67. There was an incident involving a [REDACTED] teacher called QUH [REDACTED]. He picked a student up by the hair on his temples. The teacher was a physically big guy, and he had the boy off the floor. The student was crying, and he was shouting at him. That was at an outside gym session. I can't for the life of me remember what this boy had done, but he was quite a small boy. His name is [REDACTED]. I don't think he'd done anything. I think it was more the teacher demonstrating how strong he was and that he was the one in charge, just asserting his power. He wasn't the type of boy who misbehaved, he was a quiet boy. I know [REDACTED] as an adult now, he lives in America. He joined the army. Most of them I know from school joined the military of some sort.
68. There was a boy in my school, who was about three years older than me, called [REDACTED]. With the school being all boys and the time it was, the worst thing you could be at that school was gay. Some of my peers are gay and they would have been at the time, but they wouldn't have come out then. [REDACTED] was quite effeminate, he was quite camp and I'm not sure if he was gay or not, but he was pinned down by some of the older boys, fifth and sixth years, and had a pencil put up his backside. That was common knowledge at the school, and if I knew, as a second year, I think it would have been known among the teachers. And if that particular incident wasn't, that same boy, whether it was the same day or not, I don't know, but he walked in

the dining hall one day and the older boys started chanting, "Poof", to the extent that the whole school started chanting it to this one poor guy. There were teachers in the room and nothing was ever done about that. Not to my knowledge anyway.

69. There was lots and lots of abuse, but nothing else that sticks out. It was there all the time. The belt and the cane were legal, but the way in which their use was carried out and the callousness, being hit on the top of the head with a heavy book or shoved out of the way, there was very little respect shown to the students. We were there to be taught and do what we were told and that was it. There was also the military side of it, standing to attention and doing the drill with SNR

zQTR Throughout my time at school he was SNR.

70. Every year we would have the 'Grand Day', which was a big parade, in our dress uniforms, kilts, tunics and Glengarry's. I played in the pipe band when I was fifteen to sixteen, I was a drummer. Parents would come to that and dignitaries, it was attended by colonels and brigadiers and other military people. It was a celebration for the end of the year. It was almost like a marketing thing, it was a complete façade because the day before you were there in the drill hall, at the end of June, back then when we used to have proper summers, and we would be inside or outside, standing to attention for hours and hours and people were fainting. They would be dragged off the parade ground and when they felt a bit better they would be back on and stood to attention again, just to have this big demonstration to show how great the school was. If there was a mistake on the days leading up to it, the whole school was punished for it. Everyone would stand in line, being in fourth year and in the pipe band, having to wear a kilt, tunic, busby hat and a real leopard skin on. So you were incredibly hot and you stood to attention for hours in twenty-five degrees of heat with no water. That's just how it was.

Reporting of abuse at Queen Victoria School, Dunblane

71. Our son was adopted, so we were going through the adoption process with our social worker. There was robust background checking and I spoke to some old friends for references and stuff. I obviously spoke to my parents, and talked about

my upbringing and I spoke to them about school, I didn't go into the depth that I'm going into with the Inquiry, but just a general theme that it wasn't a very nice place and it was really toxic and my mum and dad said, "Why didn't you tell us?". I told them I couldn't. Every holiday for the first two or three years I was there, at the end of it, my mum would say, "Are you enjoying school?", and I would say I was. I was really hating it, but I didn't feel that I could tell her, because I'd asked to go to a boarding school, so I probably thought I'd be letting them down. In hindsight I probably had multiple opportunities to leave that school and go to a regular school but I never did, because I thought it would be a failing of me, letting them down.

Leaving Queen Victoria School, Dunblane

72. As with most of the people leaving the school, there was a big drive for me to join the military. At sixteen I went down to Devon for three days to join the marines. I did a marines basic entry course, and passed. I returned and had a change of heart, I just didn't want to go down that route. I also did a basic entrance exam for the army. They gave you a list of all the regiments and all the jobs you could go on to do and I had a fairly extensive list of options and my dad wanted me to join the air force. I was interested in the police or the fire service, but at sixteen I was too young. I think at that time in Scotland you could join the fire service at seventeen as a cadet, possibly with the police as well. We had a career's teacher, who worked in the area, external to the school, who came in. We did this, what you'd call now, a basic psychometric test on what you'd like to do, and mine came out as working outdoors. So I left school without a sense of what I wanted to do, but I didn't want to join the armed forces.
73. I left school at sixteen, I was told I couldn't stay on at school, I was seen as a bit of a trouble maker I guess and moved back home. I went to the local job centre and asked for something I could do outdoors. I worked with a local building firm on a Youth Training Scheme, which I hated. The boss was a guy in his late fifties, and he was a great guy. Yorkshire born and bred. A really nice guy, sort of like a surrogate father really, but I hated the building trade. I did my bricklaying and construction City & Guilds course.

Life after boarding school

74. I left the building firm after two years and didn't really have a sense of what I wanted to do. When my dad was in the air force he'd made friends with a family that were in the US navy, so I moved to America when I was eighteen and worked over there for two years. For me that was the first time of having freedom. I worked in a ski resort teaching skiing, which I loved. I spent time travelling around America. When I came home two years later I wanted to pursue sports. I worked in London for about a year as a security guard then I went off to college. I did a community sport and leisure BTEC diploma in Galashiels and worked for a year at an outdoor centre. I then went to university and did a leisure management degree for three years and worked in London on the holidays. I then worked at an outdoor centre for four years, where I met my wife. I worked with people with disabilities doing outdoor pursuits.
75. In 1999 I got a job working in a small children's home in Lancashire. There were three houses within a larger house and I worked with three young people at a time, doing three or four day shifts, then three or four days off. I did that for a couple of years then I worked at a residential school, where I had a really bad experience and whistle blew on the manager. I then worked at a place called [REDACTED]. I started off as a care worker in a small team working with young people who had multiple placement breakdowns or who had gone into young offenders or come out of young offenders institutions. We did crisis intervention work to make connections and assist getting them trusting in adults again. I did that for three years, became a team leader and did that for two years, subsequently I was a duty manager and spent my last five years as a service manager for Scotland. It was bought out and I was made redundant in the first day of the take-over. I was offered my job back a week or two later, but under different terms with the new owners, who for them it was just a money making concern, which didn't really sit with me.
76. I took three or four months off then I was offered a job working for an organisation based in Carlisle. My remit was to set up a children's home in Carlisle for young girls. I did that for about a year and a half. We always wanted to return to Scotland, and my wife is from Shetland originally, so I took this placement in Skye called [REDACTED].

■■■■ I got a job managing that, which is an organisation working with youth groups. I did that for a year and a half and now I do what I do with our business and the fire service. So that was twenty to twenty-five years working with young people in different settings. That's my career history from leaving the school. I've always been personable and get on with people really well, and talk to people, colleagues and young people. It's always been a privilege for me to have young people make disclosures to me over the years. I've always had an empathy for these young people. Although I haven't lived their experiences, I understand to a degree, where they are coming from, and in particular, young people who have been abused in care settings. I think my experiences at school helped form the rest of my life really.

77. I worked in a residential school in the north west of England called ■■■■ school as a care worker. I was working with fifteen and sixteen year old boys. There were about eighty pupils in the school. A lot of the kids had just mild behavioural problems. The culture in the school was really, really toxic. It actually reminded me of my own school. It was a boarding school, but pupils would go home at weekends. It was very much, do as you're told or you will be restrained. There was a huge amount of restraints. There were restraints in other places I worked, but I was very aware that when I was doing it I was protecting the young person from putting themselves at further risk or from injuring other people. But at ■■■■ it was very much seen as a form of punishment. The phrase I remember most at the school was, "Right, drop them". It was testosterone fuelled boys, maybe showing a bit of aggression and they would have their legs swept from them, dropped to the ground and restrained, and held there until they had calmed down. They had a room at the school called the CS, (Close Supervision), room. It was basically a very small room with a bolted table and a bolted chair. Boys were put in there and the door was locked and a member of staff stood outside the door, by the window until they had calmed down. It was awful. I was going to work every day, and I was in a position where I was having to restrain other people, because one of the kids would swing a punch at a member of staff. So you had to restrain them and hold them there until they stopped moving. Then we would start talking to them and try to de-escalate it.

78. The thing I whistle blew on in particular was in relation to the head teacher, who was called Andy Cousins, who I accepted as the boss. One of the boys from my unit, from the house that I worked in, who had come back from a weekend at home, and had got an eyebrow piercing. He was asked to remove it and he refused and it became a big issue. At the time I didn't think it was an issue, there were girls wearing earrings and stuff, I thought it was a fifteen/sixteen year old boy, trying to gain a bit of independence and individuality and this head teacher made such a big deal of it and he was going to remove it. He pinned him up against the wall and drew his fist back and another member of staff and myself told him he needed to go to the office. He went to the office, shouting and swearing. I whistle blew on him, he had totally lost the situation. I worked there for a year and the physical restraints were wrong. I had my own set of values in how I am as a person, but it shows how easy you fall into it, because I helped in perpetrating some of that abuse. I was restraining young children, when they just needed a conversation, or some time to go and reflect and calm down somewhere. It was probably the old school borstal mentality. In hindsight I think one of the reasons I was employed there was because I was physically big. All the male staff were big guys. So I didn't stay very long and I whistle blew and left when he did that.

Impact

79. To this day, if I see bullying or aggressive behaviour towards other people, thankfully I don't, it triggers in me that I want to step in and protect. And that's borne out of the fact that I couldn't, and now I can and I have done. I have found a voice and found the ability to do something.
80. For years after I left school my own self-esteem was really low. I felt stupid for a lot of years. I didn't really hold any value in myself. When I worked with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I did three years transaction analysis, therapy training and stuff, and it's through that and doing a lot of personal reflection, recognising my triggers and things, and what happened in the past, speaking about things, not in as much detail as to the Inquiry, that makes me who I am.

81. For a long time I didn't like myself, I didn't hold myself in high regard for a number of reasons and that had impacts on my own relationships with other people, relationships with my parents. I think subconsciously I held them responsible for what happened at school. I think the impacts were huge. I lived with them at home from when I was sixteen to when I was eighteen. I lived in a town where I didn't know anyone, because I didn't go to school with anyone and I was working with a man in his fifties, so I didn't have the opportunity to make friends. I went from being a sort of popular boy at school, a gregarious, outgoing boy, to spending two years in my bedroom when I finished work, not really engaging with anyone. I didn't really get the opportunity to get to know my parents because I closed them out. I felt this shame that I hadn't done very well at school but this animosity towards my dad for putting me to the school, even though I had asked. It was always my mum that asked how I was doing and I would tell her that I was doing well, and I held on to that for years.
82. It wasn't until I was in my late twenties that I actually spoke to my mum and dad about that. I just touched on it, because I didn't want them to feel bad, that wasn't the intention. I think if I told them now they would be devastated, they are in their mid-eighties. So it took me till then or my mid-thirties to establish a relationship with them, that my sister has always had. I've always been jealous of my sister, even to this day her relationship with my parents is very different to mine and that's borne out of not being good enough. Now being a dad myself, and seeing how my dad was towards me, and how other older men in the school were, and how that impacted on me is how I am towards my son. Four or five years ago I did a lot of risky things. I climb and I was doing things in the mountains that were really dangerous. I recognised it from having a near miss and I actually saw a therapist for the first time. I spoke to them, going into some detail about the school and stuff, perhaps not as much as I've told the Inquiry.
83. Again, that behaviour towards myself was borne out of not liking the person I was. I do now, but I'm fifty-two. It took a long time to come. That's because of what happened at school. What I witnessed and what I felt, and what I know to have happened to other people. That sort of helplessness of not doing anything at the time, and then thinking, I was a young boy, what could I have done. I think, even if I

had said something, with the culture of that place, it would have just been washed over. It would have been, 'it's more about him than what we do here'. In many ways it's changed now, access to support for young people, in lots of different ways. Back then there wasn't a listening service, there wasn't a Childline, or things like that. If there had been, perhaps myself and other friends might have used it but there wasn't. You just had to make sense of it yourself, armour yourself and move on.

84. I'm very lucky, I've been married now for twelve years, but I've been with my wife for twenty-six years. She's amazing and fantastic and she is the only other person in the world that I've shared with, what I've shared with the Inquiry. Like any relationship it has its ups and downs, but she is amazing and has been a massive positive for me. In some ways she has had similar experiences. Her father was physically abusive when she was younger. So we've had that support mechanism for each other over the years and we've both come through that. She has a really good relationship with her father now and I have a much better relationship with my father now. Things have switched and I give my dad support now, but I don't begrudge him that. He was brought up by my granny, he was abused when he was younger and my mum was abused when she was younger. So, whether it was the time, or the generation, or the way things were, certainly it's not what I want for my son. It has affected relationships but I'm very lucky that I have a fantastic wife that understands a lot of that.
85. I was a mature student when I went to university. I was ready to learn and it was topics that really interested me, so I did really well. I saw that I wasn't stupid, I just wasn't good at the subjects taught at school, or I wasn't great at being taught in that manner. There was a realisation that being in that different environment, different teaching methods that I did better than I thought.
86. I went back to the school once. I was with an old girlfriend, driving up to Perth and I pulled in on a whim to show her my old school. I was driving through the grounds and one of the old teachers that I had, a guy called Stevie Laing, that I actually quite liked, stopped me and said, "Can I help?". I told him I was just having a look and that I used to go to the school. He told me he remembered me and he remembered me

fondly and it was quite nice. There's an organisation called the Old Victorian Association and I was asked to join them, they have reunions and get together but I had no interest in it at all. It wasn't a place I have particularly happy memories of, I have some happy memories of some individuals and friends, but nothing apart from that.

Reporting of Abuse

87. I have never reported the abuse I suffered at Queen Victoria school to the police. The only person I have told in as much detail as I have told the Inquiry is my wife.

Records

88. I don't have any interest in whether there are any of my records kept at the school. I mentioned my dad kept my letters and he kept my reports from primary six onwards and it's interesting, I haven't read them for years. I wasn't very academic and a 'C' was quite good for me, but most of my effort grades were 'E's because I just didn't want to be there. The comments from the housemaster were always relating to my sporting abilities. If it was all packaged up, my time at the school was, 'He wasn't good at that, but he was good at sports'.

Lessons to be Learned

89. My primary reason for calling the Inquiry was to ensure that what happened to me never happens again. I know times have changed and things have changed and there's lots of different support networks for young people and other avenues. There's online stuff that they can access. But I think for me at school what would have been different, would have been empathetic teachers that I could have trusted, that I could have gone to and said something. Or someone out with the school, that was separate, that would maybe come in and ask, does anyone want to say anything. There was never that opportunity. But the main reason for me contacting the Inquiry was about what happened to me and others, doesn't happen now. I don't think it does, but the collation of all the information the Inquiry has pulled from all the

different interviews it has done over the years forms a picture of what were the signs and what people were doing, and how can that be recognised early and how can there be interventions to prevent that from escalating.

90. Being more robust and going right across the board of people working in residential settings, whether that's a school or children's home or whatever and it's fed back into training in recognising that sort of stuff. It happened during my own career, it still happens. There's still so much to be done about it. There's more information to be fed into that system so that it can be made safer. I'm not sure what else can be done. I am pretty resourced, but there are people not so resourced and aren't well versed in that line of work and in what happened to them, and how they processed that afterwards and people get into drink, drugs and self-harm. So I feel lighter for today. It has been positive, even though it's been challenging at times.

Other information

91. 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..... 23/11/22.....